

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p

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Solidarity price £1

THE RICH ARE THE REAL SPONGERS

STOP

HARNEY'S

ATTACKS

ON THE

UNEMPLOYED



LAST YEAR Mary Harney attacked single parents. This year her target is the unemployed.

Addressing a conference of small businessmen, Harney said that anyone under 25 would be cut off social welfare after six months if they refused any job they were offered.

Those aged over 25 had a year before they faced the same piece of blackmail.

The Small Businesses Association was delighted with Harney's announcement. The employers organisation IBEC called it "refreshing and realistic". No wonder.

The bosses have consistently opposed the idea

of a minimum wage. Some of them now pay their workers puny wages of £2.50 an hour.

Harney's announcement amounts to a form of industrial conscription. She will be forcing the unemployed to take poorly paid jobs in order to boost the profits of employers who won't pay a decent wage.

Workers will receive no protection from a minimum wage because it is not due to be introduced for another two years. And even then, the proposal for a minimum wage has not been officially adopted as government policy.

There can be no social partnership with this rotten government which protects rich tax dodgers. We should organise to throw them out of office.

DROP THE CHARGES AGAINST BELMONDO

BELMONDO Wante, a Congolese man is being harassed by the Gardai in Crumlin in Dublin.

On Thursday 18 June, Belmondo was in court, where he was charged with assaulting a Garda and breach of the peace.

The charges arose out of an incident on 1 May, when eight Gardai came to Belmondo's house at

3.30 am with a warrant for a different man.

He was racially and physically abused and then brought to Sundrive Road Garda Station where he was held for 12 hours.

Mistake

The original charge was dropped but when the Gardai discovered their mistake they then cooked up the assault charge to

cover themselves.

Since this incident the Gardai have subjected Belmondo to constant racial harassment.

On the 3 June they came with another search warrant. On 10 June, Belmondo and his brother in law were coming out of the dentists and they were stopped by the Gardai again and asked for their identity papers.

Despite having their

identification they were kept at Crumlin Garda Station.

Thirty people picketed the court during Belmondo's first trial but the case was deferred.

The case will be before the courts again on 9 July and another picket has been organised:

■Protest at Court 44, in the Bridewell, (behind the Four Courts) at 10 am, July 9th

Jail for helping asylum seekers

JUSTICE Minister John O'Donoghue has published a new Bill proposing that anyone who facilitates the illegal entry into the State of immigrants could face 10 years in jail and an unlimited fine.

O'Donoghue claims he is targeting "traffickers" who smuggle refugees in containers.

But if refugees were allowed free entry here, the "traffickers" would be out of business.

Prison

The new bill also says that employers who take on refugees or asylum seekers without a work permit will face a maximum of five years in prison and a fine of up to £50,000.

The Department of

Justice is also restricting visas to Chinese students wishing to study in Ireland.

If a student already in Ireland wished to extend a visa, the Department now requires them to go home and reapply, where originally they could get visas renewed in Dublin.

Imagine the outrage if white American students were treated in this way?

THE PARTY OF LAW AND ORDER?

Fianna Fail urge rich to dodge tax

FIANNA Fail are in trouble. They were elected on a zero tolerance platform but since they came to office they have been exposed as a party who have encouraged tax dodging by the rich.

Ahern hides backers

BERTIE Ahern lied about the political donations he received last year.

Ahern declared only £3,000 but did not disclose that he has the use of a £100,000 house called St Luke's in his Dublin Central constituency.

St Luke's is owned by five named trustees on behalf of Fianna Fail.

Expenses come from an annual £170 a head dinner organised by the O'Donovan Rossa branch of Fianna Fail.

Among Ahern's financial backers are:

■ **Jim Lacey:** the former head of National Irish Banks who instructed his managers to "load" the interest payments of his customers. Lacey was head of Forum 2000, the fund-raising wing of FF and was also involved in raising funds for Ahern's own constituency.

■ **John Finnegan** has made several donations to Ahern's constituency organisation. He also had £2 million invested in the Ansbacher account and was a close associate of Charles Haughey.

Tax rates on the privileged elite in Ireland are already very low.

But their greed means they do not want to pay a penny to provide schools or hospitals.

Top of the list of the Fianna Fail tax dodgers this month is Beverly Cooper Flynn.

Several wealthy individuals recently told RTE that Mayo TD Cooper-Flynn helped them to avoid tax when she was working for National Irish Bank.

One retired farmer said Cooper-Flynn had contacted him to say, "I believe you have some money that you are not using".

She told the farmer to invest in offshore bonds with NIB.

Declare

The man wanted to declare his money under the tax amnesty but Cooper-Flynn discouraged him, saying,

"There's no point, we'll keep this. Why give the government 15 per cent?"

Cooper-Flynn denies the allegations and is trying to appear as if she was an "ordinary employee" of NIB.

But the reality is that she was an "investment advisor" who set out to con the Revenue Commissioners.

One of the biggest investors in NIB's offshore tax scams run by Cooper Flynn was Anthony Hederman, a former Supreme Court judge.

He invested over £100,000 in the scheme in the early 1990s.

Hederman was the Fianna Fail party treasurer for many years when they were getting funds from millionaires like Tony O'Reilly.

Favours

His job was to meet the big business backers who came to the party for favours.

Hederman represented Haughey in the 1970 arms trial and Haughey appointed him to the Supreme Court in 1981.

But Hederman need not worry too much about being fingered by the investigation into NIB.

One of the investigators is John Blayney SC who, like Hederman, is also a former Supreme Court judge.



Beverly Cooper Flynn.

Firms pick up the tab

IT HAS now emerged that Irish Printers Ltd issued a £30,000 invoice to Rennicks, the company that gave a £30,000 donation to Ray Burke.

Irish Printers is run by former Fianna Fail fund-raiser Paul Kavanagh.

They invoiced Rennicks for services given to Fianna Fail under a scam known as "pick-me-ups".

This is a scheme where private firms pick up the tab for party expenses.

The company can hide their donations to political parties by paying the party's bills directly.

The payment can then be put down as "business expenses" so that the company's profits appear artificially lower and they can avoid VAT and corporation tax.

Refugees demand right to work

REFUGEE groups have launched a campaign to demand the right to work for asylum seekers.

But Justice Minister John O'Donoghue has rejected this demand. He is obviously afraid that by working they become part of the wider society and this will undermine racist suspicions.

If asylum seekers work they might also join unions and gain solidarity

from Irish workers in resisting deportation.

By forcing asylum seekers to remain on the dole, racist politicians can continue to accuse them of "sponging" off the state.

But research shows that refugees are highly skilled and highly motivated to work.

One study has shown that 79 per cent are educated to third level and 58 per cent are professional or skilled workers.

Sutherland's gold

PETER Sutherland, former Attorney General, is set to make a killing when his company Goldman Sachs is floated on the stock exchange later this year.

Goldman is one of the elite banks, which deals with top businesses and governments

around the globe.

Several of its leading partners are against the flotation, saying it will lead to "reckless risk-taking" that could undermine the company.

But Sutherland only "risks" getting even richer than he is at present as he stands to gain up to \$200 million from the flotation.

PLC gains but more to be won

THE Department of Education has at last ended its discrimination against PLC students by announcing that maintenance grants will be paid to them.

However the government has refused to increase the number of places on offer this year even though there has been a huge increase in demand for places.

In addition, the government has announced a pathetic increase of a mere 2 per cent in already highly insufficient maintenance grants.

The same week as this increase was announced, USI's National Poverty Survey of Third Level colleges found that 59 percent of students have to take part-time jobs to help pay their way through college.

USI president Colman Byrne said "this is an outrageous situation and one which is an insult to students".

However USI— particularly under Byrne— has done nothing to campaign for increases in grants or to stop the government's attempt to reintroduce fees through the back door.

what we think

HARNEY'S WAR ON WELFARE

MARY Harney is launching a war on social welfare.

SIPTU, the largest union in the country has denounced her proposals to cut off welfare for under 25s after 6 months as "a threatening and destructive harassment of the unemployed."

Harney tried to put a spin on her proposals, claiming 'we're not threatening anyone'. But she has already taken measures to remove 40,000 people from the live register in the next few months. They include:

- The appointment of nearly 100 FAS staff to interview social welfare recipients and inform them of "their new obligations".

- Targets to reduce social welfare spending. Half a million people are to have their claims reviewed this year and a £180 million target of "savings" has been set.

All of this is an attempt to divert anger from the real spongers in Irish society. For the last year Harney sat in a government that has been implicated in corruption and tax dodging.

One Fianna Fail TD, Beverley Cooper Flynn, who worked for the National Irish Bank, openly advised clients not to even pay the 15% reduced tax granted in the tax amnesty.

But Harney has not argued for extra staff in the Revenue Commissioners to trawl through company accounts.

She has set no targets on raising extra revenue from the rich tax dodgers who used offshore accounts.

