

Socialist Worker

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Torture in US prisons

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S latest report details the horrific use of electric shock weapons against prisoners in US prisons. The weapons are frequently activated accidentally or used arbitrarily as instruments of torture.

The stun belt, as it is called, is a box worn at the back of a belt, which is triggered by remote control and administers an eight-second shock of 50,000 volts incapacitating the wearer with extreme pain.

Amnesty described it as "a weapon that is worn by its victim".

The company that produces them, Stun Tech Inc. markets them as a non-lethal means of control in increasingly overcrowded prisons. It claims to

have sold over 1,800 belts to the American prison system.

Amnesty's US director, William Schultz, described the weapons as instruments of torture, "torture by remote control".

In Red Onion State Prison

in Virginia, the mostly white guards use the stun belts to abuse the prisoners.

The guards administer electric shocks accompanied by racial abuse to the prisoners, three-quarters of whom are black.

WARRANTS have been issued in Santiago for the arrest of the former Chilean general Sergio Arrelano on charges of torturing and executing 75 political prisoners.

Arrelano was a close associate of Augusto

Pinochet, the former dictator who overthrew the left wing government of Salvadore Allende.

He commanded an elite army unit known as 'the caravan of death'.

Throughout the 1970s, the 'caravan' arrived by helicopter in many prisons and young men were then marched out of their

cells. After torture sessions which included burning prisoners alive and gutting them with 'corvos' - razor sharp knives, they were summarily executed. All of this took place on the orders of Pinochet, the man now hailed by Margaret Thatcher as a 'defender of democracy'.

Corrupt politicians

Bertie's cronies bite the dust



Ex-councillor Liam Lawlor

ANOTHER OF Bertie Ahern's cronies has fallen from high office in a new scandal.

PADDY DUFFY was appointed as a senior adviser to Ahern with a salary of £50,000 a year. But at the same time as drawing a state cheque he also was a director with a PR company, Dillon Consultants.

One of the main functions of PR companies is to arrange meetings between big business and the top politicians.

Dillons made it known that Duffy was an important asset because of his connections with high office.

It now emerges that Dillon Consultants arranged a meeting between NTL bosses and Ahern and also a series of other meetings with 'key influencers in the country'.

NTL was anxious to grab the state run Cablelink firm as it was being sold off. Their efforts were eventually rewarded and the extensive cable network will allow NTL to market a variety of information technology products in Ireland.

Duffy is not the only one of Ahern's cronies to have recently been caught in an embarrassing situation.

Friend

JOE BURKE is another close friend of Ahern who is avoiding the media after it was revealed that he had visited Philip Sheedy in jail.

Sheedy was a top architect that the establishment tried to spring from prison even though he killed someone while on an orgy of drunk driving.

Burke was also involved in discussions with Tom Gilmartin over the builder's

wish to develop the massive Quarryvale site. Burke is due to give evidence to the Flood Tribunal on what transpired.

Another of Ahern's friends who has dropped out of the limelight is JIM LACEY.

Lacey was the chairperson of Forum 2000, the fund-raising wing of Fianna Fail. He was also involved in Ahern's own constituency organisation and helped to buy the Drumcondra house that Ahern used to live in.

Yet Lacey was also the chief executive of National Irish Bank at the time when working class customers in areas like Walkinstown in Dublin were being overcharged on their accounts

Little of course has been done to prosecute NIB for this form of daylight robbery.

Meanwhile the Teflon Taoiseach continues to pose as the ordinary lad from Dublin's northside.

Lawlor's donations dry up

FIANNA FAIL TD Liam Lawlor, who is at the centre of planning allegations at the Flood Tribunal, failed to get elected on to Dublin County Council in the recent local elections.

Lawlor admitted receiving £3,500 a month in political donations from Tom Gilmartin who was working with Arlington Securities, a British property developer.

Yet he never listed these donations on the register of interests of Dublin County

Council.

Lawlor originally claimed they were "consultancy fees".

Gilmartin denied this saying "I would not have that man consulting on a shit-house."

Lawlor has systematically attempted to evade every attempt to make him appear before the Flood Tribunal.

He has recently been before the High Court attempting to block an order by the Flood Tribunal directing him to give docu-

ments relating to accounts held in various financial institutions.

He has also refused to hand over documents relating to the payments made to him by Gilmartin/Arlington Securities.

Not only did Lawlor have close associations with Gilmartin, he is also on the board of directors of one of Larry Goodman's companies.

Goodman organised an EU scam that cost Irish tax payers millions of pounds.

Guinness try to squeeze the last drop

"NAME ME a private house of this quality in any European capital, apart from Buckingham Palace" said the auctioneer Andrew Hay who is charged with selling Farnleigh House, the home of the Guinness family.

The drink-dealing family are looking to cash in on the property boom by netting £15 million for the house.

They should be told where to get off because the Guinness family have made a fortune in Ireland.

The first Lord Iveagh



A very big house in the country

(the aristocratic name for the Guinnesses) became the third richest man in Britain in the 1870s, with a fortune worth £2 billion in today's terms, by promoting alcoholism amidst misery.

Only Cecil Rhodes who robbed Zimbabwe could boast of more wealth. The family lived off that fortune every since.

Even though their lazy lifestyle led to a huge squandering of wealth they

are still worth £680 million. Instead of contributing another £15 million to the coffers of the Guinness family, the property should be nationalised and the money used to house the homeless.

Celtic Tiger pup

THERE IS no end to the greed of Michael O'Leary, the boss of Ryanair.

Last year, O'Leary got a pay hike of 25 percent to bring his salary to £365,000 a year. But that is only the pin money.

Shares

O'Leary expects to get another £17 million from the forthcoming placing of Ryanair shares. That will be on top of a previous £17 million bonus he got before the last Ryanair flotation.

Meanwhile the top economics unit, the ESRI, is asking workers to show another three years of wage restraint.

CHEAP LABOUR

SMALL BUSINESS have often complained that their labour costs are too high.

But now a recent OECD survey gives lie to this myth.

It shows that Ireland has one of the lowest non-wage costs in the EU.

The average social insurance and other non-wage costs throughout Europe is 25 percent of the pay bill.

But the cost to the employer in Ireland is only 15 percent. In Germany, France and the Netherlands, the cost is 30 percent of the pay bill because better social services are provided.

Once again, the Irish rich area getting too good a deal.

what we think

A BLOODY AND USELESS WAR

A BLOODY and useless war has ended with NATO's occupation of Kosovo. But already the seeds of new and more vicious conflicts are visible.

Far from bringing genuine peace, NATO has only drawn the frontier for a new colonial war in the future.

As the peace deal was put in place NATO and Russian troops raced against each other to see who could grab sectors of Kosovo.

According to the *Financial Times*, "it was the most serious eyeball to eyeball stand-off between Russian and Allied forces since the Russians cut off Berlin 50 years ago.

Rivals

The five big Western powers are establishing an old style 'protectorate' in Kosovo and they want no rivals about.

Anyone who thinks this will bring benefits for either Serbians or Kosovans should look at the experience of the 'protectorate' that was set up in Bosnia at the end of 1995.

