

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p

Inside:

The Marxist tradition and women's liberation—Page 5

Blair and Clinton shaken by Gulf protests
—PAGE 6/7

Solidarity price £1

All out action to beat low wage airline...

Union rights now at Ryanair!



Refugees are deported but...

AT THE end of February the first refugee, a Russian, was forcibly deported by the Gardai from Ireland.

Out of sheer desperation the man had attempted suicide by slashing his wrists, but the Gardai still carried out their orders and brought him to the Mater Hospital.

Then they took him to Dublin Airport, where he was put on a flight to London that same evening.

He is the first out of a hundred other refugees who face a similar fate.

Guilty

Under the terms of an EU law known as the Dublin Convention they are guilty of stopping off in another country before setting foot in Ireland.

But it is difficult to reach Ireland from some countries without touching down in another EU country.

If Fianna Fail get their way most of these refugees will be deported to Britain, where there are already an estimated 52,000 asylum seekers as opposed to a paltry 4,000 in Ireland.

Socialist Worker talked to one of these refugees about the frightening prospect of deportation:

Victor (not his real name), is from the Ukraine and received a letter of deportation from the Department of Justice January threatening him with deportation to London. He is now awaiting an appeal.

Victor is adamant that if he is deported to Britain it will only be a matter of days before he is deported to the Ukraine where he cannot return for political reasons.

At home his uncle has been killed, his sister is in prison and his father is continuously persecuted by the current government.

Afraid

He is afraid for his own life and has been told not to return by his family.

Although the Ukraine is considered to be a democratic country, the nationalist government borders on a dictatorship.

It is protected by its own mafia which murders opponents.

Victor is an engineer and wants to work but he is forced to live in a small flat in Rialto on £65 a week.

Meanwhile the Home Office in Britain confirmed that they were considering the application for political asylum from the Iraqi ambassador to Venezuela, Majid al Samarr'a'isa, who has been involved in cocaine smuggling.

It shows the hypocrisy of a government that denies asylum to genuine refugees.

Fianna Fail are now planning to deport another hundred refugees.

They have no problem sheltering Carlos Salinas, the wealthy former leader of Mexico who organised the murder of his opponents.

But their racist policy means that they want to stop Ireland becoming a multi-cultural society.

RIGHT: A Dublin plain clothes immigration official examines ID's.



RIGHT: A Dublin plain clothes immigration official examines ID's.

Relatives protest at conditions in Dublin hospital

RELATIVES of mentally handicapped people recently held a public meeting in north Co Dublin to protest at conditions in St Ita's Hospital, Portrane.

The hospital is an old style institution with large draughty rooms and rising damp.

Transfer

The Eastern Health Board wants to transfer residents—many of whom are severely handicapped—to group homes around north Co Dublin. The move sounds like Tory style "care

in the community".

Both the Psychiatric Nurses Association (PNA) and the relatives want a cluster of bungalows built in the hospital complex, and not several miles away.

One PNA activist told *Socialist Worker* there had been regular visits by politicians and reporters to St Ita's since Vincent Browne featured the hospital on his radio programme.

Another PNA member said the hospital was now receiving attention because of the Dublin North by-election.

A fight is needed if St Ita's is not to be forgotten once the election is over.

...Ireland embraces the tax dodgers

IRELAND is home to over 40,000 offshore non-resident companies who come here to avoid tax.

All the rich need is about £300 and two people who will say they are directors.

Ireland is the only country in the EU which allows companies to register without paying any tax.

The Department of Finance

has admitted knowing that some of these companies are involved in illegal activities, such as money laundering.

Damage

But they claim they haven't done anything about it because they don't want to damage "legitimate" companies who want to avoid tax.

Multinational's scour the

world to avoid tax.

Rupert Murdoch's News International group, for example, manages to avoid paying three quarters of its tax bill this way.

One way to avoid tax is to engage in "transfer pricing". Multi-nationals artificially change the prices within their empire so that profits are declared in countries like Ireland.

Coca Cola for example claims that it makes £400 million in Ireland - even though it employs only 200 workers in Drogheda.

Multi-nationals in Ireland have also invested £1 million in setting up Irish registered Non-Resident Accounts.

They are choosing Ireland because the Cayman Islands and the Bahamas have got a bad name.

Paradise for Irish rich

IT ISN'T just the multinationals who avoid paying tax. The Irish rich do too.

Not satisfied with the lowest corporation tax in Europe, people who "earn" over £250,000 a year need only pay a tax rate of 20 percent.

That is less than somebody on £2.75 an hour in

a supermarket.

They manage this through a wide number of scams:

- By investing in PROPERTY in designated areas the rich can cut their tax.

Last year the Revenue Commissioners found that a staggering 185 wealthy individuals out

of 400 they surveyed used these schemes and saved themselves £10 million.

- The BUSINESS ENTERPRISE SCHEME allows the rich to write off sums of up to £25,000 if they invest it in government supported projects.

- All leading Irish banks have "OFF-SHORE" FACILITIES for their rich customers which typically charge no taxes, impose few regulations and guarantee anonymity.

- A "CHOP ACCOUNT" is the Asian equivalent of a Swiss bank account.

The bank gives you a "chop," or a stamp imprinted with a unique and intricate composition of Chinese characters.

They are almost impossible to counterfeit, which makes them perfect for an anonymous bank account, and great to show off at parties.

- To avoid Capital

gains tax on shares in Ireland, the rich can sell and then buy their shares back in a day.

They just have to do is remember to do it every year. This is called "BED AND BREAKFAST".

- If none of the offshore accounts suit you, then why not set up your very own PRIVATE BANK?

Licenses

The South Pacific island of Nauru (population 9,000), for instance, sells bank licenses at the cut rate of £1,800 and allows new banks the special privilege of operating with no capital at all on deposits for two years.

Having your own bank offers an especially luxurious degree of privacy.

All transactions, whether investments in the stock market or donations to a favourite charity, are in the bank's name and not in yours.

The cost of tax scams

TAX CAN be a mild way of redistributing wealth from the rich to the poor. So when the rich get away with not paying their share everyone else suffers.

- The building of public housing has suffered because the rich will not pay up. The number of local authority houses has been cut in half since 1987.

- Ireland has the poorest investment in primary education in Europe. In the heart of the Celtic Tiger, children still have to collect bar codes from commercial products to get computers into their schools.

- The health system has also suffered. In the hospitals sick people sleep on trolleys in corridors because there aren't enough resources.

The waiting list for crucial operations like heart transplants is so long that many people die before their turn comes.

Agency's new low

THE FASHION industry's constant pressure on women to achieve the "perfect body" has led to a rise in eating disorders.

There are 9,000 people in Ireland suffering from bulimia or anorexia, mainly women between the ages of 14 and 20.

One Irish modelling agency recently reached a

new low when it rang the Irish Eating Disorders Association looking for potential models.

The agency asked Donna O'Connor, the Association's chief psychologist, if she had any girls in recovery who would like to do some modelling.

These sickos then claimed that modelling would help to build up the women's self-esteem!

- To avoid Capital

what we think

Blair and Clinton shaken by protests

THE US and Britain have backed down from their threat to bomb Iraq — for the moment.

But it is not because they have had a change of heart. Nor is it because the United Nations has suddenly broken free of the grip of the Western powers.

The US and Britain were forced to retreat because of the huge opposition they faced. Countries such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia which had joined in the coalition to attack Iraq in 1991 refused to do so again.

Regimes

These traditionally pro-Western regimes were frightened of the reaction of their own population who have seen the US support Israel even though that state has ripped up the peace accords with the Palestinians.

Israel is the only state in the region with nuclear weapons and it targets them on Arab capitals.

But the opposition was not confined to the Middle East. In the US and Britain opinion polls showed that nearly 40% of the population opposed the bombing. Sections of the media began to discuss how "the population was not yet psychologically prepared for war." At a town hall meeting in Columbus, Ohio designed to gather support for

the war, protestors won frequent applause for tackling US officials. Afterwards a White House official said, "It was like watching a car crash take place before your eyes."

The real reason for the war drive against Iraq was simple and cynical — the US wants to dominate a regime that controls 40% of the world's oil supplies.

This is why they still maintain a huge force of troops, missiles and bombs in the Gulf.

It is also why sanctions are still in place against Iraq even though half a million Iraqi children have died as a result.

Just before the war against Iraq was postponed Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State said,

"We are America. We are the indispensable nation. We stand tall. We see further into the future."

None could better sum up the imperialist arrogance of her ruling class.

But the last few weeks have also shown that behind the arrogance there is weakness. The rulers of the US are still haunted by "the Vietnam syndrome" and cannot impose their will wherever they want.

For the moment this has saved the people of Iraq from the carnage of war.

But we should continue to demand that US and Britain get out of the Gulf and protest again if necessary.



Playwright Harold Pinter at an anti-war protest in Britain

Vote Left to topple F.F.

THE by-elections in Limerick East and Dublin North give voters a chance to topple the Fianna Fail-led government.

Since they came to office Fianna Fail have covered up for the holders of the Ansbacher account which was used to bribe their former leader Charles Haughey.

They have slashed the Capital Gains Tax in half so that their big business backers can make a fortune.

Although there is huge disillusionment with conventional politics, the by-elections provide an opportunity to destabilise this millionaires' government. That is why Socialist Worker has no hesitation in calling for a left wing vote.

By far the best candidate is Clare Daly in who is standing for the Socialist Party in Dublin North.

She played an important role in mobilising opposition to the water charges and in exposing the corruption of Fianna Fail.

The Socialist Workers Party has many

differences with the Socialist Party—not least their refusal to oppose Orange marches going through Catholic areas in Northern Ireland.

But Daly advocates open class politics and deserves the support of every socialist.

Since going into opposition the Labour Party is once again presenting itself as the political voice of the labour movement.

Quinn has appeared on the platform of the Ryanair workers and the party has put down a bill in the Dáil to establish a right to union recognition.

None of this, however, will prevent Quinn entering a Coalition in the future and engaging in more sell-outs.

Workers should only vote Labour in order to give a slap in the face to the right wing policies of Fianna Fail.

The by-elections show that there is a need for a real alternative to the milk and water policies of Labour.