Instead she has responded

to their calls for even more tax breaks. By launching her war on welfare, Harney is hoping to create space to cut tax on company profits to a mere 12% — the lowest in Europe.

Harney has justifying her actions by claiming that the process of attacking the unemployed was begun by the Democratic Left leader, Proinsias de Rossa. But that only shows the damage which fake left wing parties do in government.

Resist

All workers need to actively resist Harney's plans. If the unemployed are conscripted to work for peanuts, this will undermine the wages of everybody.

Over the recent period the government has insisted on the employment of "yellow pack" labour in areas as diverse as the civil service, Dublin bus, local authorities and the health service.

Tragically the union leaders who advocated social partnership have supported the establishment of these grades which pay less for the same work performed by older workers.

It Harney gets her way the first conscripts from the unemployed will be sent to these jobs. That is unless we call a halt now.

Fighting Privatisation: Take some Greek lessons



■ Governor Haris Stamatopoulos, governor of the state owned bank loses his shirt with the help of bank workers

THE governments on both sides of the border have embarked on a policy of privatisation.

The Blair government wants to cut the large public sector in the Northern economy and is about to privatise Belfast docks. The Fianna Fail/SDLP government want to start with TEAM and then privatise Aer Lingus, Telecom and sections of the bus service.

Union leaders often argue that nothing can be done about this policy. They claim that workers have to comply with EU directives and accept that privatisation as inevitable.

But Greek workers have not accepted this defeatism. Every attempt to privatise a state company has been met with fierce resistance.

When the Greek state tried to sell off the Ionian bank, the fourth largest in the country, bank workers embarked on a militant six week long strike. The director of the bank was even forced to flee in terror from a company meeting in his underwear after his clothing was torn off by strikers.

Dockers have closed the harbours in Piraeus and Salonika to prevent their privatisation. This summer there will be major strikes on the Greek airline, Olympic Airways, as workers resist cost-cutting measures.

"This action will go on until the government understand that Greeks can no longer go along with economic austerity," said Christos Polyzopoulos, the leaders of the country's largest union.

The next time the Irish union leaders cry into their beer and tell us 'there is no alternative', tell them to learn Greek!

TRIMBLE'S VISION THING

AFTER the Assembly elections David Trimble will become the First Minister of the North.

He has promised to use the new Assembly to produce a 'new beginning' for Northern Ireland.

Trimble has formed a small coterie of researchers and former left wingers like Paul Bew around him in an attempt to modernise Unionism. But the reality is that Trimble can only survive by playing the old sectarian games.

He still refuses to talk to his own constituents in Garvaghy Road, claiming they are using the threat of force to get their way. But Trimble never had any problem meeting the late Billy Wright while he led the LVF thugs.

Arguing

After the election he will spend months arguing about whether Sinn Fein can join the Executive before they de-commission weapons.

Although he may claim to be a 'moderniser', Trimble is a Tory dinosaur who can only maintain his electoral base by claiming that rights for nationalist workers are a threat to Protestants.

Once he takes up office,

Trimble will continue to use sectarianism to press through economic policies which the rich.

Which makes you wonder how Gerry Adams can claim to represent 'the people of no property' all over Ireland — while he hopes to have David Trimble as in partner in a Northern Ireland cabinet.

Socialist Worker £10,000 appeal

Over the last two weeks the government has made it clear that they intend to privatise the semi-state companies, with drastic consequences for workers.

TEAM workers are facing enormous pressure to give up their entitlements. Bus workers are under threat with the new viability plan and Telecom workers are being blackmailed into a flawed share ownership plan.

Socialist Worker has produced and distributed thousands of leaflets explaining the issues and encouraging workers to make a stand. In the North our Charter for workers rights is an antidote to the sectarian electoral politics.

Our appeal is to raise money so we can continue to support workers in struggle and expose the bosses agenda. This week we reached £6,140.

Please send cheques or postal orders to Socialist Worker PO Box 354, Tomb St. Belfast or PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

£10,000

£9,000

£8,000

£7,000

£6,000

£5,000

£4,000

£3,000

£2,000

£1,000





news of the world

General Motors

9,200 workers humble biggest multinational

"I THINK about how things will be when I'm dead. The guys in the boardroom don't. I'm worried about our children's jobs and the towns around here. They just care about bonuses."

Flint is GM's home town

GM employed over 80,000 workers in Flint in the 1980s. That has already been cut to less than 30,000.

GM's jobs massacre was featured in Michael Moore's film, *Roger and Me*. GM says the Buick City plant in Flint will close by 1999. Workers are worried other plants could also go.

The strike began at the Flint Metal Center. Workers there were promised investment to secure their future, but the investment has not materialised.

Management says there will be no more investment until the union agrees to changes in working practices.

As jobs are slashed, the remaining workers have to work harder and longer.

"In December I was producing 300 parts," says a worker. "Now I have to make 1,200. They've quadrupled my work in five months and now they say they want to quadruple it again."

Powerful

People are worried about their jobs but they know it is time to make a stand.

The strikers are members of the United Auto Workers union, one of the most powerful unions in the US.

For years the UAW's leaders pushed the argument that workers have to cooperate with management and accept job losses in order to make their plants

But, like here, that has not stopped jobs being axed.

Now UAW leaders are feeling the pressure to act.

These are the words of one of the 9,200 striking workers at General Motors in the United States.

The workers are now into over three weeks on strike and they are demonstrating their tremendous power.

Their action has so far led to over 100,000 other GM workers being laid off.

Two GM plants in Flint, Michigan, are striking.

One of them makes sparkplugs and air filters used in virtually every GM vehicle.

That means all GM's 220,000 North American workers could be laid off soon.

The action is costing GM around \$65 million a day and is also hitting firms that supply parts to the company.

Workers

American Axle, for example, one of Detroit's biggest car parts manufacturers, has closed its Detroit plant and laid off 1,000 of its workers in New York.

Other parts suppliers, which have built plants close to GM's assembly lines in order to meet "just in time" production requirements, are also being hit.

Some of these parts plants, like American Axle, were once owned by GM.

GM bosses sold them off in the belief that this would be cheaper, more efficient and less vulnerable to strike action.

The issue at the heart of the GM strike is job security. GM is the single biggest industrial corporation in the world and is making record profits.

Yet still it wants to slash jobs in order to jack up productivity to try to outcompete its rivals.

"Greed, greed. That's all we get from GM," one striker told *Socialist Worker's* sister paper in the US.

"We've given them everything they wanted for years, and they said they would give us work," says another.

"Now they say they want us to give back more in order for them to guarantee us what they already guaranteed us."

"We've had the power to shut down GM for years," says a third striker. "I'm glad we're finally doing it."



The UAW members at Flint walking off the job at GM's Flint Metal Center

Kosovo

Is there a solution?

THE CRISIS in Kosovo threatens yet another bloody war in former Yugoslavia.

Western leaders say they are determined to prevent Kosovo becoming "another Bosnia".

Yet their policies have made such an escalation of violence in Kosovo more likely.

Kosovo is officially part of the Serbian state, but only 10 percent of its population of two million people are Serb. Almost all the remaining 90 percent are Albanian.

In the late 1980s Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic used the Serb minority in Kosovo to whip up Serbian nationalism.

He, along with other Yugoslav leaders like Croatia's Franjo Tudjman, wanted to divert workers' anger at economic crisis into nationalist channels.

The descent into nationalism brought the break up of Yugoslavia and war in Bosnia. In Kosovo it led to a reign of terror.

Milosevic fanned Serbian nationalism and launched a policy of systematic discrimination and repression against the Albanian majority in Kosovo.

The treatment of Albanians was akin to Turkey's repression of the Kurds or Israel's humiliation of the Palestinians.

Ordinary Serbs in Kosovo, however, did not gain from the persecution carried out in their name.

They were given state jobs at the expense of Albanians. But they then lost out heavily when sanctions against Serbia hit the state sector more heavily than the private industries which employed Albanians. The average Serb monthly salary was \$400 in 1990.

By 1994 that had fallen to \$12.

For nine years the West kept quiet about discrimination against Albanians in Kosovo.

When the US finally forced a settlement in Bosnia, any mention of Kosovo was excluded from the peace treaty.

The repression and the West's indifference have now helped drive more and more Albanians in Kosovo towards armed groups like the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA).

Tony Blair and Bill Clinton are now forced to speak out against Milosevic's assault on Kosovo. But they are just as opposed to the KLA. US envoy to the Balkans Robert Gelbard called them 'terrorists' on the eve of Milosevic's offensive.

The Western powers want to preserve the existing states in the Balkans.

Independence for Kosovo would call that division into question. Albanians are spread principally across six Balkan countries: Albania itself, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo, Greece and Macedonia.

Kosovan independence would lead Albanians in Macedonia to demand secession from state.