The agreement then was to split Bosnia into a Muslim Croat federation and a Serb republic. There was supposed to be eventual reconciliation in the context of economic progress. But the opposite has happened.

★ Only one in four of the 2.1 million refugees have returned home.

★ Half of the housing stock was damaged in the war but only 10 percent has been repaired.

★ Three quarters of the

refugees who returned are unemployed today.

Politically the Bosnians have no control over their lives. Power lies with a UN high representative who can impose laws and dismiss "uncooperative" elected members of Bosnian institutions.

The area is administered by a Spanish diplomat, its finances are controlled by a New Zealander and its police are run by an ex-officer of the Los Angeles Police Department.

The same fate now awaits Kosovo. Units like the British Paratroop Regiment, which is renowned for its brutality, will dominate the area.

They will preside over the expulsion of the local Serbian population while they prepare for a new confrontation in future years.

Far from being a liberation, this is another brutal, colonial occupation.

NO NEW MARSHALL PLAN



Democratic protestors against Milosevic in 1997 in Belgrade. These people are the potential for real change in Serbia, not NATO tanks or bombs

DURING THE war, Tony Blair promised a new Marshall Plan to help reconstruct the buildings his bombs destroyed.

But the European leaders are already 'expressing concern' about the costs of keeping their troops in Kosovo.

Anyone who thinks there will be a Balkan Marshall Plan should look at

the similar promises made to the people of Eastern Europe after the Berlin Wall fell.

The New World Order was supposed to bring a 'peace dividend' that would raise living standards.

Yet the reality ten years later is that 100 million children in Eastern Europe are in danger from war, poverty and disease, according to the UNICEF agency.

Leaders of NATO also pledged that

investment would pour eastwards. In fact since 1989, foreign direct investment in the whole of Eastern Europe was only half of what entered Britain.

The same will happen in the Balkans. Some multi-nationals will swoop to grab assets on the cheap but they will mainly use the region as markets for their goods.

This is the reality that lies behind NATO's demand that Kosovo be run "on free market principles".

Euro and Local Elections show discontent

"PEOPLE ARE not voting because they are content with the booming economy". This is how Fianna Fail Minister Noel Dempsey, explained the lowest voter turn out in a local election since the foundation of the state.

This couldn't be further from the truth. The reality is that many young and poor voters stayed away in disgust.

Scandals

After two years of corruption scandals where nothing has been done many drew the conclusion that the whole system stinks and that voting was not going to change matters. For some this was a strong political protest - for others it resulted from a despairing belief that 'everyone is corrupt' and 'is out for themselves'.

The main beneficiaries of the low turn out were Fianna Fail and Fine Gael.

They held up their percentages - but in only in a smaller electorate.

The main party which lost out on the discontent was Labour.

At the start of the year, Ruairi Quinn predicted that the merger of Labour and DL would galvanise the left and produce a

'synergy' where the new party would gain more than the sum of the original parts.

In reality, Labour has been outpulled by Sinn Fein and independents in key areas in both Euro and local elections.

All the talk about 'moving to the centre' and producing 'modern images' has proved to be a

pipe dream.

Labour was too closely associated with the political establishment.

It has failed to attack corrupt politicians because it wants to be back in coalition with some of them in the future.

It was not able to show how workers have lost out in the

Celtic Tiger because it is totally committed to the social partnership schemes which rob workers.

The elections show that the centre ground of Irish politics is too crowded.

Many are crying out for a real alternative.

Are Sinn Fein the new radical voice?

"I HAD 679 files in the Killinarden area but I got 50 votes out of it. It's inviting people like us and Fianna Fail to stay out of these areas and that would be calamitous".

This is how the Labour TD Pat Rabbite reacted to getting just over half of the vote of the Sinn Fein's candidate, Sean Crowe. Rabbite, expressed a sentiment that many in the political establishment feel: politics is about getting votes in return for pursuing individual cases. Anything that moves beyond that is worrying.

The Sinn Fein vote expressed a

desire for a radical alternative.

Unlike their approach in Northern Ireland, Sinn Fein in the South tried to tap into a class sentiment.

Opposed

They called for a £5 an hour minimum wage, strongly opposed corruption and called for a higher share of the Celtic Tiger for workers. Where they had a record of community work, they scored highly.

The Socialist Workers Party, by contrast, polled a low vote in the few areas where we stood because our focus is on the struggles of organised workers and there is not the same

emphasis on elections.

Yet Sinn Fein's radicalism is limited. It won much of its base by attacking 'anti-social' behaviour and focusing on individual drug addicts and dealers rather than the system which provides no facilities for treatment.

It sees Fianna Fail as the party that it might lend unofficial support to form a government.

Its nationalism and desire to enter 'the mainstream' means that it is no longer committed to a revolutionary approach to the Southern state.

Sinn Fein voters want real change - but only a real socialist approach can deliver.

The wildcard

DURING the war the media hailed the KLA as brave fighters.

But now NATO are attempting to disarm them and prevent any move to independence.

But according to the journalist Robert Fisk, "The KLA will refuse to be 'demilitarised'... In a few months time - at most a year - NATO's enemy will be the KLA, who will then be raging against the West for abandoning their hopes of independence. Then we shall remember how we thought we had won the war."



INDONESIA

Will the election fulfil people's hope for change

THE PARTY of Megawati Sukarnoputri looked set to top the poll in the Indonesian general election as Socialist Worker went to press. Official polling results put her Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle as the front runner with 38 percent of the vote.

But by the beginning of this week less than a fifth of the votes that were cast seven days previously had been counted.

Whatever the final result, it is clear that no party has won an overall majority of seats.

Democratic

It is also clear that the election falls well short of the hope for democratic change which inspired hundreds of thousands of workers and students when they overthrew military rule last year.

Mass uprisings in May last year broke the 32 year long rule of Indonesian dictator General Suharto.

His deputy, B J Habibie, stepped in and

promised moves to end military rule. But his main role was to slow the pace of change and prevent the movement from spreading to demand economic and social justice.

Moves towards democracy have been limited.

Some 38 of the 500 seats in parliament are still reserved for the military.

Leaders

It gets a similar proportion of the seats in the 27 provincial assemblies too. Many local political leaders still come from the army.

The Indonesian armed forces continue to own large chunks of the economy.