Such an alternative lies outside of electioneering and has to root itself in the day to day struggles of rank and file workers.

Will you take

Socialist Worker

to five people?

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

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

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

I want to take _____ copies of *Socialist Worker* to sell

Name _____

Address _____

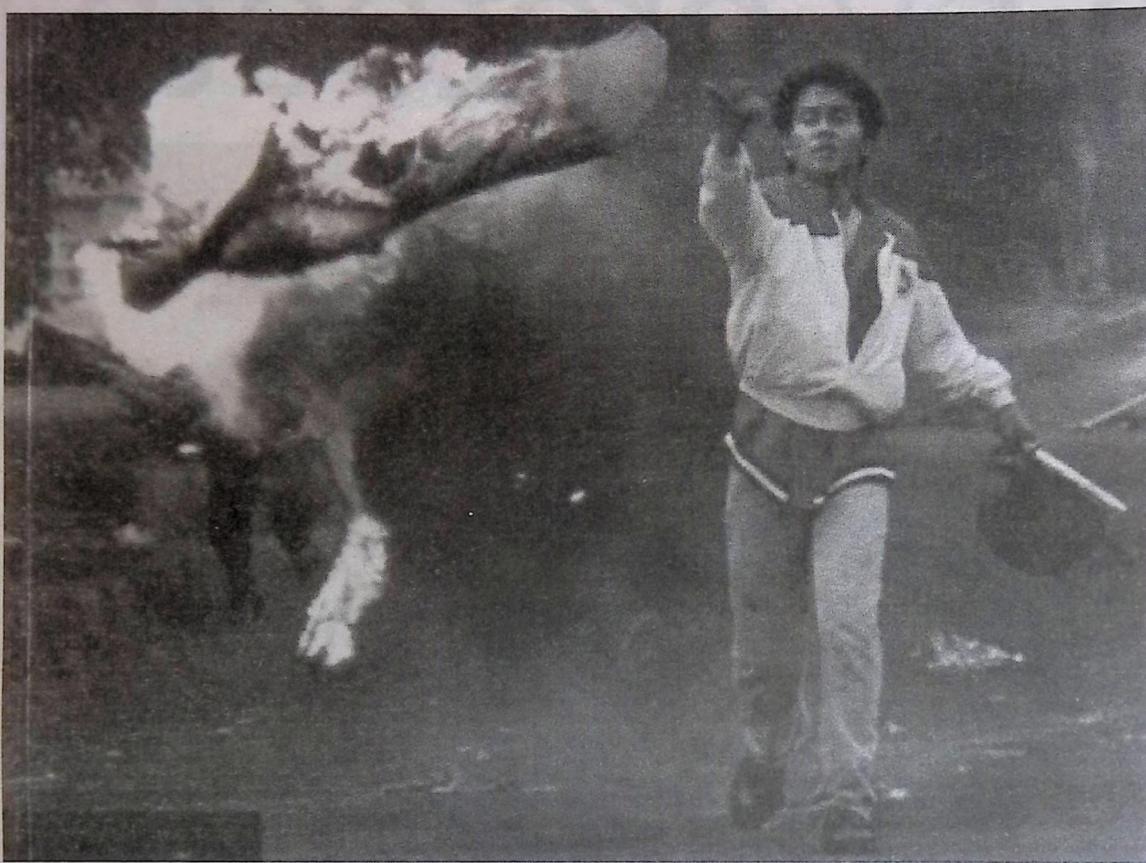
Phone _____

Cheques/POs payable to *Socialist Worker*
Send to: PO Box 1648, Dublin 8 or PO Box 354, Tomb St
Belfast



news of the world

Indonesian crisis sparks protests



The financial collapse of Indonesia has caused riots over the price of food

France

Thousands march against Le Pen

FRANCE'S NAZI National Front is facing a wave of protests in the run up to important regional council elections on Sunday 15 March.

Last Friday over 7,000 people demonstrated in Grenoble against an election meeting addressed by National Front deputy leader Bruno Mégret.

On Saturday 5,000 demonstrated against Mégret's meeting in Lyons.

The same day 5,000 marched against an election rally in Nantes in western France addressed by Nazi leader Jean-Marie Le Pen.

A week earlier over 10,000 had marched against a National Front meeting in Rouen in the north, and

3,000 in Dijon in the east.

The National Front has been trying to present a respectable image in the regional election campaign.

But two incidents in recent weeks have shown its real face.

In Nantes a young man out advertising Saturday's demonstration was waiting in a car for a friend.

Savagely

He was set upon by a group of masked men who smashed his car, teargassed him and beat him savagely.

The car used by the attackers has now been identified as belonging to a key local National Front member.

Meanwhile Le Pen himself has been up in court for assaulting a women Socialist Party candidate in last year's general election, and

could face heavy penalties.

The National Front organised a protest in defence of Le Pen last week, which saw nearly 10,000 Nazi supporters marching in Versailles, near Paris.

The regional elections, unlike other elections in France, are a single round of voting and are based on a form of proportional representation.

This means that Le Pens Nazis, currently running at around 15 percent in polls, are likely to win seats in many areas.

But overall the left hopes to make gains across the country.

Despite the protests by the unemployed, and strikes by lorry drivers and others, the Socialist Party led coalition government is still relatively popular.

Germany

Time is running out for Kohl

THE GERMAN equivalent of the Labour Party has chosen a politician who models himself on Tony Blair to fight the country's general election in September.

A special Social Democratic Party conference voted for Gerhard Schroeder to be the party's "chancellor candidate".

Schroeder won an increased share of the vote in elections in his own

state of Lower Saxony at the weekend.

The SPD's share of the vote there increased by 3.5 percent to nearly 48 percent.

The Christian Democratic Party, the Tory party that runs the national government, saw its support slip to about 36 percent.

This reflects the sharpened opposition to chancellor Helmut Kohl's CDU across Germany.

Schroeder claimed his "moderation" led to victory.

But Schroeder's pro-business

policies are not popular.

The increased support for the SPD owes more to the growing bitterness at recession and unemployment than it does to Schroeder's free market policies.

Unemployment

German capitalism is in a very deep crisis.

One in eight Germans is unemployed and the figure is higher in the east.

Protests against the government

Zimbabwe

Strike wave against Mugabe

A TWO DAY GENERAL strike was set to begin at the beginning of March in Zimbabwe despite being banned by President Robert Mugabe. This was the latest of a wave of protests against the government.

The strike was called by the Zimbabwe Confederation of Trade Unions (ZCTU), the country's main union organisation.

It is in protest against a VAT style sales tax which has put up prices of basic goods.

Poverty

This has created immense poverty among the mass of ordinary people who were already struggling to cope. That the ZCTU called the strike indicates the pressure the union leaders are under from below.

The union leaders are close to the government, and turned their backs on

the riots and unofficial strikes which swept the country earlier this year.

Now, however, they feel they have to reflect the growing anger among their members.

Despite this the union leaders cannot be trusted. They had, for example, called on workers to stay at home on this week's strike days instead of demonstrating.

The strike takes place against the background of the government con-

AROUND 250,000 health workers in Romania have ended a two week strike with real gains.

Thousands of low paid health workers rallied in the capital, Bucharest, last month and heard later that the government had agreed to pay a 30 percent pay rise.

Adrian Birea, a leader of the workers' Sanitas union, said they would not have got anything like that "if we had not protested and gone on strike".

THE AUSTRALIAN Tory government has banned workers from striking in a key dispute at Melbourne docks.

That has allowed non-union dockers to start work as part of an orchestrated attempt to destroy the dockers' Maritime Union of Australia.

Union leaders had called a series of strikes against the Patrick Stevedores Company which is working with the powerful National Farmers' Federation to break the dockers' union closed shop.

But union leaders have refused to defy an injunction from the Victoria Supreme Court preventing further strikes.

The dispute is not over but union leaders are paving the way for a serious defeat.



round up

With the peace process in crisis...

Where is Republicanism going?

TENSIONS inside the republican movement are growing as disillusionment with the peace process sets in.

EIMEAR MALONEY spoke to two socialists from Derry, **Eamonn McCann** and **Colm Bryce** about how socialists can respond.

What is Sinn Fein's current strategy?

McCANN: Sinn Fein's main strategy is to hold the nationalist movement together and to expand its influence.

They represent one section of the community and they are now competing for the leadership of that community. Any pretence of rejecting sectarianism has been dropped.

What they have to achieve is a settlement that can plausibly be presented to the nationalist community as a step towards a united Ireland.

They know they're not going to be able to achieve a united Ireland but they need to be able to present any agreement as a bridge towards that. Both Adams and McGuinness have very deep and wide support.

Deliver

But is it extremely difficult to see how Gerry Adams can actually deliver a settlement which represents a fair return on 25 years of Republican struggle.

To put it crudely people will ask "Is this what Jimmy died for?" That may be crude but it's valid.

BRYCE: Sinn Fein used to say that their ultimate aim was a democratic socialist Ireland, but that national unity always came first.

Now their aims have become narrowed down to simply achieving respect for the nationalist identity.

If you look at the equality agenda which Sinn Fein is pushing, it's all couched in terms of cultural symbols.

They talk about Irish signs and the Irish language and gaining funding for Irish language schools.

There's nothing wrong with wanting those things but it's still a very limited agenda.

Their narrow vision is exacerbated by the alliances that they are trying to make with the SDLP and the Irish government.

You can only make those sort of alliances with middle class politicians by limiting the aims of a movement.

What does this shift in strategy mean for their day to day activity on the ground?

BRYCE: On the ground the new approach means an emphasis on symbolism and symbolic changes.

For instance in the recent election for Student's Union president in Queen's University Republicans campaigned primarily on the issue of Irish signs—something that was stirred up by the Unionist party.

This is happening at a time when all students are under serious attack, facing the complete abolition of grants and the introduction of fees. As a result there has been no serious struggle over this issue.

This pattern is repeated in the wider arena. There has been a wave of redundancies in the last six months but no decent fight back.

It's a real pity because these struggles could hold out the promise of real improvements in people's lives. The struggle for symbolic change has become a substitute for fighting for real change.