Any break up of Macedonia would unleash rivalries between all the Balkan states. Extreme Albanian nationalists dream of a Greater Albania, incorporating all the areas Albanians currently populate. Bulgaria and Greece each covet Macedonian territory.

Any expansion of Greek influence would bring it into deeper conflict with Turkey.

Both countries are locked into a struggle for dominance in the eastern Mediterranean, control over oil reserves and the route of oil

and gas pipelines from the Caspian Sea.

So an independent Kosovo could bring down the existing Balkan order with its mass of warmongering states and web of investments by big capitalist firms.

But it could simultaneously trigger a wider war which would unleash a new nationalist frenzy across the region.

There are unfortunate signs of this already. The KLA and other Kosovan forces have nothing to say to Serbs in Kosovo to win them away from Milosevic.

The KLA has mainly targeted police and army units over the last two years. However, it has also attacked ordinary Serbs in Kosovo straining Serb run cafes, for example. Kosovan nationalists are calling for US intervention and for Turkey to act as their protector.

But the Western powers are neither interested in nor capable of providing a lasting peace. And direct Turkish involvement would mean a wider Balkan war.

There is no way forward for the Kosovan independence right as long as it stays within the nationalist straitjacket.

Class divides every group of rulers from the mass of people they supposedly represent across the Balkans.

Alongside the nationalism and ethnic division in the Balkans there is a tradition in the region of ordinary people uniting across ethnic lines. The only real solution in the region is for ordinary people to unite and fight for their common interest while respecting the rights of all ethnic groups. Only then can oppressed national groups win their rights without the whole

GAY PRIDE: Time to fight for our rights

HOMOSEXUALITY was decriminalised in Ireland in 1994. Although many years behind the rest of Europe, it was a huge shift from the atmosphere of the early 80's when a gay man was killed in Fairview Park and the perpetrators were not sentenced because the Judge felt that the murder was "understandable."

However despite the decriminalisation of homosexual acts, gay people remain oppressed in Ireland.

If a lesbian or gay is fired from their job because they are living with a lover, this is not regarded as discrimination under the 1997 Employment Equality Act.

Ethos

This act also gave the church a free hand to sack people who undermine the 'Catholic ethos' of schools and hospitals.

Padraig Flynn, EU Commissioner in charge of public health recently proposed that gay men should be prevented from donating blood.

Although he was forced to back down, a similar policy is administered by the Irish Blood Transfusion Services Board. Dr. William Murphy the head of the board said that blood from gay people would not be accepted even if they had a HIV negative test result because "test results can be false".

The gay rights movement was formed to fight this type of discrimination. It originated with a belief that gay people had to unite with others to challenge capitalism if they were to win their own liberation.

In the 1960s the American police routinely harassed gay bars, until the night when over 400 police raided the Stonewall Bar in New York.

Gays and lesbians fought back and thousands of people were involved in three days of rioting with the police. It destroyed the stereotype of passive effeminate gay men.

Within a few weeks the Gay Liberation Front was formed, modelling itself on the Vietnamese National Liberation Front which was on the verge of defeating the US army. Solidarity was shown with the Black Panthers and the gay movement became part of the tide of

change that gripped the sixties.

The movement in Ireland took longer to develop because of the power of the Bishops. When it first started it was understandably quite timid and cautious.

During the 1980's, after a gay man was suspected of having been involved in a murder, the National Gay Federation handed over its membership list to the police.

But the atmosphere shifted dramatically after the huge protests over the X case in 1992.

The first gay pride march in a decade took place a year later to demand equality and decriminalisation.

As Fianna Fail tried to shift away from being identified with the bishops, they were forced to bring in a measure that legalised sex between men aged seventeen or over. The British law until recently made this illegal until both partners were eighteen.

Since then the gay scene has expanded in most major cities and with it has developed a pink economy.

Gay bosses now say they intend to serve the community by offering gay men and lesbians jobs and opportunities.

But there is nothing liberating about working for a gay boss or working in a gay bar. Like the rest of the industry the workers are subjected to the same pressures of longer hours on low pay.

So while gay bosses may attack homophobia, they have often a material stake in the system which guarantees them profit.

The reality is that not all gays and lesbians are in the same boat. Those at the bottom of society face gay oppression in a much more sharper form.

Many cannot afford a lifestyle built on expensive clubs and saunas. It is often harder to come out at home when you cannot move easily into other accommodation.

Bullying

Working class gays are more prey to bullying bosses and managers who can whip up homophobia against them.

For this class of gay person, real liberation is not available in the pink economy.

It demands a political movement that links gays and straights into a fight to overthrow a system that breeds bigotry and prejudice.

by PAULA GERAGHTY

North and South...

STOP THESE ATTACKS ON HOSPITALS!

OVER 150 people protested at the end of June against the closure of the Meath, Adelaide and National Children's hospital in Dublin.

The closures mean that Accident and Emergency services have been severely cut back and patients may end up going to Naas in County Kildare to get emergency treatment on some nights of the week.

The three hospitals provided health care in the south inner city of Dublin for over 160 years. The government claimed that the closures are due to the opening of Tallaght hospital. But this is an excuse to hide the cutbacks.

Only five operating theatres will be open for emergency surgery in Tallaght. This is fewer than were operating by the Adelaide and the Meath. The government has also been forced to admit there is a funding shortfall of between £25million and £30 million for the new hospital.

Tallaght hospital will just about be able to provide for the people living in this expanding area of Dublin.

"Nearly 4,000 patients would come through my ward every year. There was so much activity, so much good work, and now it's empty," said a nurse at the Meath. "It's extremely sad and upsetting to lose something we have worked so hard on for so long. This isn't about upgrading the facilities. It is about cutting back on patient services."

Care

One woman on the protest said, "I get physiotherapy twice a week. How am I meant to travel to Tallaght, when I can hardly get across the road? It's ridiculous. The politicians all have private doctors so they don't need places like the Meath so they don't care if they close."

For patients needing kidney dialysis the situation is acute. The new haemo-dialysis unit at Tallaght hospital is opening with facilities to treat only seven patients instead of 14. That means there are now fewer facilities than before the new hospital opened.

The car-parking facilities at the Tallaght hospital are run by a private company which will charge users £1 an hour. This will mean that dialysis patients, who must attend the hospital on three days per week for four to five hours per day, will have to pay £20 per week to avail of the new unit.

One man in his seventies who used to work in the Adelaide said, "My first memory of the hospital was when I was three and my father brought me here when my mother was a patient, it's a shame they're closing them."

"It seems daft that there aren't as many hospitals in Dublin now as in the 1930's. We need more hospitals not fewer"



Protesting against the hospital cutbacks at Dublin's Meath hospital

Fight to save the Jubilee maternity

AROUND 500 people joined the Save the Jubilee march in Belfast on Saturday 20 June.

The Jubilee Maternity Hospital is threatened with closure by August next year, as the Labour government continues with Tory spending limits and rationalisation

plans. Labour wants to merge the Jubilee, based in South Belfast, and the Royal Victoria Maternity hospital in West Belfast.

Sister Pamela Loane explained to *Socialist Worker*, "The care here is mother-centred, with women able to stay as long as they need to. But the merged hospital is going to have to deal with 6,000 de-

liveries a year, over twice what each does now, and that's going to mean pressure on beds. It's a decision that takes no account of what women need or want."

Other nurses and midwives at the rally were furious about the lack of consultation and the general cuts in spending which lay behind the decision.

Tragically, the campaign has tended to focus on the differences in treatment between the Royal and Jubilee, encouraging rivalry between the two hospitals which are associated with different sides of the communal divide.

The Reverend Martin Smyth, of the UUP tried to stir up sectarianism when he said the Jubilee lost out as a result of a joint campaign which saved the Royal maternity last year. "We were asleep when we supported the people at the Royal," he said.

Campaign

A joint public campaign that would unite Protestant and Catholic workers, connected to a strategy of industrial action by nurses and midwives, occupying the hospital to keep it open, is the last thing that Paisley and Martin Smyth want.

Such a campaign would highlight the core issue of funding, rather than play on communal rivalry, but it is a much surer way of saving the Jubilee.

We Think

ON THE North and South of the Irish border, both governments are attacking the health service.

In Northern Ireland, the Labour government are continuing the Tory plan to cut the number of hospitals from 19 down to six.

In the South, the number of hospital beds per thousand patients has been cut by 40%. This is the biggest reduction in all of the OECD countries.

Both governments organise the cutback under the guise of establishing 'centres of excellence'. But this is only bureaucratic jargon to hide the attack on the health service.

The protests against the hospital closures have often been enormous. 20,000 people, for example marched in Dungannon recently to protest at the closure of acute and maternity services at the South Tyrone Hospital.

However the key to victory lies in the actions of hospital workers. Communities can campaign and win support of local TDs or MPs who want to save "their" hospital at the expense of others. But the right politicians who back particular hospitals still defend the overall system which makes for the cutbacks.