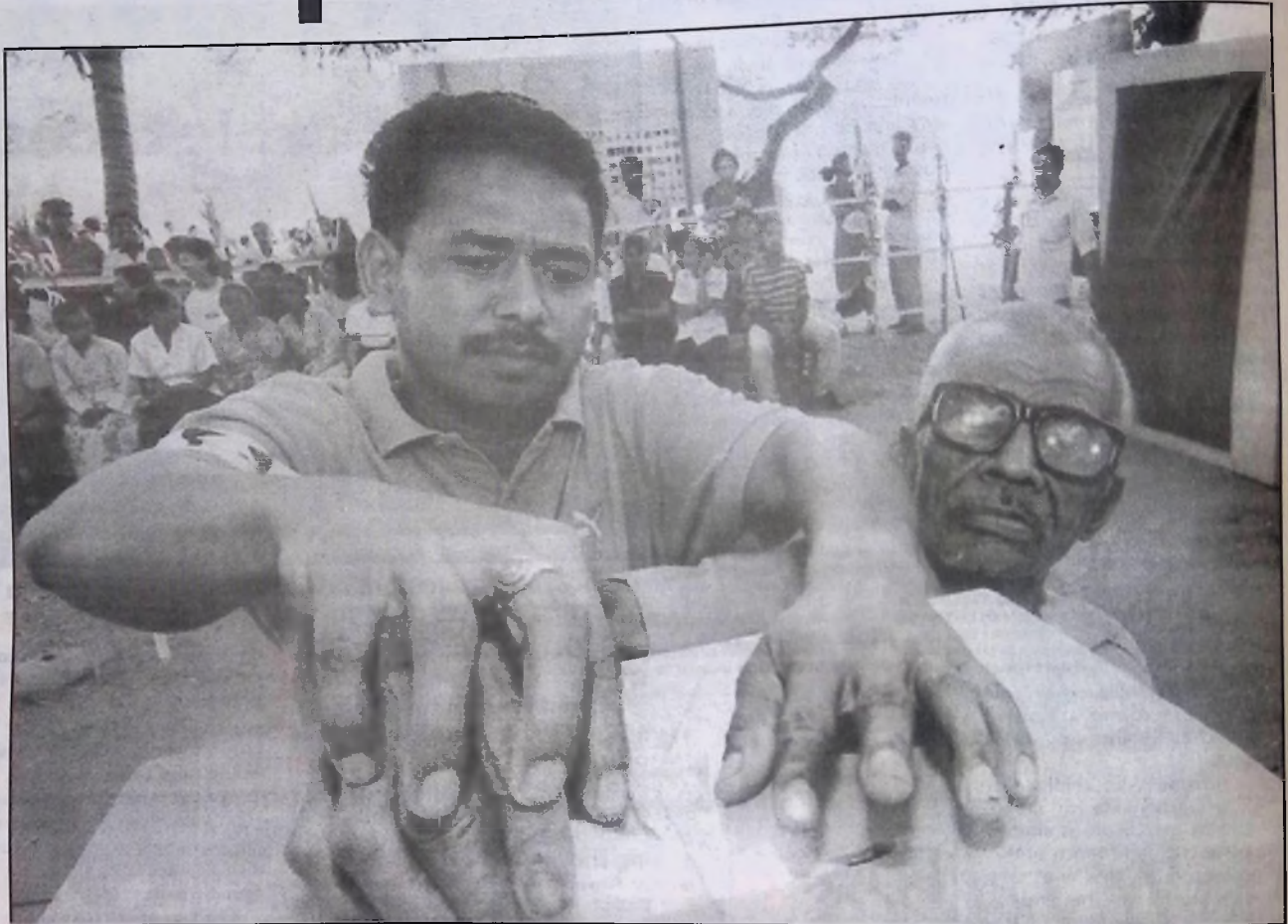
Officials in Habibie's government and army officers have used their position to rig the vote for his Golkar Party-founded by General Suharto.

The Jakarta Post reports hundreds of election "irregularities" including the buying of votes, the opening of false polling booths, double voting and the forging of ballot papers.

In one district more votes were cast than the number of voters.

Golkar has been the biggest beneficiary of this vote rigging.

But it is still behind



Voting in Indonesia — but there has been widespread corruption

Megawati's party and the National Awakening Party of Islamist politician Abdurrahman Wahid.

The mass of Indonesia's 200 million people have high hopes for a coalition government led

by Megawati

But such a prospect has not brought panic within the army or big business.

The Indonesian stock market rose 12 percent on news that Megawati was in the lead.

The International Monetary Fund released \$450 million in delayed loans as the votes came in.

The army declared it was looking forward to working with whoever formed a government.

They are confident because Megawati has distanced herself from demands for radical change.

She accepts the budget cuts the IMF is demanding in return for loans.

She has touted

General Wiranto, head of the army, as a possible deputy leader if the parliament makes her president.

And she has also ruled out a referendum on independence for East Timor.

European elections round-up

VOTERS across Europe have rejected governments modelled on right wing labour like those of Tony Blair and Gerhard Schröder.

The vote in the Euro elections shows the disillusion with Labour style politics across the continent.

In most places, the immediate beneficiaries of this feeling were Tory parties. But this does not mean that millions of European workers have moved rightwards.

Where there were credible left electoral alternatives, as in France and Greece, they grew by giving focus to people's frustration.

In some countries the Greens also did well.

■ **GERMANY:** The Social Democratic Party of Gerhard Schröder was beaten by the Tories.

The Greens, whose leaders backed the

war in the Balkans, fell sharply to just 7 percent of the vote.

Polls showed jobs as the key issue and voters were angry that Schröder has presided over a rise in unemployment and had sacked Oskar Lafontaine for daring to propose measures to create work.

There were some signs that the left could pose an alternative. The vote for the PDS (the ex-Communist Party) rose to 6 percent. It made some breakthroughs in working class districts of the former West Germany.

★ **FRANCE:** The far left coalition of Lutte Ouvriere and the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire won over 5 percent of the vote and took five seats.

LO-LCR gained almost as many votes as the Communist Party (7 percent).

The Socialist Party was the largest single party with around 22 percent of the vote. The Tories are split between three parties, all of which took between 10 percent and 13 percent.

In the final week of the campaign the Socialist Party spoke left, denouncing the Blair-Schröder "Third Way" pact.

Leading Socialist Party figures expressed horror at the original draft of a statement by Blair and Schröder which called for "captains of industry" to be treated in the same way as top footballers and pop stars.

The Nazi vote was split between the followers of Le Pen and the followers of Megret. Together they took about 10 percent, similar to the result in 1994 but substantially down on their vote in the last presidential election.

★ **ITALY:** The centre left parties of the governing coalition did badly, boosting the fortunes of media magnate and ex prime minister Silvio Berlusconi.

The National Alliance list, which contains Nazis, came third but its vote, 10.5 percent, was lower than in 1994. The turnout was just 34 percent.

★ **SPAIN:** The ruling centre-right party won the largest

number of votes. The Labour type Socialist Party slightly increased its share of the poll.

The Socialists did rather better in local and regional elections held at the same time as the Euro poll.

The United Left, to the left of the socialists, did badly, losing almost half its vote compared to 1994. A revolutionary socialist in Spain says, "The United Left failed to build on opposition to the war in the Balkans." At the start of the war 30 percent were against, by the end 70 percent. Yet the United Left did not build on this."

The Basque Party Euskal Herriarok won one seat and increased its vote from 180,000 to 300,000.

★ **GREECE:** The vote for the ruling Socialist Party (Pasok) fell and the left alternatives all gained some votes.

The Communist Party put opposition to NATO's bombing at the centre of its campaign. Its vote rose to 9 percent and a left wing breakaway from Pasok took 7 percent.

The Tory vote was almost unchanged from last time and parties to the right of it did badly.