If Sinn Fein has moved away from its radical roots towards alliances with the middle class, how can you account for its working class support which continues to grow?

BRYCE: The reason for this is precisely because the causes of the conflict still remain.

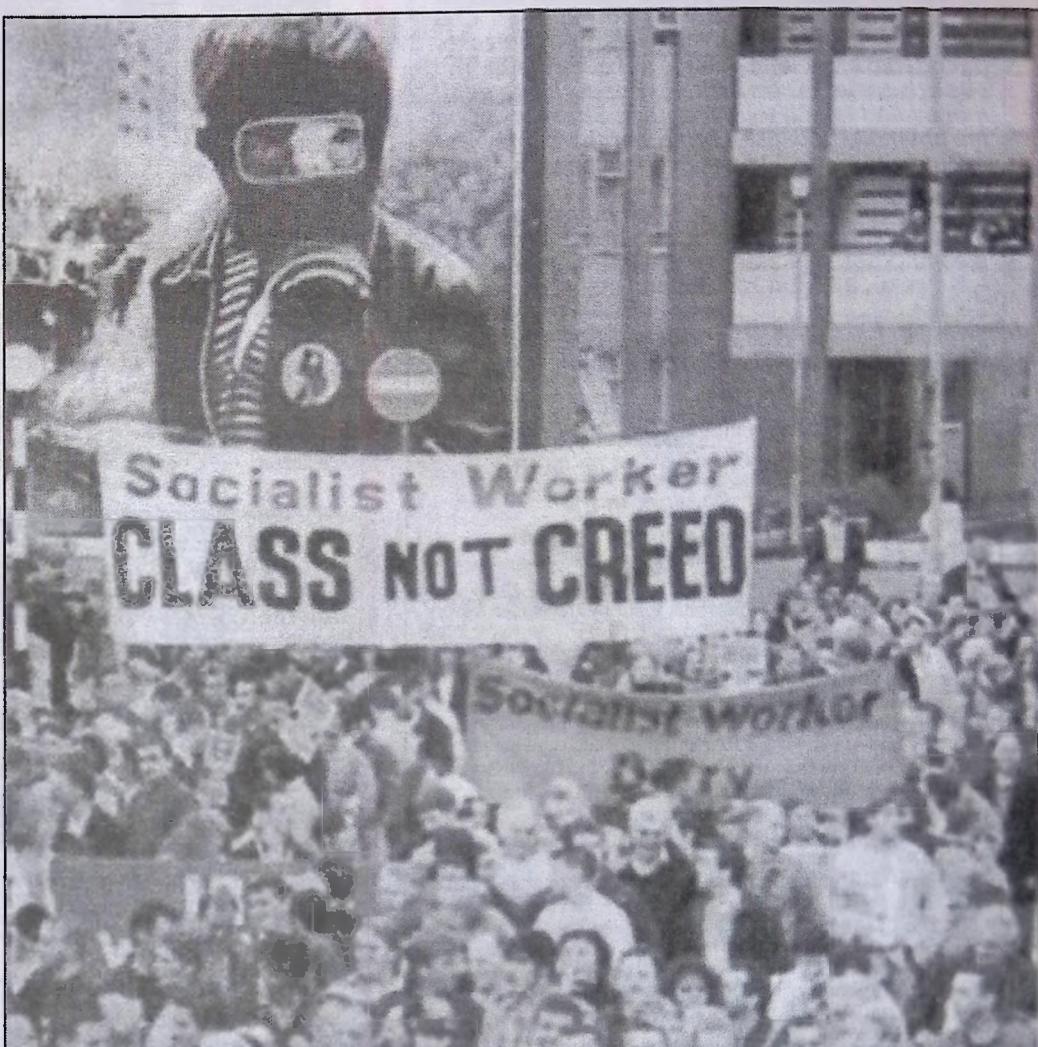
Sinn Fein can still appear a radical force, but it is radical nationalism only.

This means that people's anger at situations like Drumcree, their hatred for the sectarianism of the RUC, finds a voice within Sinn Fein.

But nationalist politics can't take that struggle beyond opposition to the outward effects of sectarianism.

It doesn't get to grips with the reason why sectarianism continues to be promoted, the fact that a modernised form of sectarianism suits the interests of a section of the ruling class in the North.

More importantly, nationalism can't get to grips with Loyalism or the support for sectarianism among



"It is only socialist politics that can effectively challenge loyalism and show why the republican strategy of a pan-nationalist alliance is futile."

Protestant working class people.

Sinn Fein assumes that the current divisions will always exist; that the Protestant working class will always be Loyalist.

What it completely fails to recognise is that there are substantial numbers of Protestant working class people who are completely fed up with the sectarianism of the main unionist parties but who have very little means of expressing this outrage.

Some Republicans say the peace process has already failed and that a return to violence is inevitable. How do you respond?

McCANN: There is very little support for a return to armed struggle. People have seen the horror of it.

They know it would be intercommunal violence, not just the IRA against the British army or the RUC.

There is a real horror of sectarian intercommunal violence on a scale that we've known in the past.

The problem is there is no mechanism for allowing people to express this.

If Republicans concede that the talks process has offered them nothing then they ought not to see a return to violence as the only option.

They ought to look at other ways

of continuing the struggle such as the civil rights path.

There is no reason why there could not be mass demonstrations and protests in support of the release of prisoners, opposition to the RUC, even looking for a British withdrawal, except that these options would go against the grain of Republicanism.

Where does the recent rise in sectarianism leave socialists?

McCANN: Where they've always been, in very difficult terrain. The situation in Northern Ireland, both historically and in the current experience invites people to define themselves primarily in terms of religion and community instead of class.

The lack of activity on the class front is a major problem and the trade union leadership is to blame for much of this.

Failure

The real failure of the trade union leadership is not that it hasn't taken a stronger line against sectarianism, it is that it hasn't waged class war.

It has recently linked up with the employers group, the CBI, and other groups under an umbrella called New Agenda.

This move represents an absolute

abandonment of the ability of class struggle to undercut sectarianism.

The trade union movement has neutered itself. It can't possibly appeal to people on the basis of class when it is linking up with the CBI.

BRYCE: The recent ICTU rallies against sectarian violence were a very important initiative. It points to what the trade unions should have been doing all along. But once again we saw the labour movement's complete failure to fight along class lines.

The platforms were filled with business leaders and church leaders. When the trade union leadership says "let's not talk about politics" it really means "lets stick with the idea of bosses and workers being in partnership".

But this offers nothing to workers who suffer some of the lowest wages in these islands.

The disillusionment of Protestant workers with unionist politics is a very important development of the past few years but it doesn't find expression in a movement that sees class as the main divide in Northern Ireland.

This is why the key to the present situation is to build a minority of socialists who come from both backgrounds.

It is only socialist politics that can effectively challenge loyalism and show why the republican strategy of a pan-nationalist alliance is futile.

The horror of child labour

"My mother was sick all the time. We had no food for me, my sister and brothers. I started to wash the car windscreens at the traffic lights. I was nine. Now I sell sweets, chewing gum, pulseras (friendship bracelets) outside the bus station. The bus drivers let me on their big buses. I earn good money and take it to my mother. She doesn't hit me anymore because I bring her the money."

—Guadelupe, a 10-year-old Mexican street vendor.

"A lot of people call me a small boy. I work selling chewing gum outside a cinema. I have no sleeping house. I sleep at the petrol station."

—Kewku, a 9 year old boy in Ghana.

Each day an army of about 100 children, with an average age of five years, trudges into Uganda from Kenya carrying loads of sugar on their tiny backs. They return home with articles of clothing that they smuggle across the border.

In the evening, the youngsters slip into comfortable homes in the town of Malaba on the Kenyan side of the border, to receive meals and shelter in exchange for the work done during the day.

Africa has the world's highest proportion of working children - About 41 percent of African children aged 5 to 14 years are involved in some sort of economic activity - that's 80 million, 21 percent of Asian children work and 17 percent in Latin America.

At least 250 million children are involved in child labour. But this figure excludes children in the industrialized world - neither does it measure the child workers hidden from the statistician's view, notably girls doing domestic work.

Including these child workers would push the total up to nearer 500 million - or half the children in the developing world aged 5-14.

Exploitative

Even in the industrialised world it is acceptable for children to work for miserable wages, yet the work is often unsafe as well as exploitative.

For instance in the US in 1990 100 adolescents were killed and a further 70,000 injured while at work in the service sector.

The involvement of migrant children in US agriculture is routine. In the 1980s the United Farm Workers union estimated that 800,000 underaged children worked harvesting crops.

In 1990 a survey of Mexican American children working on farms in New York state showed a third of them had been sprayed with pesticides.

The story of one twelve year old boy from Pakistan shows both the horror of child labour and the courage of those who fight against it.

Iqbal Masih was four years old when his father sold him into slavery, for the equivalent of £8. He was forced to work more than twelve hours a day. He was constantly beaten, ver-

**In the US in 1990
100 adolescents
were killed and a
further 70,000
injured while at
work in the
service sector.**

bally abused, and chained to his loom by the carpet factory owner. His growth was stunted by severe malnutrition and years of cramped immobility in front of a loom.

There are an estimated 7.5 million bonded child labourers, like Iqbal, in Pakistan today.

In 1992 Iqbal's life changed dramatically.

Aged ten, he and some other children stole away from their carpet factory to attend a freedom day celebration held by the Bonded Labour Liberation Front (BLLF).

At the gathering they learned about their rights. Iqbal was moved to give an impromptu and eloquent speech about his sufferings which was printed in the local papers. Afterwards he refused to return to his owner.

He contacted a BLLF lawyer and obtained a letter of freedom which he presented to his former master.

Iqbal campaigned for children to run away from their owners, his campaign was so successful that on Easter Sunday 1995 his former "owners" murdered him.

Many people who are genuinely concerned with the problem of child labour call for the boycotting of goods produced by children as a means of stopping child labour.

But the majority of goods produced by children are for local markets where customers have no choice but to buy the cheapest on offer.

The only way to alleviate the suffering is through the Labour movement.

If, for example, there were strong trade unions in the carpet industry in Pakistan they could effectively outlaw the exploitation of children in the industry.