Workers action at hospital level could cut across all of this and help save hospitals. Workers who occupied to save their service would receive tremendous support from both the local areas and the wider trade union movement.

Argentina: Church complicity in the dirty war

THE former Argentine dictator, Jorge Videla, has been arrested and charged with kidnapping children born to left wing parents killed during the "dirty war" which began after a military coup in 1976.

Some of the children were born in torture centres run by the Argentinean army and then handed over to generals for adoption. Two of the children Videla is accused of kidnapping were given to Norberto Bianco, a military doctor who is now serving a jail sentence.

30,000 people disappeared in Argentina between 1976 and the fall of the military junta after the abortive Falkland/Malvinas war in 1983. Socialists were dragged into concentration camps like the ESMA Navy base in Buenos Aires and subject to gruesome abuse before disappearing.

Videla has already been sentenced to life in prison for some of these murders but was pardoned in a general amnesty introduced in 1990. Up to now not a single army officer has been punished for the terrible events which had the full backing of the US government.

But a strong campaign by the Mothers of the Disappeared and the HUIOS organisation which represents the children of the disappeared has refused to let matters rest.

In recent months new revelations have emerged about how the dictatorship profited from the dirty war and how the Catholic Bishops supported this war against socialists.

Over £50 million ended up in the Swiss bank accounts owned by Argentinean officers. The money was accumulated as the death squads carted away all the belongings of their victims. But more elaborate ruses were also common.

The army officers charged thousands of dollars for information about people who had disappeared. They set up an estate agency dealing in victims' property.

One operation, the appropriation of 64 acres of land in Mendoza province, later converted into an exclusive suburb, earned the military around £6.2 million.

The Pope's envoy to Argentina, Cardinal Pio Laghi, welcomed the military coup. He also knew about the concentration camps and often visited them.

Colaborated

Laghi collaborated closely with the dictatorship and even gave advice on the "most Christian and compassionate way" to put people to death. He also knew about the execution or deportation of liberal nuns and priests.

The Mothers of the Disappeared who first uncovered the truth about the church's role have provided over 20 witnesses. Among them are several priests, a mother superior, and the Bishop of Azul in the Buenos Aires province. Two

The Pope's envoy to Argentina, Cardinal Pio Laghi collaborated closely with the dictatorship and even gave advice on the "most Christian and compassionate way" to put people to death.

people say they saw Cardinal Laghi at the government's secret prisons and torture centres.

Cardinal Laghi, who was also the Pope's emissary to Washington, is now the Vatican's Prefect of the Congregation of Catholic Education, which is in charge of seminaries, schools and Catholic universities around the world. He is also the Patron of the Knights of Malta.

Laghi was a close friend of the US ex-President George Bush and frequently played tennis with, Admiral Emilio Massera, another member of the junta.

The complicity between the church and the junta was so strong that the Vatican Embassy kept a secret list of thousands of people who disappeared.

Argentina's bishops received their information directly from the military. In a macabre system the Vatican Embassy constantly updated information regarding the dead and missing.

Every fifteen days the Ministry of the Interior sent a list of the disappeared — the names marked with a cross were already dead.

The Vatican is still refusing to issue this list to the public even though the Mothers of the Disappeared say it would help their search for justice.

Today right wing commentators claim that Latin America has entered a new era where democracy has replaced dictatorship and the 'old' class wars have ended.

But the reality is that the military brutes who crushed the left in Argentina, Brazil and Chile through bloody coups still hold considerable power.

The generals worked directly with the Pentagon in Washington in their war against socialism.

This is why there is no talk today of bringing them before war crimes or human rights tribunals.

by SIMON BASKETTER

GARVAGHY ROAD: Living in the of bigotry

SOON AFTER the Belfast agreement was concluded on April 10th, the Orange Order in Portadown convened a meeting of its lodges to discuss its response.

An overwhelming 94% of the membership voted against the deal. It was a vote against making the slightest concession to Catholics.

It was a different story on Obins Street and the Garvaghy Road.

These two streets contain the majority of the six thousand nationalists who live in Portadown.

"We voted for an agenda of change, for equality and human rights.

"If the Orange march goes through our area this year it won't just be a sectarian march.

"It will be a march of those who are against peace and equality going through an area which voted for

peace," Brendan McCionnagh told a Garvaghy Road supporters meeting recently.

Portadown is a prosperous town of nearly thirty thousand inhabitants with a fairly strong manufacturing base.

But little of the prosperity is evident in the Catholic ghettos.

Impoverished

With 72 percent of households receiving some form of state benefit, the Garvaghy Road is one of the most impoverished areas of the North.

The local residents have an unemployment rate that is four times higher than the average in the city.

Being a Catholic in Portadown is the nearest thing to being a black in Alabama in the sixties.

"You will never see a Catholic walk in the city centre after 6pm when the shops close. There has just

been a litany of murders.

"In 1972, Jack McCabe was shot in his pub.

"His murderer was an RUC man. It has never stopped since.

"There was Billy Hayes, Eamon Mahon, Dennis Kelly and Martin McConville. Martin was kicked to death by a loyalist mob—just like Robert Hamill.

"What made everyone furious was that Robert was murdered within yards of an RUC jeep.

"They just sat there even though people appealed to them for help" one resident said.

Since the troubles began ten Catholics have been murdered in the main street in Portadown—yet there has been no outcry.

Instead the politicians are claiming that the conflict over the Orange march results from the "intransigence of both sides".

A tradition of sectarianism

THE ORANGE Order claim that their right to march the Garvaghy Road is part of the Protestant heritage of civil and religious liberty.

But the reality was that the Orange Order was first set up to destroy the United Irishmen, a progressive movement founded by Protestants to attack the landed gentry.

After its very first march in Drumcree in 1795, two Catholics were murdered. The violence and terror has never ceased since.

A banner carried on the 1996 march said, "There are no nationalist areas of Portadown — only areas temporarily occupied". It was a nasty echo of the motives that led Billy Wright and Robin Jackson to carry out their killings in the area.

Local Catholic anger against the sectarian rituals developed decades ago.

They were disgusted when the paratroop regiment were once used to clear away through the neighbouring

Obins Street to allow one hundred and fifty UDA men escort the Orange march to the Drumcree church.

Protests at the Orange marches grew until finally in July 1985, the march was re-routed away from Obins Street. It took three years of confrontation for the Orangemen to accept that decision.

"Obins street is the smaller of the two nationalist areas and we thought then that the British government would take the logical step and re-route them away from Garvaghy. But they didn't," explained Brendan McCionnagh.

On July 1995, almost all the community organisations in the Garvaghy Road came together to form a coalition to fight the sectarian marches. That year saw the first big confrontation at Drumcree.

An agreement was eventually reached through the efforts of the Mediation Network because the Orange Order refused to speak directly to the Residents. "We agreed to stand aside so

that the following year the march would require local consent. But barely had they passed the Garvaghy Road then Trimble and Paisley did their triumphant dance, hand in hand. We knew then they were breaking the agreement. They even printed a special Siege of Drumcree medal afterwards" one resident said.

The following year Hugh Ainsley of the RUC agreed to a re-routing but he was overruled by the Tories who needed Unionist votes to hang onto power.

In 1997 2,500 soldiers and police swamped the Garvaghy Road to make sure the Orange march got through.

"That is one armed officer for every two men and two women in the area. It became an RUC riot. We were locked into our houses.

"When we wanted to attend Mass, we could not get to the church.

"The Mass was said on the road but no men of 'combative age' were allowed to attend" a resident said.



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THE FUTURE SOCIALIST SOCIETY

Organising workers' power

'IT SOUNDS fine in theory but how would a socialist society be organised? This is a common question asked of socialists.

The core of any future society would have to be workers' councils.

Workers' councils are regional bodies of delegates elected from workplaces which in turn will send delegates to a national workers' council. It is this latter body that will be the highest power in the land.

The government, the militia and all other state institutions will be responsible and accountable to the national workers' council.

Different political parties, providing they accept the basic framework of the revolution, will operate freely within the councils, with the party which has the majority support from the workers forming the government.

In all likelihood this will be the party which has led the revolution.

The reason that we can predict this role for workers' councils is not that it has been laid down in tablets of stone by Marx, but that every workers' revolution, and every attempted workers' revolution in this century has created such bodies or the embryos of such bodies.

Workers' councils

The first workers' council or Soviet, as it was called, arose in Petrograd in the 1905 revolution; subsequent examples are the Soviets of 1917, the workers' councils of Germany in 1918-19, and the Central Workers' Council of Budapest in 1956.

Examples of embryonic councils are the factory councils in Italy in 1919-20 and the Cordones, or Industrial Belts, in Chile in 1972.

Such councils arise not after the revolution in accordance with some pre-set plan but in the course of the revolution in order to enable the working class to co-ordinate its forces.

As organs of struggle their initial structure will necessarily be improvised to meet the requirements of the day and will thus vary enormously depending on circumstances.