★ **BELGIUM:** Newspapers called the poll results "an earthquake". Belgium had a general election as well as Euro elections, and the centre coalition government of Jean-Luc Dehaene lost its majority in parliament.

Amid outrage over the government's handling of the dioxins in food crisis, the Greens did extremely well.

Others who gained were the right wing and pro-business Liberals and, in Flanders, the Nazi Vlaams Blok.

★ **AUSTRIA:** The governing Social Democratic Party just managed to win the largest share of the vote, but the conservative Austrian People's Party (which is part of the ruling coalition) held on to the seats it won last time.

The Nazi Freedom Party led by Jörg Haider saw its vote fall by around 4 percent, but it still took nearly a quarter of the poll.

Eamonn McCann

Sectarianism and the Agreement

There is an apparent paradox at the heart of the situation in the North. The vast majority of people don't want to be at daggers-drawn with their neighbours. But at the same time, levels of sectarian hostility seem to be rising. The same contradiction is expressed in relation to the Multi-Party Agreement.

All opinion poll evidence suggests that support for the Agreement has held up on both sides of the divide. But the pressure mounts on Trimble not to form an Executive without IRA decommissioning - and simultaneously on Adams not to contemplate decommissioning until there's an Executive formed. This incongruity allows commentators to be blithely optimistic that "the Agreement will work", and, at the same time, filled with doom about the disaster at hand.

Most commentators see support for the Agreement and rising sectarianism as directly-opposed phenomena.

It doesn't occur to them that the stand-off at Garvaghy Road, for example, might be as much a product of the Agreement as a threat to it: that the contradiction may not lie between the Agreement and what is happening on the ground, but is contained within the Agreement itself.

Even in ordinary, conventional, bourgeois terms, the Agreement was flawed in its foundation. A comparison with the agreement in South Africa makes the point.

The South African deal left a lot to be desired. It hasn't transformed the structures of wealth and power.

Politics

There is disillusion among black workers that majority rule in politics has brought little change in economics. But at least there was no doubt about the point of the exercise.

The problem was white minority rule, the solution black majority rule. Complex negotiations and dodgy dealing were necessary to reach agreement on how the transition was to be managed. But there was no confusion that this was the transition required.

But what transition was required in the North? An innocent outsider might have imagined it obvious. The problem was that the State had been constructed in such a way as to give expression to the identity of one community only, while refusing expression to the identity of the other. This one-sidedness was reflected in all State institutions - most notably in the police - and in official policy and practice.

This being the problem, the solution lay in devising a means of incorporating the identity of the excluded community. The State would no longer reflect Britishness only, but Irishness too. That is, the Britishness of the State would be somewhat diminished, its Irishness somewhat enhanced. Such a deal could be sold to both sides only on the same basis, of remedying an unfair, sectarian imbalance.

There are grounds for believing this approach would have "worked". But instead, the deal was done by avoidance of the issue. The nature of the transition required is nowhere set out in the Agreement. The implicit assumption is that 30 years of conflict resulted from unfortunate misunderstanding.

The alternative approach would have necessitated acknowledging the nature of the State, and the need for change. The majority of working-class Protestants would not have balked at this. After all, they'd been marginalised, too, in the old sectarian set-up.

But the Unionist political bosses, and their henchmen in the police and the upper echelons of the civil service, couldn't admit the truth about the Northern State, because this would revealed them as the sectarian villains of the piece, and cast doubt, to put it mildly, on their suitability for public life in the new era.

So we have an Agreement which acknowledges no dimension to politics other than Orange-versus-Green, and then bids for acceptance by both sides by allowing each to believe it has won. In this circumstance, the competitive mobilisation of "the two communities" is natural and inevitable.

Sectarian strife threatens the Agreement? Maybe. But it's true, too, that the Agreement threatens sectarian strife.

Murdered for marrying a Catholic

THE BRUTAL murder of Elizabeth O Neill was the work of extreme right wing fundamentalists who want to drive Catholic and Protestants apart.

In the eyes of the Red Hand Defenders and the Orange Volunteers, she had joined the enemy because she married a Catholic.

Both are cover names for a group of loyalist paramilitaries who have been fed on a message of hate from DUP politicians.

Over the past two months, they have embarked on a campaign of pipe bombs attacks to drive Catholics from 'Protestant' areas of Armagh.

Many of them came together as 'born again'

Christians in the Maze under the inspiration of fundamentalist pastors.

A slogan on the walls of Portadown summed up their approach - ATAT - All Taigs are Targets.

Yet the groups is only able to function because the RUC has connived in its growth.

Sections of the security apparatus fear an outbreak of peace because it would mean a slashing of their numbers and privileges.

The atmosphere in the RUC has long been one of institutionalised sectarianism and sections of the police have always been willing to take extreme measures to protect their idea of Protestant privilege.

Thousands of ordinary



Elizabeth O Neill

Protestants have been sickened by these events.

finger of blame onto the politicians who have stoked up this desperate bigotry.

But the key now is to turn the

BLOODY SUNDAY

Establishment tries to block the truth

THE BRITISH Ministry of Defence has joined the campaign to stop the release of the names of paratroopers called by the Bloody Sunday Inquiry

The *Daily Mail's* "Don't Betray the Paras" campaign has been backed by William Hague, Norman Tebbit and other arch right-wingers.

It is the latest attempt to frustrate the inquiry into the murder of 14 civil rights demonstrators in Derry in January 1972.

Paul O'Connor from the Derry-based Pat Finucane Centre says the names of various paratroopers had long been known to the families.

Truth

"The names should not matter," he says. "This is not a case of personal animosity against soldier A or Soldier B. It is a matter of justice and finding the truth. This is what the families want."

But the last thing the British establishment wants is for the Saville inquiry to uncover the real role of the British Army in trying to suppress the revolt in Catholic areas against the sectarian Northern state.

That is why it has continually focused on the issue of soldiers identity. Since the new inquiry



was announced, the Ministry of Defence has claimed that the soldiers could not be traced, and when they were that they could not testify for fear

of being targeted by the IRA.

In fact the two most senior members of the paratroopers in Derry that day are well known.

Colonel Derek Wilford, officer in charge, has claimed that he will go to jail rather than testify. Wilford still claims that he did nothing wrong

and on Channel 4 news said "all my soldiers will give the same evidence as they gave to Widgery, so I don't see what will be new about this one".

Wilford was awarded an OBE the year after Bloody Sunday. Mike Jackson, head of NATO forces in Kosovo, was second in charge of the paratroopers on Bloody Sunday.

Jackson was not even called to give evidence at the Widgery inquiry.

Far from facing any disciplinary measures, he has been promoted through the ranks of the British army.

N.I. refugee scandal

TONY BLAIR has spent £4 million a day on the war, claiming he wanted to help the Kosovan refugees.

Yet refugees who arrive in Northern Ireland and Britain face life on the bread line because Jack Straw won't give them more than a lousy £10 per week.

But the greatest scandal of all is that many refugees end up in jail or prison camps while their application for asylum is being processed.