The scale of child labour around the world can only mean that the talk of "ethical capitalism" is a very sick joke.

Capitalism will always look for the cheapest way to produce goods and if that means the abuse of children then so be it.

by SIMON BASKETTER

THE STORY OF THE AMISTAD

From slave revolt

"WE HOLD these truths to be self evident—that all men were created equal."

The opening words of the Declaration of Independence are supposed to be the basis of the US constitution.

US rulers today describe their country as a haven of democracy and "the land of the free".

Amistad, the new film by director Steven Spielberg, tears such images apart.

AMISTAD IS based on the true story of 53 kidnapped Africans and their inspiring revolt on board the Spanish slave ship Amistad in 1839.

Spielberg has made a powerful film that graphically brings to the screen the horrors of the slave trade and the struggle for its abolition.

The story starts on the west coast of Africa as a Portuguese ship loads up its cargo of enslaved Africans.

The nightmarish journey from a slaver's fortress to the Spanish colony of Cuba is graphically brought to life in the film.

Shackled to each other, whipped and abused, men, women and children are kicked down into the dark hold of the ship.

Some are murdered by the slavers, beaten or starved to death or thrown overboard.

The inspiring quality of Amistad is that, despite the barbarism they endure, the captives are shown at every point fighting to regain the freedom that has been snatched from them.

Some of the slaves committed suicide rather than take any more. But even this is shown in the film as an act of resistance.

The ship sailed to Cuba where two Spanish businessmen, Jose Ruiz and Pedro Montes, bought 53 Africans, including 25 year old Sengbe Pieh, who they renamed Joseph Cinque.

Ruiz and Montes put the enslaved Africans on their ship, Amistad, and set sail.

Slavery—the very opposite of "freedom and equality"—was central to the growth of capitalism in the US.

Millions of Africans were imported as slaves to work cotton, sugar and tobacco plantations.

The rich and powerful developed vile racist ideas to justify slavery, while at the same time proclaiming the "rights of man".

The scale of slavery was immense.



Revolt leader Joseph Cinque

The 1810 US census showed that one in six of the population was a slave.

Slaves were concentrated in the South of the country, but the wealth they produced flowed into the hands of Northern bosses as well.

Though importing slaves from Africa had been made illegal in 1808, slavery itself was not outlawed in the US until the 1860s.

In the Amistad case this meant that the Spanish slavers Ruiz and Montes forged documents saying the slaves were Cuban, not straight from Africa.

But their plans were shattered when the Africans led by Cinque refused to accept their fate and took control of their own destiny. They rose up and seized control of the ship.

The film does not shrink from showing how bloody the mutiny on the Amistad was.

We see Cinque plunging the blade of a cutlass into the captain, literally pinning him to the deck.

But the film leaves us in no doubt that there is a world of difference between the violence meted out to the slaves by their oppressors and the violence of those forced to fight to regain their freedom. Cinque ordered the Spanish to sail to Africa.

But Montes tricked him and instead zigzagged the ship along the coast of North America.

Eventually, lack of provisions forced the Africans to anchor off Long Island, New York.

They were captured and held in the neighbouring state of Connecticut, where slavery was still legal.

They were kept captive while their "status" was battled out in the courts.

There is a revealing scene in the film where the Africans are clearly reduced to property to be fought over.

In an early courtroom scene a series of interested parties step forward to make their claim.

A representative from the US president claims the Africans are the property of Queen Isabella of Spain and should be handed back so as not to provoke a diplomatic incident.

The US president at the time, Martin Van Buren, was up for re-election and did not want to alienate his support in the South.

The sailors who captured the Amistad off Long Island claim part of the proceeds from any sale of the slaves as maritime salvage. And Ruiz and Montes also make a pitch to have their property returned.

"A difficult slave case," murmurs the bemused judge.

That the young lawyer who volunteers to help the abolitionists free the Africans is a property law expert says it all.

However, Spielberg makes sure we never forget that the Africans are human beings.

The film focuses on Joseph Cinque who is shown to be at least the measure of those in power who would decide his fate.

The Africans eventually gained their freedom with the help of the movement to abolish slavery and ex US president John Quincy Adams, who came out of retirement to represent them before the Supreme Court.

AMISTAD outlines the pro- and anti-slavery forces that had emerged in the US by 1839.

Bosses in the Northern states of the US, who had certainly benefited from the proceeds of slavery, had by 1830 largely come to oppose it.

The north east of the US was home to the expansion of industry.

Slavery was profitable in the agricultural South because a single overseer could ensure that large numbers of slaves did backbreaking unskilled work.

But the industries of the North required skilled labour and some commitment from the labourers if the most was to be got out of expensive machinery.

The Northern industrialists favoured free wage labour over slavery for this reason.

The party of the industrial capitalists, the Republican Party, came to express this opposition to slavery.

However, the fact that the Northern ruling class opposed slavery did not mean they regarded black people as equals.

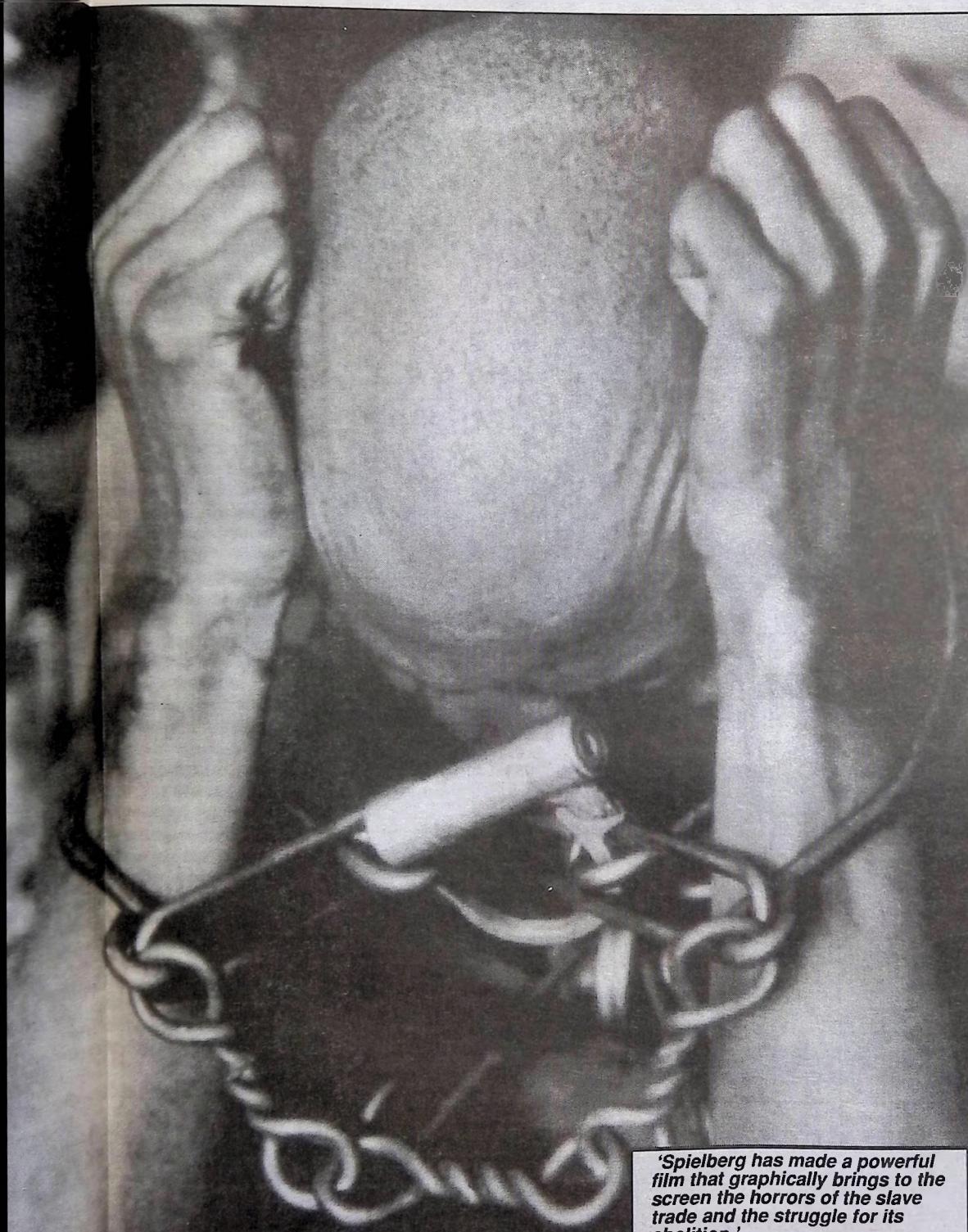
Only a minority of Northern states allowed black people to vote on the same terms as whites, and blacks in the North suffered deep racism.

Nevertheless, the Republican Party did develop a radical wing that believed in a more thoroughgoing fight against slavery and for democracy.

THE SUPREME Court judges in the Amistad case were not prepared to provoke the Southern slaveholding states by declaring that all slaves were to be regarded as free. Nonetheless, the judges could not be seen to be in line with the South against the North.

by HASSAN MAHAMADALLIE

a cry to



'Spielberg has made a powerful film that graphically brings to the screen the horrors of the slave trade and the struggle for its abolition.'

THE SUPREME Court judges in the Amistad case were not prepared to provoke the South slaveholding states by ruling that all slaves to be regarded as free. Nevertheless, the judges could not bear the weight of public opinion either.

So the court ruled that because the Africans aboard the Amistad had been illegally imported to Cuba then they had never technically been the "property" of Ruiz and Montes.

It then ruled that Cinque and the others had been kidnapped and so had the right to "resist oppression and to apply force against ruinous injustice".

It was a mealy mouthed judgement.

The Supreme Court made it clear that slaves COULD be property as long as slavery remained as an institution.

This has led some black and socialist historians to denounce Spielberg as twisting the nature of the Amistad case.

US historian Eric Foner says the case "had nothing to do with slavery in this country".

But the forces lined up on either side of the Amistad case were clearly the anti-

and pro-slavery camps. The public saw the Amistad case as a victory over slavery and it enraged the slaveholding states of the South.