At this point a vital question arises. How democratic will workers' power be?

It is true the rule of workers' councils will not be, in formal terms, an absolute democracy.

There will not be complete universal suffrage because the nature of the system will exclude the old bourgeoisie and its main associates from the electoral process.

But what is lacking in formal

One of the great virtues of workers' councils is their flexibility and adaptability to the changing structure of the working class.

terms will be more than made up for in terms of real democratic participation by the mass of people.

The democracy of workers' councils will be based on collective debate and discussion and on the ability of the electors, because they are a collective, to control their representatives.

The mechanism of this control will be very simple. If delegates seek to represent the will of their electors they will simply be recalled by mass meetings in the workplaces. Naturally this kind of control is impossible with area-based constituencies in a parliamentary system. Instead of one day's democracy every five years for everyone, there will be ongoing involvement in actually running the state for the vast majority.

Sometimes people worry that a system based on workplaces would exclude sections of the working class, like housewives, pensioners, the unemployed who are not in workplaces.

Actually this is not a problem, providing the core of the structure is rooted in the workplaces as it will be, there will be no reason why other groups should not form collectives and their delegates be incorporated in the councils.

One of the great virtues of workers' councils is their flexibility and adaptability to the changing structure of the working class.

The fundamental feature of the workers' state will be that it relies upon and mobilises the self activity, organising ability and creativity of the mass of the working class to build the new society from the bottom upwards.

In this way it will be a thousand times more democratic than the most liberal of bourgeois democracies which, without exception, depend on the passivity of working people.

All this sounds marvellous and rightly so—it will be marvellous—but how much repression will there have to be?

What freedom will there be for those who think differently these important questions will be discussed in the next issue.

by JOHN MOLYNEU

the shadow



THE CRISIS OF ORANGEISM

A year ago, the Grand Lodge of Ireland passed a resolution to rule out any talks with residents groups over the re-routing of their parades.

In many areas they have set up "strategy committees" to ensure the resolution is implemented in full. This attitude has been supported by David Trimble who has never replied to a single letter sent to him by the Garvaghy Road residents. The refusal to talk is a sharp reminder of the Orange Order's central belief—Catholics should have no rights. Its 2,000 annual marches are an occasion of Protestant triumphalism. Their function summed up by the

leading Orangeman, the Rev John Brown in the 1960s,

"Where you could walk you were dominant and other things followed"

Decline

Yet today the Order is entering a period of fundamental crisis.

In 1969, it had a membership of 125,000.

Today it has less than 35,000 and is in sharp decline.

Barry joined the Orange Order as a teenager and resigned four years ago.

"If I was the same age today, I wouldn't have joined in the first place.

"I am not alone either—young people today do not join the Orange

Order. Most people in the lodges are drawing pensions.

"I joined because my family were all members, you could say I was born into it. And it made you feel part of something.

"You were respected in the community. Some people really got off on that feeling of power.

"After the last few years though a lot of Protestants are browned off with the whole Orange scene.

"Nobody I know defends Harryville. Not many defend Drumcree.

"I don't think most Protestants agree with marching through Catholic areas.

"Why do you think the Grand Master Robert Saunters went to Harryville to support Catholics?

"Why do you think the twelfth

marches in some areas were called off last year?

"Because Orange leaders were abused in the street by people who said we don't support this.

Repression

"I don't know if people's best instincts can win through. But I hope so."

In the past the Orange Order was a ticket to a job or a house. Now it can only give out the bowler hats.

This means that its power to both organise repression against Catholics and keep Protestant workers in line is weakening.

That is why resisting the Orange Order marching on the Garvaghy Road is essential to break the grip of sectarianism in the North.

THE WORLD CUP:

ACCORDING to some estimates a quarter of the world's population will watch the World Cup. That alone is a tribute to our desire to see skill, talent and excitement.

But the competition is also big business. So far there have been 1.2 billion sales of World Cup linked products. These vary from soft toys to diamond pendants and toilet rolls.

The official sponsors pay \$20 million to use the World Cup logo. There is a World Cup drink—Coca Cola; a world cup "restaurant"—MacDonalds; and even a World Cup credit card to make it easier to get into debt buying the merchandise.

Nike aren't even official sponsors, because their rivals Adidas beat them to it.

But they are spending an estimated \$100 million on special advertising this summer to cash in on the World Cup.

The business ethos which dominates the sport is summed up by the footballs used in the competition. They are made in the Punjab, India, by child labourers who get paid about 16 pence per ball. The official World Cup souvenir balls are made in Pakistan, again by child labour.

Social class is the main factor determining how people view the games. Tickets can cost anything to up £250.

The corporate sector grabs a big share to reward its management hacks. In Euro '96 in England 14,000 people saw the final on corporate hospitality.

In the Stade de France where the World Cup final is to be held there are 10,000 places for corporate dining.

For most people the world cup is a television experience, which provides a prime opportunity to sell yet more products. Advertising during the World Cup final on French television costs 1.5 million francs per 30 seconds.

The European Broadcasting Union paid \$37 million twelve years ago to broadcast the matches, but this is the last time people will be able to watch for free.

The German company Krisch has bought the rights for the next two competitions for \$2.6 billion. To make back this much money they intend to show the games as pay per view.

But it is not just with the rise of satellite television that football has been linked to profit. The origins and spread of the game have always been linked to capitalism.

For thousands of years people entertained themselves with games, often using a ball. In the Middle Ages, hordes of people played with a pig's bladder on a field with no demarcation of boundaries.

Often there was little distinction between participants and spectators. Instead of fixed rules, the games were organised by custom and tradition.

It was only after the industrial revolution that the modern game of football developed. The game has its



PROFITS COMING HOME

origins in the British public school system which was supposed to turn out great men who would be the fittest to succeed.

The first rules for football were drawn up by the exclusive Cambridge University in 1848 and the football association was controlled by the private schools until 1863.

Because the sport was regarded as a training ground for the elite, the emphasis was on individual skills, especially dribbling and there were no specified roles. Goalkeepers only appeared in the revised rules in

1870.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the more familiar pattern of a long ball game and short passing movements made its appearance.

This came about partly because the game was played on waterlogged pitches, but it also reflected the development of football into a mass sport. The idea of individual skills has taken second place to the goal of winning.

The first football league clubs in Britain were set up by the churches to keep their parishioners. Aston Villa for example grew from a men's bible class.

Soon the clergy were followed by

industrialists who formed clubs for their workers. Arsenal was made up of workers at the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich and Manchester United was formed by the Lancaster and Royal Railways.

The spread of football into the working class from above was central to the creation of a "respectable" working class after the upheavals of the Chartist era.

The game spread internationally, not just because of the simplicity of the "beautiful game" but because of imperialism.

Football became international in the age of the empire when sport was used as a way of tying the colonies to the metropolitan centre.

So England imbued the stiff upper lip philosophy of cricket to India and the Caribbean and America fostered baseball in Cuba, Mexico, and Central America.

As football was organised around competition between countries, it was used to promote nationalism. The tensions of politics have never been to far beneath the surface.

The first World Cup in Montevideo in 1930 saw Uruguay win at home after coming from 2-0 down against Argentina.

In Buenos Aires rioting took place at the Uruguayan embassy and diplomatic relations were broken off.

The 1934 World Cup was completely overrun by Mussolini using the competition for propaganda for the fascist regime.

His troops paraded before and after each match and organised chanting of "Italia Duce" for two hours before the final. The Videla dictatorship tried to do the same when Argentina held the World Cup in 1978.

At club level football is now run as a business with the top clubs acting as huge corporations, making millions out of the fans for shareholders who now decide who plays and who manage the team.

In Brazil soccer is run as a political bargaining tool by gangsters who will often deliberately call off games or instruct their players not to turn up so as to induce riots for their own ends.

In Columbia the influence of the drug cartels is so high that at USA '94 one player was murdered for standing up to the drug barons who run the country's football.

Football is the most popular game in the world. It provides a break from the drudgery of our society. The tragedy is that the limited leisure time capitalism allows us is turned into a commodity which is used to suit the aims of big business.

Capitalism has never allowed workers any real control over what they produce. Not surprisingly it does the same with leisure time. We are put in the position of passive spectators and mere consumers of products. Human activity whether at work or at rest is turned into something that can be bought and sold.

Even when people manage to spend their time taking part in sports, the competitive ethos means they are pushed to loose out on other areas of life.

As the former Tottenham Hotspur manager, Bill Nicholson, explained "I prefer players not to be too good or clever at other things. It means they concentrate on football".

As society pushes people to be more atomised, the feeling of supporting a club or a nation as part of the crowd is offered as a poor substitute for real feelings of solidarity or community. Especially since most people watch in the isolation of their own homes.

It is only we can create a society based on workers control, will we be able to spend our leisure not as the raw material for the marketing men but in the simple pursuit of pleasure for its own sake.

by SIMON BASKETTER

Eamonn McCann

One world, one struggle

ONE OF the best-known slogans of the last 30 years is on a gable-end in the Bogside: "You are now entering Free Derry".