In Northern

Ireland, refugees are locked up in two prisons: Magilligan for the men and Maghaberry for the women. In the past, Magilligan housed up to two dozen refugees at once.

Torture

These included Kurds and Algerians who had just escaped jail and torture at home.

The Northern Ireland Law Centre has repeatedly rung the alarm bells about the fate of these refugees. The Derry office says many refugees who

turned out to have a legitimate case for asylum were kept in jail for months.

They were treated as criminals, although they weren't even illegal immigrants.

Law Centre workers have heard of at least one case where a refugee, who had no English, was seen by the Magilligan prison doctor without the aid of an interpreter.

Until recently, refugees who followed a certain diet due to their religion were only given ordinary prison

food.

In 1998, around one in five asylum seekers was put into jail.

The Immigration Service argues even asylum seekers are illegal 'aliens' because they have no permission to stay in Britain.

But it's ludicrous to suggest that a refugee could apply for a visa in his or her home country.

Even international human rights law recognises that a person without valid papers isn't necessarily an illegal immigrant.

South African elections:

ANC fails to deliver

IN 1994 black people in South Africa and people around the world rejoiced as the apartheid regime collapsed and Nelson Mandela was elected president.

Five years on, South Africans have once again voted overwhelmingly for Mandela's party, the ANC, but the mood of optimism has almost disappeared.

The sweeping changes that most blacks expected have failed to materialise.

Homeless

The ANC promised to build a million homes to deal with the problem of six million homeless but just 325,000 have been built.

The end of apartheid has produced riches for a small black elite but there is still a huge gap between black and white.

Over 97 per cent of white homes have electricity but less than a third of black homes do.

In some townships black people still have to share one free standing toilet with up to a thousand other residents.

The terrible poverty suffered by millions breeds crime and Johannesburg has been labelled the most dangerous city on earth by the media.

Yet, South Africa has always been a violent place to live if you were black.

Now the obscene gap between rich and poor has created greater tensions between the rich white elite and the oppressed black majority.

Before the fall of apartheid, crime was confined to black areas. The rich white suburbs were unaffected as blacks were banned from white areas after dusk.

Although the notorious pass laws have been abolished, in some areas an informal system is still in place.

Private security firms patrol white areas and many whites walk around their estates carrying sjamboks - whips used by the police to keep down blacks under apartheid - and accompanied by rottweilers.

Sixty-five murders are committed daily and a woman is raped every 30 seconds.

In the South African media, black murders are

by GRACE LALLY

ignored and the headlines are filled with sensationalist stories of white people being gunned down in their drive-ways by black gangs.

Far from becoming the "Rainbow Nation" that Mandela predicted, five years after the end of apartheid South Africa is a more dangerous and racially divided country than ever.

Crime was one of the central election issues but no party offered a solution. Instead, calls for more draconian punishments were echoed by each of the parties.

Even the ANC defence minister wants to change the constitution "to reduce the rights of criminals".

No party calls for fundamental reform of the police force which has remained unchanged since the days of apartheid.

Sixty-six per cent of people voted for the ANC in the recent elections because most blacks do not see any alternative. But there is growing dissatisfaction with the ANC.

The ANC recognised the mood and its election manifesto proclaimed "change must go

at a faster pace". Corruption within the ANC was also a major issue, prompting a "moral renewal campaign" within the party to regain the confidence of its followers.

Yet the real difficulty with the ANC is that it is not prepared to make the fundamental changes which would benefit working class people.

Vicious

Trade unions have found that companies now run by black managers are just as vicious as white bosses in exploiting workers for profit.

The ANC has come to office with a massive majority and huge goodwill but the party wants to work with the rich and the big companies and not seize power from them.

The upcoming public holiday to commemorate the Soweto Student Uprising of 1976, which saw black students strike the first major blow against apartheid, will be a reminder to people that there is an alternative tradition of mass movements from below which have the power to challenge the system itself.



War ends in carve up

How

TONY BLAIR has boasted that "Europe is a better place than it was before military action began in the Balkans".

It's a statement that couldn't be further from the truth.

As newspapers proclaimed the 'liberation of Kosovo', refugees are returning to a countryside that is devastated by war.

Defects

Thousands of depleted uranium shells litter the soil and will lead to a growth in leukaemia and genetic defects in future years.

NATO has readily admitted that the refugees will not return to a

Bloody Sunday officer leads NATO forces

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL Michael Jackson, the commander of NATO was one of the butcher's at Derry's Bloody Sunday.

Nicknamed by his own troops, the Prince of Darkness, Jackson served as the adjutant to the officers commanding the Para regiment in Bloody Sunday.

He has never apologised for the murders but instead refers to them as 'an unfortunate series of events'.

Minority

The British army entered Northern Ireland as 'peacekeepers' and 'protectors of the nationalist minority' in 1969.

Within a short time they began to behave as a colonial army of occupation. With Jackson's record, the same will happen in Kosovo.

democracy but to a protectorate patrolled by armed troops and run by a colonial style viceroy appointed by NATO.

The full consequence of NATO's war on Serbian civilians will also be only become apparent in the coming months.

At the end of the war, NATO was mounting 600 air sorties a day.

Bombers were described as waiting in a "cab rank" over the Adriatic.

Their main targets were electricity stations, sewerage works, bridges, oil refineries - in fact all the facilities necessary to conduct life in a modern urban environment.

Repair

The insurance newspaper *Lloyd's List* reported that water reserves in Belgrade were down to 12.5 per cent and that the city's power grid was bombed "almost beyond repair".

Even as the war was ending, NATO wanted to inflict the maximum number of injuries of Serbian conscripts.

In language reminiscent of the

'turkey shoot' of Iraqi conscripts at the end of the Gulf War, NATO set out to create 'hog pens' and 'target rich environments' over Kosovo.

Credibility

The aim of this huge level of violence was to assert 'the credibility of NATO'.

It had little to do with human rights.

AS THE war ended, NATO carved up Kosovo into different territories.

Each of the five NATO countries played a major role in the war. They were given a piece of land supposed to control.

The British were given the area including the area around Pristina.

The real winners

ARMS COMPANIES are the real winners of the Balkans wars. They have been celebrating at the profits they have already made.

The premier merchants of death are:

Raytheon (laser guided bombs) shares up 25 per cent since the war began. Raytheon is also one of the big business donors to the British Labour Party.

Boeing (cruise missiles) shares up 20 per cent.

British Aerospace (attack aircraft) shares up 12 per cent.

On top of the rise in share prices,

the arms companies can't wait to gain from replacing military equipment. It is estimated that in the war, 20,000 smart bombs were dropped and 5,000 "other

Hardware

The cost to NATO of the war was \$100 million a week. It was \$36 million a day at the start of the war. Much of the money for the war will be taken out of the national budgets and also to relieve Third World debt.

Lieutenant-General Jackson said he wanted to see "Serbs out, NATO in and refugees back."

In reality the whole of the army was given the green light to his generals to preside over a new round of ethnic cleansing. NATO's commander in Kosovo,

NATO's ethnic cleansing policy

AT THE end of the war Britain's Defence Minister George Robertson said he wanted to see "Serbs out, NATO in and refugees back."