Some 20 years later slaves finally won their freedom in the great upheaval of the American Civil War.

That war was fought between the Northern states and the slaveholding South, and in it black slaves fought for and helped win their own liberation.

What do socialists say?

Why does imperialism still exist?

THE NEWS that the US and Britain will remain in the Gulf is a sharp reminder that imperialism is still a potent force.

But what connection does military muscle have with the day to day business of profit making?

For some this might seem a strange question. We are supposed to live in a globalized society where companies scour the world for moneymaking opportunities. They are not tied to any nation state and, if anything, the nation state is a hindrance to them.

The view that capitalism had outlived war was expressed by Karl Kautsky. He claimed that apart from the tiny number of arms manufacturers, it was more rational for the vast majority of capitalists to oppose war.

It was against such naive optimism that Lenin wrote his extraordinary pamphlet *Imperialism: The highest stage of Capitalism*.

The title itself suggested the core of his argument. The domination of weaker countries by powerful industrialised states was not some natural urge that grew out of a fear of other peoples.

Monopolies

Modern imperialism emerged at a special stage in the development of capitalism. For Lenin this corresponded with the growth of large monopolies that moved from economic competition to carving up the whole world between them.

Some of Lenin's particular arguments have not stood the test of time. He predicted a more direct connection between the export of capital and imperialist activity than turned out to be the case.

Nevertheless the essence of his argument, particularly as it was developed by his fellow Bolshevik, Bukharin, was correct and remains relevant today.

Lenin and Bukharin argued that capitalism developed rapidly from the state of affairs envisaged by Adam Smith where firms are subordinate to the market and compete on the basis of lowering prices.

They argue that two contradictory tendencies become visible. On one hand there is a concentration of capital so that one or two firms dominate whole sectors of the economy.

So a close relationship develops between the large firms and their individual nation states.

Second, the firms begin to outgrow the national boundaries and operate on an international level.

The combination of these two tendencies means that competition between capitalists re-emerges on an international level and involves their respective states giving them 'back-up' and putting pressures on their rivals.

Military force, whether as a threat or a reality is never far behind.

The behaviour of the US in the Gulf provides an ample demonstration of this. Most will agree that US foreign policy is often linked to the control of oil.

But while demand for oil is an important element of the US equation it is not the end of the story.

One of the overriding concerns of all US administration since the eighties has been the relative decline of the US economy compared to its nominal allies in Japan and Germany.

Starting with Reagan, the rulers of the US sought to compensate for their declining economic strength by reasserting their political and military leadership within the Western alliance.

If anything, the collapse of the USSR intensified the rivalry among the nominal allies as the pressure of one rival superpower was removed.

The first Gulf War of 1991 showed that the US could achieve some success in this strategy. US arms sales increased dramatically in its aftermath. US companies grabbed the lions share of reconstruction in the Gulf.

The most recent escapade in the Gulf again showed the US did not just want to show its domination over the Middle East - but also over other powers like France, Russia and China.

Foremost among their consideration was the fear that France, and Russia was grabbing too important a share of Iraq and Iran's oil.

The response to this economic rivalry was to threaten a population with barbarity on an immense scale.

Tragically this is an omen for the future - until the capitalist system which breeds imperialism is overthrown.

by KIERAN ALLEN

Socialist Worker is your paper

I would like to join the Socialist Workers Party
I would like.....copies of Socialist Worker to sell
I would like the special introductory offer of 8 issues for £5
I would like to take out a subscription: six months £9
one year £18

Name.....

Address.....

.....Phone.....

Cheques/P0s payable to Socialist Worker
Send to: PO Box 1648, Dublin 8 or PO Box 354, Tomb St Belfast

Buy it,
read it,
sell it,
Join us!

Give your
name and
address to
your local
seller or
phone (01)
872 2682
or return
form

The Marxist tradition and Women's liberation

by SINEAD KENNEDY

WE ARE TOLD "We are living in a post feminist age - women today are no longer oppressed."

This is the picture presented to us by the Spice girls and writers such as Naomi Woolf. Feminism in the nineties is fun, it's all about asserting yourself in a tough world.

If women are still put down, it's their own fault. All you need to do is go out and assert yourself, make something of your life. This is the message that is constantly promoted today.

But the real picture is very different. Women are still earning only 80% of men's wages in Irish manufacturing industry. Rape and domestic violence are on the increase. Last year's horrific case where a 13 year old rape victim was dragged through the courts showed that many basic rights are still to be won.

Feminism sees the roots of women's oppression in the personal relations between men and women. All men are supposed to have a long standing need to dominate and oppress all women.

Socialists, on the other hand, see the origin of women's oppression in a class society.

In 1884, Frederick Engels outlined the socialist argument on women's oppression when he published *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*.

Engels used the work of the leading anthropologist of the day Lewis Morgan to argue that women were not always oppressed. Morgan showed how seventeenth century Jesuit missionaries were horrified to discover that among the native Americans men did not expect wives to be faithful or to obey them.

Engels and Morgan's argument that the oppression of women is not natural was confirmed by later studies. As late as the 1930s, the people of the Pacific Trobriand Islands had no word for rape. They could not believe a man might beat a woman or that a woman might stay in a monogamous relationship if she did not want to.

In early human societies people survived by hunting animals and gathering fruit and vegetables. In these societies women were not considered the property of men and were not excluded from decision making.

These societies were described by Engels as "primitive communism".

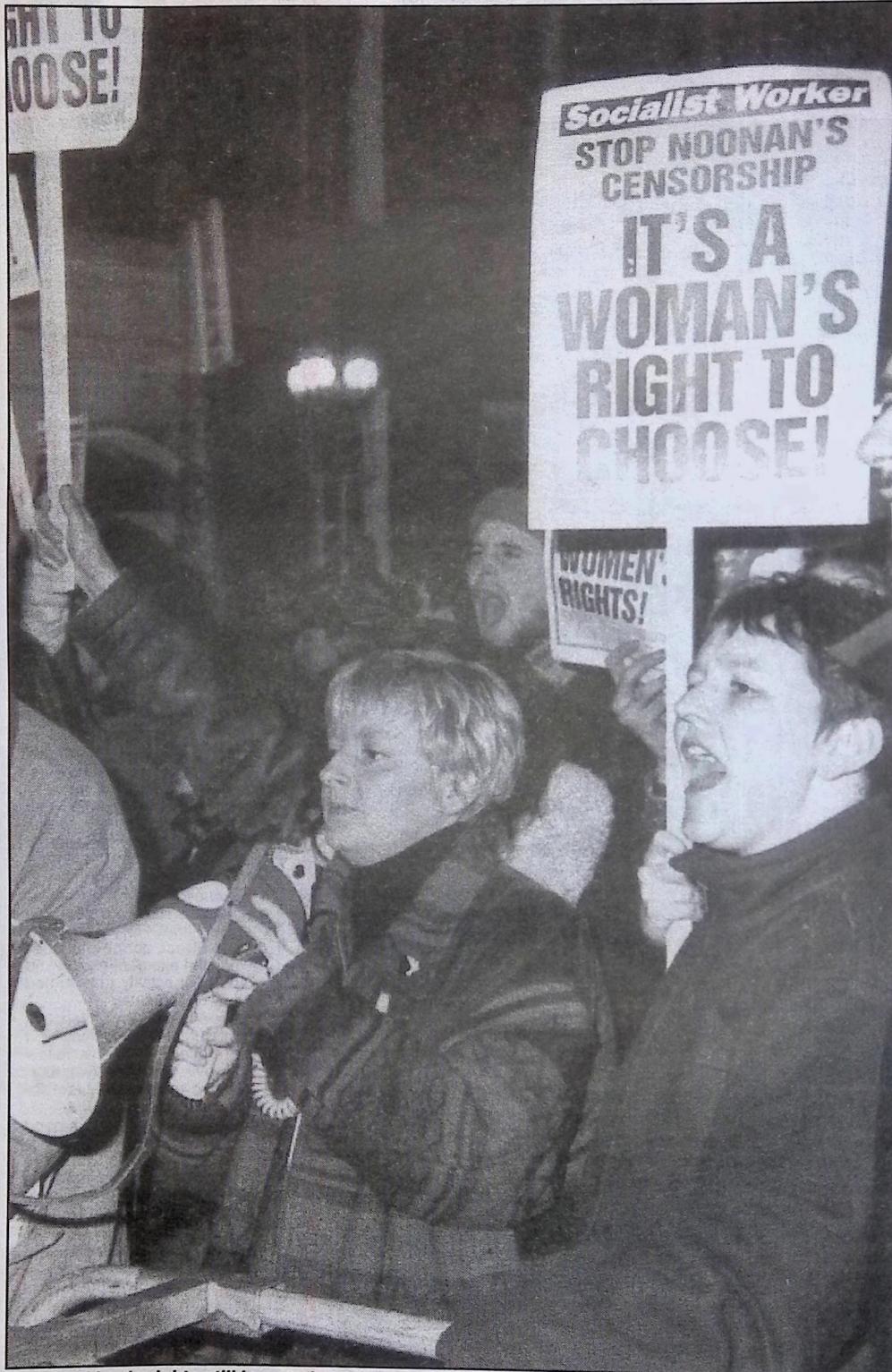
This world was harsh and people had to struggle to survive. Men and women had to co-operate and there was no such thing as private property.

Because women had no control over whether or not they had children, work was divided on the basis of sex. But this division was not rigid and men sometimes looked after children while women joined the hunt. More importantly, as both sexes contributed to production, a rough equality between the sexes existed.

With the development of agricultural production the position of women began to change. A surplus amount of food was produced and a new class emerged to take control of it.

As the surplus was mainly generated by the plough which men controlled, the new ruling class was predominantly male.

The transition to a class society led to profound changes in the relationship between men and women. The new ruling class began to establish states and to ensure that only they had a monopoly on the use of violence. The new rulers also began to insist on inheritance for their offspring.



In Ireland basic rights still have to be won

This led to new codes of monogamy and rules to restrict women's sexual activity. Engels argued that the development of a class society was linked to "the world historic defeat of the female sex".