It was scrawled on the wall in January 1969, in the middle of a riot following the arrival of a student civil rights march from Belfast. The idea came from Berkeley, California, where the university had been occupied by students, part of the upsurge inspired by the black liberation movement and the fight against the Vietnam War.

We'd seen news pictures, and the slogan, "You are now entering Free Berkeley", and wanted to make the point—One world, one struggle.

Nowadays, it's thought obvious the words refer not to freedom struggles the world over but to Irish freedom only, expressing nationalism, not internationalism. Those who dominate what passes now as a struggle for "freedom" in the North, look back narrowly into history, not out across the world.

They have a view of the '60s generally broadly in line with that of the glossy sentimentalists of the snob Sundays. They depict it fuzzily in sepia, dismiss it as an unserious era. In this perspective, the Northern civil rights movement was an innocent crusade led by an assortment of dizzy idealists with their heads full of vast unrealistic notions: it inevitably gave way to hard reality and the Republican armed struggle.

But there was nothing fanciful about associating the North's civil rights campaign with the black struggle in the US, the workers' fight in France, the resistance of the Vietnamese to imperialism, the uprising against Stalinism in Czechoslovakia.

We say, "One world, One struggle", not because it's an attractive way of putting things but because it's true.

Shortly after the inscription of "Free Derry Wall", Bernadette Devlin went on a speaking tour of the US, where she had a run-in with Richard Daley, mayor of Chicago and the most powerful Irish-American politician outside the Kennedy family.

The previous year, Daley had unleashed his cops in an orgy of violence against anti-war protestors during the Democratic Party convention. He had gerrymandered the city to deny black people voting power, and was notorious for the repression not just of the Black Panthers but of the movement of the murdered Martin Luther King.

Bigotry

Invited to meet Daley, Bernadette refused, and compared his cops' use of CS gas to the RUC's, and his race-hated to the religious bigotry of Orangism.

Told that Daley was the key to raising money in Chicago, she shot back: "I wouldn't shake his corrupt boss's hand for the whole US Treasury".

Her remarks boosted black militants, while enraging corporate Irish-America.

Times change. Daley's son and political heir, US Commerce Secretary William Daley, was in the North earlier this month. On the day he arrived, *The Irish News* welcomed him with a special article—penned by Gerry Adams. "I am looking forward to meeting him again", wheedled the Sinn Fein president, "and talking to him about jobs and investment".

Adams recounted that on a previous US visit "I had a number of discussions with President Clinton, senior investment bankers, financiers, Wall Street brokers and others, all of whom I found to be keen to offer help to consolidate the peace process in Ireland. On a visit to Wall Street, I especially found an enormous heightened awareness of the efforts for peace in Ireland and a desire to help".

(Rank and file Republicans have found it possible to read this without fainting from embarrassment, it's said.)

Bernadette didn't want to touch Daley with a barge-pole. Adams wants to touch the hem of his garment. She boosted the victims of the same power structure which he now heartily endorses.

Logically, the SF leader now calls for tax-breaks for foreign investors and a "profit-friendly" economic environment.

Now as then, it's "One world, One struggle". The question is, which side are you on?

Woody Guthrie

Songs that bring socialism alive

MERMAID AVENUE is the street in Coney Island, Brooklyn, that was home to US folk singer and socialist Woody Guthrie during the 1940s.

It is also the title of a new album by Billy Bragg and folk band Wilco of previously unrecorded Woody Guthrie songs.

MARTIN SMITH talked to BILLY BRAGG about Woody and how the album came about.

"Nora Guthrie, Woody's daughter, approached me in 1995.

"She told me about the Woody Guthrie archive where they have the manuscripts of over 1,000 unpublished Woody songs.

"Nora invited me to put some to music. Many of them did have music scores. But because Woody could not write music he kept them in his head—they were lost when he died in 1967.

Relevant

"Woody and his music are still relevant today because in the 1930s and 40s he asked some very hard questions

about American society that are still unanswered today.

"He wrote about the lives of ordinary Americans with telling simplicity, love and integrity.

"In songs like 'This Land is Your Land' he asked, why, in the midst of all this plenty in the American dream, is there still all this poverty?"

"This question is just as relevant today.

"It also explains why Woody still remains a marginalised figure in American cultural history today.

"It was only comparatively recently that I started to get into Woody Guthrie's material. You couldn't find his records very easily when I was growing up in east London.

"It was only when I started going to America to do gigs in 1984 that American journalists compared me to Woody. I thought it was about time I found out a bit more about him.

"On the new album *Mermaid Avenue* there are songs about unions, the film star Ingrid Bergman, as well as witty lightweight pieces.

There is also a track called 'She Came Along



BILLY BRAGG wants to bring the music of Woody Guthrie (above) to life

to Me'.

"Woody in this song is writing about his wife, but he is also writing about all women and their involvement in society.

"What is important is that he was doing this in 1942. It's about the role of women in society. He is writing about gender

politics which did not get into mainstream pop until the late 60s.

"Woody is the original singer/songwriter.

"Another interesting song is 'Eisler on the Go'. It is about Hans Eisler, a collaborator of the great socialist playwright Bertolt Brecht.

"Eisler was brought

before the McCarthyite House UnAmerican Activities Committee.

"What makes the song interesting to me is it is a honest record of Woody's thoughts on the McCarthy witch hunt against the left. The chorus is "I don't know what I'll do—Eisler's on the come and go and I don't know what I'll do."

book

The SAS: Britain's incompetent bullies

by KEVIN WINGFIELD

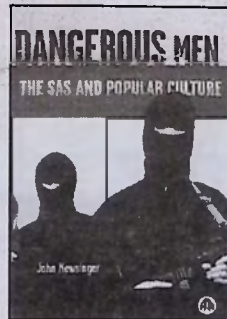
DURING the North's troubles Ian Paisley often called for the SAS to be sent in to 'clean out' areas like West Belfast.

The regiment is supposed invincible and cruelly efficient. But a new book by the socialist writer John Newsinger looks at the reality behind the hard image.

The SAS had its origins in the Second World War when upper class officers formed small sabotage squads to attack behind enemy lines.

After the war the SAS was reconstituted to fight—often secretly—against anti-colonial movements.

In 1948 the new Brit-



ish Labour government were desperate to hang on to its colony in Malaya against a popular movement for independence, led by the Malayan Communist Party.

The SAS was deployed in the jungle of Malaya and the subsequent myth was that they had turned the corner and defeated the rebellion. The facts are different. Despite their bestial brutality the SAS

had played only a small part in the defeat of the guerrilla movement.

It was the massive military build-up of British, Fijians, East Africans and Gurkhas which was necessary to defeat a heroic and popular guerrilla uprising.

During the Gulf War the SAS's commando operations behind Iraqi lines were a complete disaster with officers running away, while SAS soldiers had to beat a fast retreat.

Pride

In the Falklands War the SAS were given pride of place in the dispatches.

The editor of the Daily Telegraph was even given the use of a secret SAS military satellite link to London to file his report of the daring-do of

the British Task Force and the SAS.

But the SAS's operations were not crowned with glory. A planned attack on Argentinian air base was cancelled when SAS's officers resigned and soldiers nearly mutinied.

A last ditch attempt to grab the headlines one day before the Argentinian forces surrendered involved an SAS overland attack on Port Stanley. It was ignominiously driven off.

Despite the myths, the most trained, brutish and thuggish elite commandos of the state are not invincible. Newsinger's book shows they could not prevail against a popular revolutionary movement.

Dangerous Men, the SAS and Popular Culture by John Newsinger, Pluto Press

Persecuted

"Woody is singing about Eisler being persecuted. You also see Woody worried about the fact that they are going to come for him as well."

"Woody really doesn't know what he is going to do. Is he going to stand strong or testify?"

Rather than copy Woody's musical style Billy has recorded his songs with a more modern feel.

"I can't pretend I haven't heard the Clash and Bob Dylan. I didn't want to make an album in the Dust Bowl Woody style. I wanted to move on from there, set the songs in a music more reminiscent of the traditions blooming in the 50s.

"Woody must have heard Elvis and he may even have heard the Beatles. That's the Woody I want to bring across.

"It is now 30 years since Woody died. Recording these songs has enabled me to play my part in rehabilitating the man, and in a funny way bring alive socialist ideas."

where we stand

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

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

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

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

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

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST:

The 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, workers 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.

ICELAND STORES VICTORY

This is how to win union rights

WORKERS in Iceland, a frozen food store in Ballyfermot, have won a major victory against their multinational employer after just four days of strike action.

The workers demanded trade union recognition, proper rates of pay for Sunday working and an end to eight hour contracts.

Not only has the company conceded all of these demands but they have also agreed to pay the workers for the time that they were out on strike.