He wasn't just talking about the Serbian army or paramilitaries leaving Kosovo. He was giving the green light to his generals to preside over a new round of ethnic cleansing.

NATO's commander in Kosovo,



S in colonial

How the deal works

AS THE war ended, NATO showed its true colonial colours by dividing up Kosovo into different sectors.

Each of the five NATO countries that played a major role in the war effort were given a piece of land they were supposed to control.

The British were given the central region, including the area around Pristina to reflect their

dominant role.

The Americans got eastern Kosovo; the French got the west; the Italians were rewarded for providing airbases and given the north of the country.

The south of Kosovo was designated as a protectorate of the Germans. This the first time that the German army has moved beyond its borders since the Second World War.

Occupied

The presence of the Wehrmacht is particularly odious for the Serbs because of the atrocities it committed when it last occupied Yugoslavia.

The key aim of NATO was to prevent Russia from grabbing its own sector. Behind all the niceties of diplomatic language, a deadly colonial rivalry is now in play.

NATO's real war aim was always to firmly establish its control over Eastern Europe. Just before the war began, it had pulled three new Eastern European states - Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary - into its military alliance.

The next four states to be considered for NATO membership are the former Republic of Yugoslavia itself, Slovenia and Serbia's neighbours Romania and Bulgaria.

Soviet

This will be the culmination of a ten year push that began in 1989 with the fall of the old Soviet



Plans for the carve up:
 1: British zone, troops:13,000+
 2: US troops: 7,000+
 3: German troops: 5,000+
 4: Italian troops:3,000.

Also: Russia troops 10,000 position unknown. Shaded area is a buffer zone.

Union.

In practice it will bring NATO right up to the borders of Russia itself and allow the western countries to establish their economic domination over the whole region.

A key consideration in this strategy is to squeeze Russian influence out of Kosovo and eventually Serbia itself.

This is why Madeline Albright proclaimed that "NATO will be embedded in every sector. We do not see a Russian sector."

Bribes

It is also the reason why the US used financial bribes to try to persuade a weakened Russian leadership to accept NATO control. Yet even though Russia faces economic chaos, it is still the second biggest military power in the world.

As a small Russian contingent raced to take Pristina airport before the British, it showed that Russian generals are again contemplating how they might be able to use their military power to help rebuild their shattered country.

For all the hypocritical talk of humanitarianism, the war has ended with a new front line between rival colonial powers. NATO's victory can only be the prelude to new wars in Europe.

al winners

the arms companies can also expect to gain from replacing military equipment. It is estimated that at the end of the war, 20,000 "smart bombs" were dropped and 5,000 "other" bombs.

Hardware

The cost to NATO of "lost hardware" was £100 million alone, including a £35 million Stealth fighter downed at the start of the war.

Much of the money to pay for the war will be taken out of the social welfare budgets and also measures to relieve Third World debt.

Lieutenant-General Michael Jackson said he wanted "the withdrawal of all Serb reservists in Kosovo between the ages of 18 and 55".

Reality

In reality this meant the almost the whole of the adult male population.

As the journalist Robert Fisk noted, this would have been "a step which would reduce the indigenous Serb population to tens of thousands of vulnerable old men, women and children".

g. commander in Kosovo.

Shareholding We don't all have a stake

GOODBODY STOCK-BROKERS have found a cause for celebration: share ownership among the Irish population is growing. According to a recent report, 13 per cent of the Republic's adult population or 380,000 people now own shares.

Public sector employees are also being pressured into taking share options instead of getting decent pay rises

Irish Government policy is directed to increasing share ownership. The current advertising campaign for Telecom shares suggests that it is a decidedly patriotic thing to do.

Instead of the type of 'Tell Sid' campaign which characterised privatisation deals in Britain, the ads are accompanied by traditional music and images of free spirits roaming the hills.

Evidence that a spread of share ownership is associated with a concentration of ownership in fewer hands comes from America.

Despite all the pressure on workers to take up shares in 'their firms', the reality is that 82 per cent of corporate stock is held by the wealthiest 10 per cent of families.

But even that does not tell the full story because over half of those shares, the controlling stake, is held by the richest one per cent.

Dubbed the One Per Cent Club by the *Observer's* business journalist Gregory Palast, this tiny elite holds a 'portfolio' of shares in a variety of companies that allow them to exercise control.

So they own General Motors and its rival Ford or they control Monsanto and its supposed competitor Dow Chemical.

Palast describes the motivation of this tiny elite of shareholders, "So what does the Wealth One Per Cent want? Answer: more wealth. Where will they get it from? As with a tube of toothpaste, they are squeezing from the bottom".

Dictates

One of the main ways they squeeze the bottom of society is by bending the will of governments to follow their dictates.

This has been spectacularly successful in America where there has been a huge transfer from the poor to the rich just as share ownership was apparently spreading.

In 1983, the One Per Cent possessed 33 per cent of America's net worth.

Today Clinton's policies has helped to increase their share to 40 per cent.

The main task of chief executives today is not to manage production or focus on markets but to spend their days as super-lobbyists and deal makers.

Take Sir Clive Thompson, the boss of Rentokil as an example. His spent most of last year lobbying New Labour to keep the minimum wage below £4.

As Palast writes, "The savings to corporate Britain totalled easily £4 billion a year, justifying a thousand times over Thompson's £3.7 million one year gain of share options".

Far from becoming a share owning democracy, modern capitalism is run by ever fewer thugs in suits.

by **KIERAN ALLEN**

Partnership

Public sector employees are also being pressured into take share options instead of getting decent pay rises.

The ICTU has even joined the campaign to promote employee share ownership schemes because they see it as a way of relieving the pressure on the terrible partnership deals.

The current promotion of shares is designed to foster an atmosphere of 'popular capitalism' in order to bolster support for right wing pro-market ideas.

Even though individual workers may buy shares the reality is that capitalist ownership is more concentrated in fewer hands than ever before.

This happens in a number of ways.

Firstly, those who buy shares tend to already own at least medium size property.

The Goodbody report shows that half of Irish share owners are farmers - even though farmers make up less than 15 percent of the population.

Secondly, shares in privatised companies eventually come under the control of banks and big financial institutions.

During a flotation offer, state companies are typically undervalued and sold off cheaply. Many buy shares at an early stage and make a small surplus by sell them off to 'institutional investors' who then make the real profits.

Outvote

Third, ownership of individual shares is meaningless when it comes to controlling companies because the real owners cast blocks of millions of shares and outvote the small time investors.

Ryanair, for example, often issues shares to the public as a quick way of raising cash.

But this does not stop the Ryan family and Michael O'Leary grabbing the lion's shares of the profits.

30 years after Stonewall...

Out of the closet — onto the streets

THE STONEWALL Inn at 51 Christopher Street in New York was a gay bar. At 3 a.m. on the 28th June 1969 Deputy Inspector Seymour Pine led eight plainclothes officers into the bar and arrested employees for selling liquor without a license.

It was a regular event. The Mafia run bar was raided when the cops didn't get enough of a pay off. But what had started as a police raid ended in a full-scale riot.