Traits that are sometimes regarded as naturally feminine or masculine grew out of the sex roles that were established then. Femininity was associated with caring, gentleness and looking after children while masculinity was supposed to be built on aggression and ambition.

In the mid seventeenth century there were further changes as industrial capitalism began to emerge and production was transferred from the home into the factories.

Women, who had until then been in-

volved in production within the family home, also moved to the factories and began to work for a wage. Such changes threatened to destroy old family relations and Engels mistakenly predicted the death of the working class family.

But while this looked like a real possibility in the early part of the nineteenth century, two factors combined to recreate the modern nuclear family.

One was the growing concern among capitalists about the costs of the industrial revolution.

In the 1830s, for example, the average

life expectancy in the Spitalfields industrial district in London was just eighteen years.

The result was a movement which sought to restore the private family by paying the man a "family wage" and pressuring the woman to stay at home.

But it would be wrong to see the family simply being recreated from on high.

Working class men and women saw the family as a refuge from the horrors of the industrial revolution. In America, for example, black slaves fought to preserve the family against the machinations of their owners.

However it was capitalism which gained most from the restoration of the

family. Profit depended on a healthy and obedient workforce.

The private family bore the cost of childcare, cooking, cleaning, and socialisation. It ensured that the factories and offices were provided with a stable healthy workforce at minimal cost.

This is why a whole series of laws were passed in the 1870s in Britain to shore up the family. They included the registration of births and deaths, and the outlawing of homosexuality and abortion.

The link between women's oppression and capitalism has ensured that there has always been two women's movements.

"The women of the Commune," wrote one reactionary after the 1871 Paris commune was crushed "were like the men - ardent, implacable, frenzied. Never had they turned out in such great number, braving peril and defying death."

But far from there being one woman's movement, ruling class women were the most violent to the female prisoners of the Commune.

"One sees," wrote the liberal conservative *La Sicle* on 30 May 1871 "elegant ladies insult the prisoners on their passage and even strike them with their sun-shades."

When International Women's Day was celebrated in Russia in 1912 at illegal meetings organised by the Bolshevik party, the middle class feminist movement was disgusted at the way working women joined with men to celebrate.

One wrote, "They did not protest at all against the subordinate position of wives in relation to their husbands. They spoke primarily of the enslavement of proletarian women by capital!"

But if there is a class divide between women, there are also conflicting ideas about how women's liberation can be achieved.

Feminism tends to argue that gender is the main divide in society. It claims that the relation between men and women have always been governed by inequality and violence. It sees a patriarchal structure running throughout history under which all men have oppressed all women.

This is why it argues that all women regardless of class need to unite against men of all classes.

The Marxist tradition on women's liberation takes a different approach. Not only does it root women's oppression in a class society rather than an unchanging patriarchy, it also stresses the class differences between women.

Marxism says that the Dunnes boss, Margaret Heffernan, and the woman who works at the Dunnes checkout are not equally oppressed.

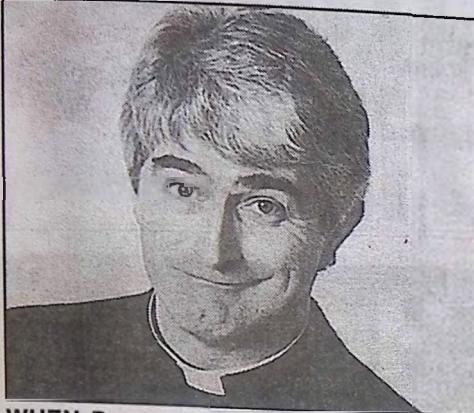
Ruling class women benefit directly from the oppression of working class women.

This is because they benefit from the profits that are created by getting the individual family to carry the cost of reproducing the next generation of workers - the main burden of this task falls on women.

Ruling class women employ working class women to look after their children and clean their homes. Although they may be oppressed within their class, they still act as oppressors and exploiters of working class women and men.

By contrast working class women and men have every interest in overthrowing the society which produced oppression. This is why the key to women's liberation lies in socialist revolution.

DERMOT MORGAN: The scourge of the establishment



WHEN Dermot Morgan died, the Lord of Kinsealy, Charles J Haughey Esquire, shook himself from his slumbers and told the nation how much he appreciated the comic's talents.

It was typical of his brazen hypocrisy. During the late eighties Dermot Morgan and Gerry Stembidge produced *Scrap Saturday* where they lampooned Haughey and his side kick PJ Mara. Every week Haughey came across as an arrogant II Duce with aristocratic pretensions while Mara grovelled around massaging his ego.

The show was so popular that the Fianna Fail hacks went wild. *Scrap Saturday* was the only radio show to have its own solicitor to prevent "libel".

Eventually Fianna Fail put on so much that RTE dropped the programme when it was at the height of its popularity.

It was not the first time that RTE had removed a piece of comedy. A decade before *Hall's Pictorial Weekly* was forced to tone down its script after they presented the Fine Gael Taoiseach Liam Cosgrave as a raving Blueshirt.

Dermot Morgan did not take the censorship lying down. He wrote to the press to expose the denial of free speech and to show that there were some in the establishment who took comedy very seriously.

His protests put him on the RTE blacklist. Morgan suddenly found that many important avenues for work dried up and he was forced to look for contracts on British television.

Dermot Morgan was a wonderful comic because he poked fun at the rich and powerful. In the past, there was a style of comedy that picked up on accents or made stupid and silly jokes about "the mother in law".

It was fun—with a nasty undercurrent—drawing on the sexist and racist nonsense that pervades society.

Although he probably would not identify himself as an "alternative" comedian, Morgan helped to change all this.

Before he arrived on the scene, RTE and the Irish middle class would regularly fall into hoots of laughter at the mere sound of a Northside Dublin working class accent.

It is believed that some of this set even went to Sean O'Casey's productions in the Abbey just to get the thrill of hearing this accent.

Morgan transformed the target of comic humour. For the first time the pretentious, name-dropping habits of the Dublin 4 species was mimicked.

The stupid attempts by priests to ingratiate themselves with the "modern" ideas of youth became an endless source of mirth in *Father Ted*.

Morgan never made any secret of his contempt for the establishment.

He said, "I wanted to do stuff that was satirical and taking on the establishment and bring a laugh and a poke and a slag at them."

"I think that out of stupidity and doggedness, or dogged stupidity, or stupid, stupid doggedness, I managed to stay on track."

After graduating from UCD, Morgan began his career as a comic by going to working class clubs.

He said, "I went to trade union clubs, all sort of places to get a start. They were crap and so was I to be honest with you! I was trying to find my metier."

When the Anti-Nazi League was set up in Ireland, Dermot Morgan was one of the first to sponsor it.

Dermot Morgan was not a socialist—he was probably sceptical of the ardent efforts of those of us who think that better society is possible.

But his fine comic genius pierced through all the pretensions and arrogance of an establishment that pretends to spring from the "plain people of Ireland".

They shifted nervously on their burns while Morgan took apart the once powerful church that made the lives of many a misery.

Father Ted symbolised everything about a new Ireland that was forged by the thousands who demonstrated on the streets against the attempt to detain the 14 year old X case in Ireland rather than let her have an abortion in Britain.

RTE have been forced to pay a special tribute to a comedian they tried to blacklist. But you can almost hear them grit their teeth as they run a whole series of "good image" programmed on priests to "balance up" for *Father Ted*.

But *Ballykissangel* or *Nothing Sacred* will never be a patch on *Father Ted*. The rot has set in too deep.

by KIERAN ALLEN

film

The revenge of Francie Brady

by DAVE
MCDONAGH

THE BUTCHER BOY is set in a town in Co Monaghan in the early 1960s, a world familiar to Patrick McCabe who wrote the novel on which Neil Jordan's film is based.

The film shows the way in which class divisions are reproduced in a small town.

Gossip

This is achieved through a hilarious portrayal of snobbery and idle gossip.

The story centres on the feud between young Francie Brady and his arch enemy, Mrs Nugent.

The Nugents have recently returned from England, full of airs and graces. Mr Nugent has a "high up job".

By day, Francie puts on a show of cheery bravado.



Francie Brady—a cheerful facade hides despair

But at night he peers into the Nugents' cosy living room and wishes his family could live up to the perfect image he

sees there.

Francie's family are poor and live in slum housing.

When Mrs Nugent re-

fers to the Bradys as "no better than pigs", this sets Francie on a campaign of retribution.

When he carries out

his first act of revenge against Mrs Nugent he is sent to an Industrial School.

Francie calls it the "school for pigs"—an apt description for places which were used to discipline working class boys and brand them as failures.

Francie tries to go straight so that he can get the "Francie Brady not a bad bastard anymore diploma", and return home.

Molested

He volunteers to be an altar boy even though it means being molested by the priest.

Just like Father Brendan Smyth in real life, the priest is quietly spirited away.

Francie is released in case he might spill the beans.

Despite his trauma, Francie retains his mocking cheerfulness.

But this is a cover for the deep despair and insanity he experiences as his friends desert him and his life falls apart.

The main strength of both the film and the book is their portrayal of somebody cracking up under the pressures of society.

The Butcher Boy is a funny film with a serious message.

It shows how a cry for help can be ignored by the powers that be, often with tragic consequences.

book

Connolly in print

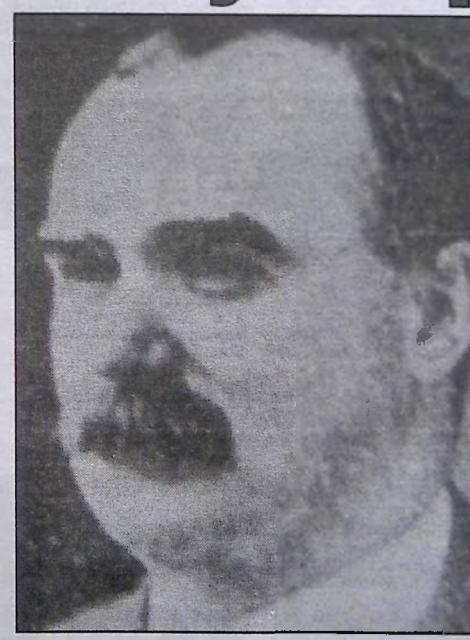
JAMES Connolly's writings are hard to come by.