Recognition

Iceland has over 800 outlets in Britain and Ireland but the Ballyfermot store is the first one to win union recognition.

Iceland used every trick in the book to intimidate the workers. They called workers in individually to try and prevent them joining the union.

During the strike they even papered up the windows and took stock out of the shop to give the impression that they were closing down rather than concede to the workers demands.

They hand delivered letters to each of the strikers telling them to call off the strike.

But the workforce refused to be intimidated.

They maintained solid pickets and got fantastic support from the people of Ballyfermot.

"We've gone up against a big, big, company. And we've achieved a lot," is how one worker summed it up.



Solidarity on the picket line won union recognition at Iceland

Unfair from the start

TWO YEARS ago, the huge frozen food multinational began to train staff for shops in Ireland.

The workers were put on "8 hour contracts" which meant that they could not be sure how many hours a week they would get.

Management could use the issue of hours to penalise people they didn't like and reward favourites with more work.

The fifteen-minute breaks were taken out of workers pay.

Overtime

There was no proper pay scale rewarding service, nor for holidays or overtime. There many examples of petty, vengeful and insulting behaviour by the managers.

"Matters came to a head when two of the younger lads approached the union and set up a meeting. I remember

being told one afternoon, and of course I said I'd be there."

"We were worried at first."

Acknowledged another striker. "The story went round that the company would close the store rather than give in to the union." But once the strike began however, confi-

dence grew daily. One worker explained.

"Everyone came on the picket and we organised shifts. The strike brought everyone together from the age of 17 up to older women with kids. We had great support. The local pub and neighbours

brought us tea. We made our own signs. I'd like to thank all the cars for honking.

"Even those with exams still gave the time to picket - except a handful of our co-workers, who turned their back on members of the Ballyfermot community."

Solidarity forever

THE KEY to victory was a magnificent wave of working class solidarity. An Post; the waste disposal; Sunblest; Brennans; Lyons and taxis all refused to pass the pickets.

The public support from Ballyfermot was huge. One shopper said, "you have to get your rights. I missed the shop but I backed them all the way."

After the store was shut for a Friday and a Saturday, with estimated losses around £25,000, the manage-

ment realised the strikers were serious.

Then late on Monday night the company conceded all the main demands of the strikers, and offered to pay staff for the days out on strike, they were that anxious to get a resumption of work.

"We'll be back now, wearing our union badges. We are in good spirits and have achieved what we aimed for - we have a voice." One worker said.

"We're the first store in Iceland to be unionised. The door is open for the others now." said another.

It should have been done like this in Ryanair

THE ICELAND strike showed that with determined strike action workers can win union recognition and take on the multinationals.

It shows how foolish the SIPTU leadership were to call off the strike at Ryanair when it was beginning to bite. The workers were told that a special commission would look into their case for union recognition.

But the commission has not even reported yet and many former Ryanair strikers now believe they will not know the result until late July. The commission was obviously only a ploy to diffuse anger. Its delay in issuing the report are a deliberate tactic to get the issue of union rights at Ryanair off the agenda.

The Iceland strike got a very different result because it relied on militancy and solidarity. It is an inspiration to low paid and part time workers in workplaces across the country.

The next step is to push to unionise the other Iceland stores in Tallaght, Finglas, Dun laoghaire, Thomas St and in the North.

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Meets every Tues in Badgers Bar at 8pm

DUNLAOGHAIRE
Meets every Tues at 8pm in Christian Institute.

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Meets every fortnight Contact national address for details

GALWAY
Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square

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Meets every Thursday (in term time) at 6.30pm Class Hall D Arts Maynooth college

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

DUBLIN PORTOBELLO
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Local Authority and Health Boards

'THEY KEEP US VOTING UNTIL WE SAY YES!'

SIPTU leaders got a shock when a majority of local authority and health workers rejected a deal that attached productivity strings to their analogue pay rise.

In their attempt to get out the vote, SIPTU officials denounced the Socialist Workers Party for producing leaflets calling for a No vote.

At several meetings around the country, SIPTU health leaders like Matt Merrigan and Jack Kelly tried to stir up a "Reds under the Bed" scare in order to denounce the No campaign.

Workers were even warned not to touch *Socialist Worker* leaflets.

But their campaign backfired when the full facts about the productivity settlement came out.

Workers were asked to give management the right to move them between jobs in the one health board and also to accept new "yellow pack" grades.

After the No vote came through many workers expected the union to take industrial action and fight for their full claim.

"It came as a shock to many when nothing happened. It just made you wonder what the ballot was supposed to be about," one hospital worker told *Socialist Worker*.

After the vote came in, SIPTU members were told that there would be yet another vote on the issue.

Ballot papers have now been sent out to see whether or not members would support a strike by craft workers.

But the SIPTU leadership is aware that in all probability there will be no craft strike.

It is just another delaying tactic designed to dampen militancy. Meanwhile, the rejected offer has been referred

back to the Labour Relations Commissions for yet more "clarification".

Hospital and local authorities should start calling for full scale industrial action to

win their claim for a pay rise — without having to give any productivity.

Craft workers

MILITANT action by craft workers has won important concessions on the analogue payments. But the basic principle that workers have a right to payment without strings has not been conceded.

The improvements show why workers were right to reject the advice of union leaders like Paddy Coughlin.

The local authorities and the health boards have been forced to backdate the pay rise to 1st July 1997—but it is still

not the full amount the craft workers are due.

Local consultation has to take place on the Main Trade Makes Good scheme whereby craft workers have to give "flexibility" about taking on different trades.

But the consultation is limited and does not give workers a veto over the new plans.

When management want to introduce sub-contractors, they also have to

go through a consultation process.

But again the union can only object to the names of individual contractors rather than management's right to use them.

The limited improvements came because of a few days of unofficial action.

It shows how much more could be won if craft and general workers stood together to insist on their right to analogue payments without strings.

TEAM

Workers ready to defy blackmail

TEAM workers are being blackmailed to either accept privatisation or face the sack.

This is the meaning of the Aer Lingus ultimatum to workers that if they do not agree to the buy-out by the Danish company FLS by July 1st they will be closed down.

"The intimidation is not going to work" one TEAM shop steward told *Socialist Worker*. "There is no sign that it is softening up people—it is only having the opposite effect"

The media have claimed

that 41% of TEAM staff have already agreed to the FLS offer. But this figure is an exaggeration because it includes management and supervisory grades.

Amongst craft workers it's believed that 85% voted against FLS.

Present

The media try to present the TEAM workers as old fashioned trade unionists who do not understand the "modern competitive" world. But the reality is very different.

"We were offered a £54 million package to agree to privatisation.

But we have already lost £20 million between us because our wages have been frozen for the past five years" one worker told us.

Ever since the lock-out at TEAM in 1994, incremental pay rises have been cut and normal awards granted to other workers under national agreements have been frozen.

Yet workers are being asked to accept there will no rises under Partnership 2000 for a further 16 months after they work for FLS.

The other issue that concerns workers is their pension scheme. They are being asked to leave a solid scheme that has been built up over the decades in Aer Lingus for one which is a lot less secure.

FLS has a terrible records of redundancies. Since 1990 half of its staff in the aero-

space division have either been sold off or made compulsory redundant.

"At Christmas we were told by Garry McCann, the chief executive of Aer Lingus, that the FLS offer was the best means we had of securing our livelihood and that of our families."

But a few months after he was lecturing us about the security of our families, he skips off from the company.

But while the mood of resistance is hardening at TEAM there is a clear need for an organised strategy.

One temptation is to believe that workers can win legally because of the letters of comfort they hold from

Aer Lingus. But this does not apply to all workers.

And courts who have consistently made judgements against workers can never be trusted to guarantee job security.

TEAM workers will have to rely on their own strength to defeat the threat of privatisation.

This means reorganising their shop steward network so that there are more shop stewards elected for every section and meetings are held regularly without the union officials dominating.

This high level of organisation will be needed if the threat of privatisation is to be warded off by militant action.

Zoe Construction

THE STRIKE at the Zoe Construction company is continuing with forty-two bricklayers demanding a 64 per cent pay increase.

The company has already offered a 23 per cent increase which has been rejected by the workers

Webtech

Around 70 workers at Enniskillen company Webtech are to vote on strike action over union recognition.

Webtech is a subsidiary of Dublin-based company Americk and makes packaging for the soft-drinks industry.

The company recently received £2.9 million in grants from the Industrial Development Board in return for creating 22 new jobs.

The company has refused to negotiate with the Graphical Paper and Media Union. GPMU Branch Secretary Andy Snoddy said "Our members are incensed that the company denies Northern Ireland workers the rights they grant to their employees in the Dublin. The company appears hell-bent on confrontation."

who want their wages brought on par with other building firms.

"Property prices have soared in Dublin and Zoe is making millions in profits, so they can well afford to pay us" one striker told *Socialist Worker*.