Two barmen, three drag queens and a lesbian, were arrested. When the arrested lesbian struggled with the police as they tried to get her into the patrol car, the crowd began to hurl beer bottles and coins.

The police, hemmed in, went back into the bar, emerging only to grab a man from the crowd whom they beat up. The crowd threw cobblestones and bricks, and even used a parking meter to ram the door.

The Tactical Patrol Force arrived in full riot gear. For hours they charged at the crowd, which scattered through the irregular streets around Christopher Park and then regrouped.

Dumbfounded

The police were dumbfounded as they never expected gays to fight back. At one point, the police turned to find themselves confronting a chorus line of dancing drag queens singing "We are the Stonewall Girls," while people dropped bottles from roof tops onto the police.

By 3:30am the police had broken up the crowd, but the next day crowds gathered at the bar to see the debris, and the graffiti that read, "Legalize Gay Bars" and "Support Gay Power."

The assumption that gays would always accept prejudice and discrimination without resistance had died. "We've had all we can take from the Gestapo. We're putting our foot down once and for all," one of the rioters told a reporter.

For the next three days over 2,000 people fought the police on the streets

by **SIMON BASKETTER**

of New York. Barricades were put up to keep the cops out of the areas near gay bars.

Sylvia Rivera, who was at the Stonewall bar and later founded STAR: Street Transvestites Action Revolutionaries, remembers the atmosphere.

"It was street gay people from the Village out front — homeless people who lived in the park in Sheridan Square outside the bar — and then drag queens behind them and everybody behind us.

"I remember when someone threw a Molotov cocktail, I thought: "My god, the revolution is here. The revolution is finally here!"

"I always believed that we would have a fight back. I just knew that we would fight back. I just didn't know it would be that night.

"I am proud of myself as being there

"I REMEMBER WHEN SOMEONE THREW A MOLOTOV COCKTAIL, I THOUGHT: "MY GOD, THE REVOLUTION IS HERE. THE REVOLUTION IS FINALLY HERE!"

that night. That's when I saw the world change."

THE GAY Liberation Movement was born. It chose its name in solidarity with the Vietnamese Liberation Front. During the rioting the Young Lords [a revolutionary Puerto Rican youth group] and the Black Panthers came to show support.

Huey Newton sent a letter of support from prison arguing against homophobia in the black movement.



Then and now: Police arresting drag queens in New York and marching for gay rights today.



The GLF also declared its solidarity with other revolutionary movements of the oppressed and exploited. It fought against the harassment of the police, but also against the exploitation by the bar owners.

The message was summed up in the slogan "out of the closet and onto the streets." In Britain, the GLF organised sit-ins in bars which refused to serve gays.

Oppressed

Yet while the GLF identified itself with other oppressed groups, it did not see the working class as the force for change.

It made a fantastic leap to see capitalism as the source of oppression of gay people - but it was never really sure how it would be overthrown.

In the heyday of militancy in the 1960s this lack of clarity did not seem to matter. But the movement still picked up some of the worst aspects of 60's politics.

There was the idea of dropping out and establishing an alternative lifestyle. Sometimes this was couched in very radical language but in the end it meant retreating from a fight against capitalism.

This weakness was exacerbated with a decline in the level of struggle throughout the 1980s.

Despite the gains of the last three decades, oppression still continues for gays and lesbians. Only six of the 202 countries in the world have laws to protect gay men and lesbians against discrimination.

Being gay is still illegal in 74 coun-

tries. If you are gay or lesbian in Cuba, for example, you are likely to be sent to jail. In Bangladesh and Bahrain the official view is that homosexuality does not exist.

In Pakistan homosexual behaviour is illegal and is punished by anything up to life imprisonment. In Saudi Arabia homosexual acts can be punished with the death penalty.

In six individual states in the US (Arkansas, Kansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Montana and Nevada) anal/oral sex between people of the same gender is a crime.

IN IRELAND gay liberation is also far from won. Surveys suggest that around a quarter of gays have been subject to physical assault.

Discrimination at work is still rife. The church still runs the education and health systems and promotes prejudice against homosexuality.

Since decriminalisation in Ireland in 1993, there has been a growth of the gay scene. But with this has come a retreat from politics.

Identity

The gay scene offers, for those who can afford it, the possibility to assert your identity. But the majority of lesbians and gays are excluded from this.

It is a myth to pretend there is a common interest between all gays and lesbians.

In fact lesbians and gays are no

more united because of their sexuality than are women, blacks or any other group of the oppressed.

Indeed there is a division that runs right through the heart of the gay community based on class.

There are both capitalist and working class gays; there are those with an interest in preserving the system and those with an interest in overthrowing it.

The pink economy which supposedly holds the gay community together shows these divisions and antagonisms very sharply.

Community

Gay bosses say they intend to serve the community as a whole - offering gay men and lesbians jobs, opportunities and the like.

But there is nothing liberating about working for a gay boss or in a gay bar.

The so called 'pink pound' is used to define a gay lifestyle. To be gay or lesbian is no longer supposed to be simply a statement of sexuality but a statement of lifestyle: it defines what clothes you wear, what magazines you read, what furniture you have, or what vodka you drink.

There is an alternative. Pride should be more than a celebration of gay identity. It should be a protest against discrimination and oppression like the riot it commemorates.

The lesson of the Stonewall is that those who fight can win change. That is a message that's still relevant today.

A cinematic revolutionary

ORSON WELLES'S first film, *Citizen Kane*, made in 1941, stands as one of the great masterpieces of cinema. It was revolutionary both in terms of its film techniques and the way it told the story.

Yet it was withdrawn from circulation six weeks after release because it was hated by those who controlled the studios. MGM even offered to reimburse RKO pictures the entire budget if it would burn the print. Newspapers campaigned against the film while some cinemas refused to show it.



Welles was used to hostile responses. When working in the leftist Mercury Theatre in the 1930s federal agents closed down one of his plays for being subversive. He was attacked for being communist for the staging of an all-black *Macbeth* in Harlem.

The 1930s was the era of the Hollywood studio system. It was a time when studio heads ruled like dictators. It was more common for Sam Meyer, head of MGM, to finish a picture than its director. The bosses chose the story, who acted in it and how it looked. There was little creative independence.

Yet Orson Welles, at 26, was given complete independence to make his film as he wanted.

The reason was the tremendous talent he had shown in his work on radio. Welles had stretched the medium to the limit, most notoriously with the broadcast of H.G. Wells's *War of the Worlds*.

Control

Afterwards RKO offered Welles the chance to control the film they wanted him to make.

Citizen Kane is complicated and not easy to follow but what the establishment hated was the film's subject matter.

With the writer Herman J Mankiewicz, Welles settled on the story of the newspaper baron William Randolph Hearst, a sort of 1930s Tony O'Reilly. As *Citizen Kane* went into production Hearst's estate put increasing pressure on RKO to have it stopped.

This was because the film shows a rich and powerful American businessman not as a figure of romance and sentiment, but as sinister and tortured. Kane is a man driven by a massive ego fed by his incredible wealth.