This makes it all the more welcome that Pluto Press has published two important collections of his writings, including his *Lost Writings*.

Connolly was a Marxist. His tiny Irish Socialist Republican Party was affiliated to the Marxist Second International. He advocated socialist revolution all his life.

In 1914, for example, Connolly wrote that war "is a relic of barbarism only possible because we are governed by a ruling class with barbaric ideas... the working class of all countries cannot hope to escape the horrors of war until in all countries the barbarous ruling class is thrown from power".

These ideas were an embarrassment for the Irish establishment. They wanted to honour Connolly as one of the "men of 1916" - but they wanted to hide his revolutionary socialism. This is the main reason why his full writings have never been made available.



Connolly's own union, the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, took part in the cover-up. Between 1948 and 1951, they sponsored the publication of three volumes of Connolly's writings, edited by Desmond Ryan. But the collection was

highly selective.

At the time the ITGWU was engaged in an anti-communist witchhunt where they denounced the Labour Party for giving membership to that dangerous Red, Jim Larkin. The union was co-op-

erating with Fianna Fail in an attempt to drive British-based unions from Ireland.

So articles where Connolly praised the solidarity shown by the rank and file of the British working class during the 1913 lock-out and attacked the growing union bureaucracy were left out.

Some of Connolly's writings were also published by the tiny Communist Party. But their own particular perspective meant they left out articles where Connolly attacked a strategy based on a "union of classes" to win national independence.

The great Marxist was simply too subversive for those who wanted to smother him in a green flag.

Connolly's *Lost Writings* gives socialists a chance to read articles that were long suppressed.

■ *James Connolly Selected Writings* Pluto Press, James Connolly *The Lost Writings* Pluto Press.

—KIERAN ALLEN



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.

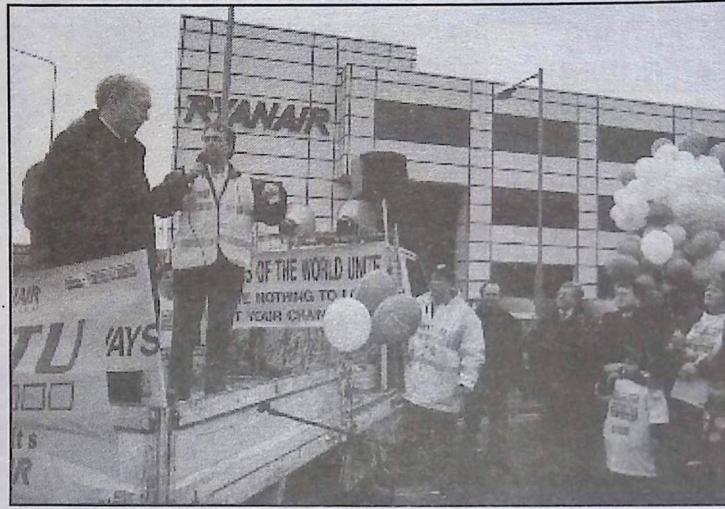
We support the leaders when they fight but oppose them when they betray workers. We stand for independent rank and file action.

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

2,000 workers march in support of strike



OVER TWO thousand people came out in support of the Ryanair workers at Dublin Airport at the end of February in one of the biggest trade union rallies seen in Dublin in a long time.

The crowd led by the Ryanair workers walked in the wind and rain and finally gathered outside the Ryanair building, with its massive hoarding which boasts the brazen and insulting claim: "Unbeatable People 97% Working Normally."

The scabs at Ryanair were psyched up for the rally, still in the building at 6.30pm, Ryanair had obviously provided them with drink and coincidentally megaphones so that they could shout down at the gathering crowds.

United

A wave of anger swept the crowd and the united voices of 2,000 people shouted them down.

"We have begun a revolt" Des Geraghty, the SIPTU Vice President told the crowd, "Jim Larkin left some unfinished business behind."

But while Geraghty tried to relate to the anger of those present, there were many more militant voices among the rank and file.

The only thing that will work is to hit the point of production and go to jail if you have to. An all out stoppage is what they need, look at Cramptons and IUM. They got a great result", claimed a member of BATU, the building union.

According to a Dublin Corporation worker: "The whole transport system should shut down—the ports everything."

An Aer Lingus worker said there was support for a stop-

page in the airport. The march was attended by a number of delegation from Belgium and France. "It's not just a national issue it's global", a Belgian worker from one of the biggest transport unions Setca-BBTM said. He has recently witnessed major strikes such as the Renault strike in his own country.

The French worker from Air France agreed with this: "Low cost air companies affect all European workers, European airways should come out on strike. This is only the beginning."

A worker from The Three Lakes Hotel in Killarney who was on strike for 164 days not so long ago was really annoyed with the slowness of the strike:

"Jimmy Somers the President of SIPTU is pissing around, he needs to do something serious, an all out strike if necessary. These guys could be out of work and forgotten about in a few months and that is why I am supporting Carolann Duggan in the elections for General Secretary of SIPTU."

According to a Dublin Corporation worker: "The whole transport system should shut down—the ports everything."

An Aer Lingus worker said there was support for a stop-

Ryanair workers speak out

RYANAIR workers have had to put up with a campaign of intimidation ever since the strike. But now some of them are speaking out about the real conditions there.

"We're at the beck and call of the employers all the time. On Christmas Eve we were scheduled to finish early at 10.00pm but because of the storms we had to wait back till 12.30am. Ryanair boasts that they turn around 2 planes in 50 minutes, as opposed to one plane for Aer Lingus in the same time, but it is the baggage handlers who suffer most in this schedule. It means you have to carry over 2 tonnes of weight per shift."

"The baggage handlers are the hardest workers in the airport and Ryanair themselves have publicly admitted this. If the company gets away with this they'll have succeeded in rewriting the statute books and the system will have let us down."

A number of the workers now want to see the action stepped up. One of them told *Socialist Worker*: "The union is playing a tactical strategy but it's been a slow train coming and now we need an all-out stoppage as soon as possible."

At the end of the rally SIPTU announced that ballot arrangements have been made for an escalation of industrial action at the airport. It should be the start of putting some real muscle into this fight.

How to win

THE STAKES are high in Ryanair. Already employers in the retail sector are holding back on union recognition to see what happens.

So far the SIPTU leadership have mounted an effective publicity war. They have also organised petitions and solidarity collections to support the strikes. But the core of their strategy is to mount a consumer boycott and to get politicians to put pressure on Ryanair.

Account

Every trade unionist should boycott Ryanair. The politicians who helped to promote the company with state subsidies should also be made to account for themselves.

But consumer boycotts have not proved an effective weapon in the past.

There was a consumer boycott during the Pat the Baker dispute on union recognition. But because it was not supported by an effective policy of blacking, it failed.

Ryanair have set out to undermine a boycott by slashing fares to London. They are also expanding

their operations beyond Ireland by opening new routes.

Faced with this, SIPTU needs to shift its tactics quickly. It has to bring its full industrial muscle to bear on this company.

A picket line on the Ryanair headquarters in Dublin airport and their office in Park House could more seriously disrupt supplies to Ryanair. It would gain immediate solidarity from postal workers who bring orders for tickets or trucks carrying fuel.

Similarly if SIPTU really want to pressurise the politicians, a one day stoppage which shut down Dublin airport could drive the message home in the most effective fashion.

For the past few years, the leaders of SIPTU have argued that they need to move away from old style trade union methods. But the recent victory on union recognition by BATU at the IJM plant in Monaghan was won by 'old fashioned' methods like picketing and blacking.

If SIPTU are going to win in Ryanair, it is going to have to re-learn some old trade union methods.

News from the SWP

OVER ONE hundred students attended a two day conference on Students for Socialism.

It was one of the biggest in recent years and reflects the growing interest in left wing ideas in the colleges.

The continuing scandals about tax evasion and corruption have disillusioned many with establishment politics.

A week before the two by-elections in Limerick and Dublin North occurred, a staggering 40% of people said the were undecided.

Although the Labour Party may pick up on some of the discontent it is vital

that a revolutionary alternative is not built to them.

A recent National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party has now set three main targets:

First, there has to be a systematic recruitment campaign with each branch recruiting five people by the end of March.

Second, every member of

SWP should be selling papers to a regular network in their local area and workplace.

Third, the growing radicalisation calls for a sharp and clear understanding of Marxist politics.

Every branch should have a well stocked bookstall and encourage members to read socialist literature.

SWP branch meetings

BELFAST CENTRAL
Meets every Thurs 8pm, Garrick Bar, Chichester Street.

BELFAST SOUTH
Meets every Tues at 8.30pm, Renshaws, 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 8pm in Curran's Hotel, Eyre Square

MAYNOOTH
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in Class Hall D Arts Maynooth college

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

COLERAINE; LURGAN; CAWAN; 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

DUBLIN NORTH-WEST
Meets every Tues at 8.30pm in The Snug, Dorset St.

DUBLIN ARTANE/COOLOCK
Meets every Tues at 8.30pm Artna/Beaumont Recreation Centre opp Artna 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 Mon 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

JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

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

Name

Address.....

Phone.....

Sean Fox
Socialist Worker notes with regret the recent death of Sean Fox. Sean had been a supporter of the party for many years. Although he had not been active for some time he threw himself whole heartedly into our election campaign in Dublin North Central last summer. His biggest regret was that he could not cast his vote as he had to go into hospital the day of the election. We want to express our sympathy to his partner and family.

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



news & reports— politics; the unions

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

ATGWU

Vote Jimmy Kelly

THE ELECTION for executive of the ATGWU is being re-run after a manoeuvre to stop the Waterford Glass convenor Jimmy Kelly taking his seat.

Jimmy Kelly won the first ballot but was then denied victory after a claim that there were 'irregularities' in the ballot.

He stood on a strong left wing ticket and attacked the inaction of the union in recent years. He also made known his membership of the Socialist Workers Party.

A story appeared in Murdoch's Sunday Times accusing the Waterford Glass workers of ballot rigging. But shop stewards at the plant have produced a leaflet disputing these smears.