The dispute was originally referred to the Labour court but it refused to adjudicate on it as even Zoe's offer breached the Partnership 2000 agreement.

Zoe is furious about the recent union gains and is using every dirty trick in the book against its workforce. It has hired a PR company Drury Communications and

DUBLIN BUS

Ballot on new viability plan

DUBLIN Bus workers are balloting on "Strategy for Investment and Competitiveness".

This follows eighteen months of negotiations between unions and management on CIE's Viability Plans.

After industrial action last year the company has dropped some of its demands such as cutting the rate of overtime pay.

But the document the NBRU and SIPTU leaderships are recommending concedes attacks on conditions and starts the process of privatisation.

One driver told *Socialist Worker*: "All the talk in the document is about making Dublin Bus more commercial, creating a climate for investment. There is no sense that the buses are providing a service. Instead it is just another business."

Union leaders had hoped to hold the ballot within a week of the plan being announced.

But a storm of anger from drivers forced the SIPTU and NBRU to postpone balloting "for clarification."

Among the proposals are:

■ Contracting out of schools services. Dublin Bus says these make a loss and would allow the buses to be redeployed to more profitable routes.

Despite company assurances that it will not bring forward plans for contracting out core services, this is the thin end of the wedge and further sell-offs cannot be ruled out if this is accepted.

As one driver told *Socialist Worker*: "The company has

made it plain that it is only interested in profitable routes, that's why the school buses are being contracted out.

"I don't believe the company promises that they will not sell off other services. Remember the letters of comfort in TEAM, now the government is saying they are not worth the paper they are written on."

■ Lower pay for new drivers: New drivers will start on about £70 a week less than the standard rate for driving the same buses on the same routes. It will take a new entrant 8 years to be paid on the standard rate.

■ A derisory pay offer: Dublin Bus is offering a 5 percent pay increase to accept this productivity and flexibility deal.

Increase

But when Programme 2000 payments are excluded the real increase is just three quarters of a percent.

■ Cuts in services during the Christmas and Summer periods are also proposed. Rush-hour frequencies could be cut to a scheduled 20 minutes which could be much greater in practice.

■ Compensation for drivers assaulted while on duty who are unable to continue in the job will be capped at £15,000 maximum. Instead the company will make videos on "conflict management" and handling "difficult customers" which drivers will be forced to watch.

The low pay and privatisation agenda can be beaten despite excuses that the changes are necessary to conform to EU competition rules.

In Greece airline workers have fought and defeated privatisation plans, despite the EU demands and in France transport workers have fought off plans to ruin their conditions and contract out their work.

■ Later in the summer the employers and unions in Bus Eireann and Inroed Eireann are due to bring forward their viability plans.

Loco Drivers plan industrial action if their demand for increased pay is not met.

Bus workers need to organise for a massive No vote in the ballot and insist that the unions call immediate industrial action if any section of CIE is attacked.

Dun Laoghaire Marina

Dun Laoghaire Harbour Company want to exclude working class people from using the local harbour.

They want to build a 600 birth marina which can be extended later to accommodate over a thousand yachts. This will adversely affect many local clubs and could spell the end of the summer projects.

These projects are run by working class communities at the cost of a few pounds per child and are the only way many local children can afford to go sailing or canoeing. Other clubs like St Michael's rowing club won't have enough space to practice in the harbour if the marina is built.

The only open space left will be out near the mouth of the harbour. This is used by the ferry and obviously isn't

suitable for young children or the inexperienced. Activities closer to shore may have to be abandoned because of lack of space and increased congestion due to parking and increased yacht traffic.

This attack on the rights of working class people to use the harbour shows the reality of the Celtic Tiger.

Dun Laoghaire Council want to build an exclusive marina for the few who can afford to buy yachts while they have run down facilities for workers. Dun Laoghaire Baths have been closed and the Blue pool has been privatised.

Local clubs have organised a meeting to launch a campaign against the marina and are demanding that the harbour facilities be available to everyone, not just rich yacht owners.

FBU

Firefighters prepare for major battle

FIREFIGHTERS in Essex had a series of strikes against cuts in June.

Essex is being viewed as a prelude to a major national confrontation and strike collections have been taken in fire stations across Britain and the North.

Firefighters were striking against £1.2 million in cuts,

which will mean the loss of 16 jobs and a number of appliances. They defied threats of the sack from the local Labour/Liberal council to go on strike.

The Fire Brigades Union believes that local authority employers are preparing to go after their work conditions, contained in the Grey Book.

In a sign of the growing anger at New Labour, FBU

leader Ken Cameron told a 2,000-strong rally in support of the striking Essex firefighters:

"If there is any attempt to sack FBU members in Essex, we will recall the national conference with a recommendation for national strike action from the executive committee. Yes, that will be illegal. But I know of no alternative and we won't be looking for one."

Wicklow Ambulances

Army used to break ambulance strike

NINETEEN ambulance workers in Co. Wicklow are on strike demanding "up-front" compensation for being forced to work extra night and weekend shifts.

The army has been

called in to break the strike even though many PDFORA members — the soldier's union — object.

Four of the staff will also have to move jobs from Wicklow to Arklow.

This will involve a round trip of 34 miles per day. Workers want to be compensated for having to relocate to the new Arklow

centre which has yet to come into operation.

The Labour Court recommendation that the "social distribution" caused by the changes should be examined after six months is ridiculous. If there is loss of pay and disruption from day one there should be compensation from day one.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p

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Solidarity price £1

Orange marching season is just...

AN EXCUSE FOR BIGOTRY

TENSION IN Northern Ireland is once again mounting because of the marching season.

The Orange Order still insists on its right to march where it is not wanted. Anyone who opposes them is denounced as a republican, a 'fenian' or even a 'taig'.

But every socialist, no matter what their background, should oppose these sectarian marches. They have nothing to do with 'civil and religious liberty'. They are all about trying to make Catholics second class citizens.

The marches are not about defending 'Protestant culture'. Today the Orange Order only represents a minority of hard-line right wing Protestants.

It called for a NO vote against the peace accord but was decisively rejected—particularly in urban areas where nearly 60% of Protestants voted for the deal.

The Orange Order was originally formed to crush a movement for liberty that was first founded by Protestants in Belfast two hundred years ago. It was backed by the landed gentry who wanted to deny the demands of the United Irishman for democracy and civil rights.

Right up to recently Orange parades ended with denunciations of 'communism' to warn Protestant workers off any attempt to advance their class interests.

It opposes every small step that

might give working people greater freedom. At a time when the rest of Britain is lowering the age of consent for gays, the Orange Order still expels members for 'immorality' and 'conduct unbecoming an Orangeman'.

The marches have always provided an occasion for naked violence. Two years ago, the young tennis star Graham Parker, was beaten to death after arguing with a number of loyalists after an Orange parade in North Belfast.

Harassment

Today the 'Concerned Protestants' organisation—a front organisation of the DUP and LVF—is threatening to subject Garvaghy Road to the same type of harassment that people going to church in Harryville faced.

Working people from both Catholic and Protestant backgrounds should oppose this bigotry. We should not fall for the argument that the residents are 'intransigent' because they want to resist intimidation.

Would anyone describe black people in Harlem as intransigent for stopping a Ku Klux Klan march going though their area?

Opposing the bigotry of the Orange Order is an important starting point in opening the way to class politics throughout Northern Ireland. This is why we should stand with the people of Garvaghy Road in resisting intimidation.

Blair's minimum wage insult

TONY BLAIR's minimum wage is an insult to workers of all ages.

Only around 83,000 workers will gain from the new £3.60 rate for over 21-year-olds.

Demanded

One third of Northern Ireland's workers, would have seen their pay go up if Blair has agreed to the £4.61 demanded by the TUC.

Now there is no guaranteed pay for workers under 18 who already suffer the worst pay rates in fast food shops and as trainees.

And the rate for 18 to 21-year-olds is only £3 per hour.

In other words, the bosses will get away with paying young workers a lower rate for doing the same job as their older workmates.

They will sack workers as they come up to their 22nd birthday and replace them with a fresh 18-year-old.

The bosses throughout Northern Ireland are delighted they can continue to pay slave wages.

In Derry a trainee hairdresser was recently offered £60 for a 48-hour week and a private security firm sought "a mature adult" for £1.80 an hour, the Derry Low Pay Unit says.

Everyone from Gerry Adams to David Trimble is claiming that Northern Ireland's bosses pay too much in tax. But it is nonsense.

Company directors and employers are lining their pockets.

Salary

Take the example of Northern Ireland Electricity. NIE managing director Harry McCracken's pay rose by 29 per cent from £196,000 to £253,000 last year.

Chief executive Patrick Haren got a 33 per cent rise, bringing his basic salary to £433,000. Tony Blair and the North's politicians all want to cuddle up to the bosses to show how 'business-friendly' they all are.

It is high time we built a socialist party that stands for the interests of workers.