In the re-run election, Jimmy Kelly is again raising the issue of the need for the ATGWU to match its occasional left wing rhetoric with some real action that brings gains to members.

Shorts

WORKERS at Short's are balloting for industrial action to resist redundancies.

The dispute springs from plans by Short's parent company Bombardier to run down the design department.

Workers insist that without a design department Short's will have no future in Belfast.

One Short's worker told Socialist Worker:

"Bombardier's order books are full. They are taking on staff in Canada. So why do they want redundancies here? Short's have not been willing to negotiate properly. We have to assume that it is an attempt to break the workforce."

All the indications are that Short's workers are getting ready for a fight. When it comes, they should make sure they hit the company hard.

Craft ballot

CRAFT workers in local authorities and health boards are balloting on a Labour Court pay recommendation.

Unions representing the 4,000 workers had claimed £27.69 due from July last year under an analogue agreement procedure.

Employers had refused to accept the unions figures and a ballot held in November gave 80 percent for strike action.

This was held up while the claim went to the Labour Court who recommended an increase of £18.87 including money due under local bargaining. The Labour Court insisted the increase be phased in and that workers offer flexibility in return.

Union activists need to campaign for the largest possible No vote and the implementation of the overwhelming strike ballot to fight for the full claim backdated to July 1997.

Cramptons

Action forces concessions

BUILDING contractors at Cramptons appeared ready to offer major concessions in a long running dispute with bricklayers.

But Cramptons management were still holding out on key demands as Socialist Worker went to press.

After months of defying the Industrial Relations Act and picketing various Cramptons sites the company was letting it be known it was ready to offer a deal in which:

■ All 16 sacked workers are to be re-instated;

■ Legal action against the BATU union is to be dropped and a substantial contribution to the union's legal costs to be paid by Cramptons.

One union activist told So-

cialist Worker: "Stopping production was decisive. The company could live with bad publicity and getting a dirty name in a dirty industry. But what really hit them was that their production was hit."

"This is a major breach in the Industrial Relations Act. Three hundred building workers defied High Court injunctions forbidding us from picketing. We were prepared to go to jail."

"The employers knew that and so did the government — the Industrial Relations Act can be beaten if workers are prepared to defy it in sufficient numbers."

But one of the key objectives of the strike was to eliminate sub-contracting of bricklayers

and have all bricklayers directly employed by Cramptons under the PAYE system.

Cramptons was set to concede direct employment on some of its sites and new sites opening up. But it has refused to remove sub-contractors from its sites in Dublin City University and Clonskeagh until the contracts expire in up to six months time.

Unpopular

This is extremely unpopular with bricklayers who were meeting to decide their attitude to Cramptons' position.

One union activist told Socialist Worker: "It's up to Cramptons to pay off the sub-contractors. We want to get rid

of sub-contracting. We don't want to return and have to work with those who scabbed while unionised bricklayers have not got their jobs back."

Another bricklayer pointed out: "One of the sub-contractors, Martin Young, was recently brought into Crampton's Clonskeagh site. He is the darling of the employers' federa-

tion with a record of anti-union activities in McNamara's sites.

"Cramptons has over £70 million worth of work on at the moment. David Crampton boasts he hardly employs anyone. He says Cramptons is management and consultancy only — all the work is sub-contracted.

"He claims he can run the

Arson attack on BATU HQ

THE OFFICES of the Building and Allied Trades Union were firebombed last month.

At 10.30pm on Sunday 22 February the rear windows were broken and petrol poured through. This was lit by a burning rag.

The rear window is made of Weatherglaze which cannot easily be broken. It appears to have been expertly broken by someone familiar with the techniques used in the construction industry.

This came as members of BATU were fighting

a vicious system of sub-contracting on Cramptons sites (see separate report).

One union activist told Socialist Worker: "The gardai told us this was a serious attempt at arson. The fire did not spread because of lack of air but smoke damage and scorching caused thousands of pounds worth of damage to computers and office equipment. It's more than a coincidence that bricklayers were involved in fighting sub-contracting at that time."

Showerings Victory

AN UNOFFICIAL STRIKE lasting two days scored a solid victory at Showerings factory in Clonmel.

The strike began after the company tried to speed up the lines. When four workers refused to comply, they were instantly suspended.

Unofficial pickets were immediately placed on the factory. All production in Showerings and the neighbouring plant Grants, which is part of the same group, was stopped.

Two days later, management caved in and the four workers were reinstated with no blemish on their records.

Workers also returned to their normal work practices and management agreed to withdraw the speedup until an industrial engineer carried out a study.

Reject Telecom deal

WORKERS in Telecom Eireann could soon be asked to vote on an Employee Share Option Plan (ESOP).

Under the deal the workforce would have shares in the company, which would be administered by the unions.

But the deal will be based on workers accepting a 100 page Transformation Document. This will mean huge attacks on conditions, including longer hours, an undermining of overtime rates and increased flexibility.

Workers may also have to pay a 5.3 percent pension contribution over 15 years — this is in effect a 5.3 percent pay cut.

The union leaders have negotiated the deal over the heads of even the shop stewards.



GET ORGANISED

THE election for General Secretary of SIPTU takes place between 9 March and 28 March.

If you want to invite Carolann Duggan to speak in your workplace or if you want her literature, contact her on: 051-70 426 or 086-824 2319.

She is openly campaigning as a member of the Socialist Workers Party.

If elected she will only take the average industrial wage and give the rest of her salary to the union strike fund.

Establishment fears

THE SIPTU establishment are represented in the election for General Secretary by Brendan Hayes and John McDonnell.

Both belong to the old Labour Party tradition which has held sway in the union for years. Both are advocates of partnership with the employers.

Both are playing the regional ticket to get elected. Hayes is Secretary of the Dublin Public Sector Region and McDonnell is Regional

Secretary for the South West. Their election literature concentrates heavily on their administrative plans for the union.

Their supporters sometimes claim that Carolann Duggan does not have the 'experience for the job'.

Carolann rejects this argument:

"The post of General Secretary of SIPTU should not be seen as a career reward for a life spent at committee meetings."

"It should not be the automatic preserve of full time officials."

"We should not tolerate

Conference

Carolann wants a special conference of SIPTU to discuss withdrawing from Partnership 2000:

"All partnership has brought us a shift in wealth to a rich minority. The pay deals of the past decade followed the line that workers had to tighten their belts to get the economy back in shape."

"Well now the Celtic Tiger is booming and we are still being told to accept wage restraint while the rich get even more tax cuts. We should push for big wage rises and tell the boss class it's payback time for workers."

Carolann stands for a re-

lationship with the South West.

Their election literature concentrates heavily on their administrative plans for the union.

Their supporters sometimes claim that Carolann Duggan does not have the 'experience for the job'.

Carolann rejects this argument:

"The post of General Secretary of SIPTU should not be seen as a career reward for a life spent at committee meetings."

"It should not be the automatic preserve of full time officials."

"We should not tolerate

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p

Inside:

The Marxist tradition and women's liberation—Page 5

Blair and Clinton shaken by Gulf protests
—PAGE 6/7

Solidarity price £1

Why talks will not end sectarianism

"NORTHERN Ireland is on course for a settlement in weeks," claims Mo Mowlam, the Secretary of State.

She plans to hold a referendum in mid-May.

Most people would love to see a settlement that eradicated sectarianism and violence.

The violence of the past two decades has been concentrated in working class areas and any return to it would only bring untold suffering and sectarian carnage.

This is why socialists op-

posed the recent bomb in Portadown. The attack on this largely Protestant town was the work of those who want to manipulate and develop sectarian tensions. It could help the thugs of the LVF.

But a genuine peace will not emerge from the current multi-party talks which are supposed to establish a balance between the aspirations of unionist and nationalist politicians.

This is because they ignore the fact that the root cause of sectarianism is the way the unionist establishment always treated Catho-

lics as second class citizens. They did this to mask and smother the class divisions within the Protestant "community" itself.

Bigotry

Over the last few months, Mo Mowlam has consistently refused to face up to the bigotry of David Trimble. Her recent appointments to the parades commission confirm this.

One of them, Glen Barr, boasts that he has been given "100 percent support" from loyalist paramilitaries who

have engaged in a campaign of random killings. Another commission member is the Apprentice Boy Tommy Cheevers who refused to meet resident groups in the Ormeau Road.

By bowing to unionist demands, Mowlam is only encouraging those who do not want to "give an inch".

If Labour had used their huge majority in parliament to stand up to the bigots who backed the Tories, they would have created better conditions for peace. They didn't because they have a limited view about what a final settlement means

The need for a socialist alternative

GENUINE peace cannot be forged by right wing politicians who have made a career of whipping up sectarian bigotry.

It has to be built from below through the common struggles of working people.

But such unity can never happen automatically.

Ghettoise

Almost every institution in Northern Ireland works to divide and ghettoise us.

Socialist politics are the key to asserting the common class interest of Catholic and Protestant workers.

Socialists argue that workers have far more in common with each other than with millionaires like George Quigley or Martin Naughton.

Political unity between workers has to be forged by standing up to the dominant traditions.

This means outright opposition to loyalist ideas which promote monarchy and attitudes of superiority.

It also means a full scale challenge to the republican myth that all Catholics must stand together against "privileged" Protestants.

Socialists see nothing privileged in the poverty of the Shankill Road area.

Modernising sectarianism

EVEN BEFORE intensive negotiations begin, everyone knows the plans of the British and Irish government for a settlement.

There will be a return to some sort of assembly in Northern Ireland with power sharing between nationalist and unionist politicians.

There will also be

North-South bodies.

None of this will bring any real change to working people. Instead the old divisions between Catholic and Protestant will be maintained.

Compete

Sectarianism will be modernised so that the "two communities" are encouraged to compete economically rather than militarily.

Even if such a settlement held, it would be highly unstable. Politics would continue to be institutionalised along sectarian lines.

Bigots would always find some reason why "their side" was losing out in order to mask the growing class divisions in Northern Ireland.

The only groups who

could make gains from these limited changes are the wealthy on both sides of the Irish border.

Key businessmen like Ulster Bank chairman George Quigley already talk of "an island economy".

They know that modernised forms of sectarianism will guarantee them low wages and weak unions.