The film is a harsh critique of capitalism. Kane's business empire decays in parallel with his relationships to those around him. In one scene, between Kane and his first wife, breakfast is repeated over and over — each time one sees the growing gulf between them. In a couple of minutes, ten years of a collapsing marriage passes.

Citizen Kane is set against real American history. The hero's empire is nearly ruined by the Great Depression of the 1930s. The film's dark, mist shrouded imagery reflected the faltering confidence of the American ruling class as workers started to organise.

Kane's lieutenant, Jed Leland, confronts him: "Remember the working man... he's turning into something called organised labour. You're not gonna like that one little bit when you find out it means that your working man expects something as his right not your gift...when your precious underprivileged really get together, that's gonna add up to something bigger than your privilege and I don't know what you'll do."

The film cost Welles his future independence in movie making and it stands not only as a revolutionary film but also as one more example of how our rulers, despite their access to wealth and culture, are a class of ignorant egomaniacs.

Despite the fact that Hollywood never forgave him for abusing their trust, Welles made a number of other impressive movies. In *The Stranger* (1946), had Welles directing himself as a Nazi war criminal hiding in a small town, showing the danger of fascism in America.

Both *The Lady from Shanghai* (1948) and *Touch of Evil* (1958) present a vision of the world where each human act has endless and unforeseen consequences in a society completely devoid of a moral sense.

Had our rulers got their way, no one would ever have seen any of them. Catch them at the special Orson Welles season at Dublin's IFC over the next few months.

SIMON BASKETTER

Island records 'catch a fire'

by PETE CHESTER

THE FORTIETH anniversary of Island Records is something to celebrate. The label, which produced the albums of reggae superstar Bob Marley, was founded in 1959 by a white upper class Anglo-Jamaican, Chris Blackwell. At first Island was a small scale operation distributing records around Jamaica.

Jamaica was at this time struggling for independence from Britain. The start of Island Records coincided with the political and social upheavals that accompanied independence.

Culturally people turned towards the US, where fantastic music, some of it political, was being pumped out. Musicians in the capital city, Kingston, began to mix up influences from American R&B, blues and jazz with a "sweet beat", which became known as ska.

In 1962 Blackwell moved to London, where he became the dominant UK distributor to Britain's growing black population.

He also built links with the mod culture that drew white teenagers towards black music. In 1965 the novelty record My Boy Lollipop sung by 15 year old Millie Small provided Blackwell with his first hit, selling seven million copies.

This meant that by the early 1970s Blackwell could sign some of the biggest rock acts to Island, including Free, Traffic and Roxy Music.

Posters

Blackwell was ready to ditch Jamaican music, but in 1972 Bob Marley, stuck in London, tapped Blackwell for his fare home and a glorious new chapter was born. Soon posters of Marley, with his proud look, dreadlocks and radical stance would be pinned on the walls of young people, black and white, across every continent.

Marley, born of a poor Afro-Caribbean woman and a white overseer, had started off doing R&B covers mixed with "ghetto songs" about the poverty and strife in Jamaica's shanty towns. He had then joined the Rastafarian cult, which mixed religious mysticism with anti-authoritarianism.

In 1972 Bob Marley and the Wallers, friends Peter Tosh and Bunny Livingston, put out the groundbreaking *Catch A Fire* album.

This was followed by

Burnin' with classic tracks "Get Up Stand Up, (Stand Up For Your Rights)" and "I Shot the Sheriff". Blackwell guided Marley's career through a series of increasingly militant albums, turning him into the first "Third World superstar".

Marley combined religion with anti-colonial sentiments and criticism of Jamaican politicians who had betrayed the people- "Them Belly Full (But we Hungry)" being an example.

Night

Marley survived an assassination attempt on the eve of a political concert he was to play during the bloodsoaked 1976 elections. Blackwell chartered a plane off the island that night.

In Britain Island signed the best reggae acts including Steel Pulse, who performed their anti-racist "Ku Klux Klan" anthem at Rock Against Racism festivals for the Anti

Nazi League.

After Marley's death from cancer in 1981 the music began to change, and so did Island.

Blackwell reaped \$300 million when he sold off the label in 1989.



Bob Marley

'The future belongs to the proles'

by SINEAD KENNEDY

GEORGE ORWELL'S famous novel *1984* recently celebrated its fiftieth anniversary.

Its plot and characters have a resonance that go outside the novel. Winston Smith is a functionary of the Ministry of Truth of Airstrip One, part of the superstate of Oceania.

Oceania is constantly at war with either Eurasia or Eastasia, the other world superstates.

But Winston is unhappy and together with his lover, Julia, they rebel against the state and the party.

They are both caught, tortured and broken. The rulers of the superstate seem to be forever triumphant

The novel, a satire on totalitarian socialism, was written at the end of Orwell's life. He died less than six months after its publication. It illustrates the disillusionment with socialist politics that Orwell felt.

1984 ends with an acknowledgement that the future belongs to "the proles" but they only appear in the shadows of the novel as helpless and stupid, faceless characters.

Orwell, whose original name was Eric Blair broke from his middle class background and abandoned his career in the imperial Police force in Burma to become a champion of the "common man".

His clear indictments of the system inspired generations of socialists

But he deliberately held out against "smelly orthodoxies" and saw himself as an outsider who investigated the conditions of

the poor. He wanted to sympathise with them but still retain his cool detachment.

This meant that for most of his life he had no confidence in the power and potential of the working class.

But for one brief moment this changed. In his magnificent book *Homage to Catalonia*, Orwell described Barcelona as he fought in the Spanish Civil War

He wrote that "it was the first time I had ever been in a town where the working class are in the saddle. Practically every building of any size was seized by the workers and was draped with red flags or with red and black flags of anarchists. Waiters and shop walkers looked you in the eye and treated you as an equal."

Orwell enlisted in the militia of the left-wing organisation, the POUM

But the Spanish revolution was betrayed by Stalin.

Orwell increasingly found his world shaped by two tyrants, Stalin and Hitler. Without an alternative, he sank into pessimism, cynicism and despair and retreated to British nationalism.

Orwell, who once wrote vicious attacks on imperialism, spent most of the Second World War doing propaganda broadcasts to India, to maintain support for Britons war aims.

It also emerged recently that Orwell touted names of communists to the Information Research Department, an anti-Communist propaganda section of the Foreign office.

The tragedy of Orwell is that in his capitulation to the system, he was yet another victim of Stalinism.

HOUSING

The greed that fuels the crisis

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 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.

NEW evidence is emerging that an orgy of greed is the main reason for the housing crisis in most major cities.

A report from the Housing Commission, originally sponsored by the Labour Party, is a damning indictment against the markets ability to solve the accommodation crisis.

The commission's report estimates that "housing costs increased three and a half times faster than house building costs over a four year period"

Between 1994 and 1998, the average house price in Dublin rose from £64,575 to £124,243.

One of the groups who have profited most from the housing crisis is a small number of construction companies who have pushed up the price of new houses.

Backers

These companies are some of the main financial backers of Fianna Fail, and so no attempt has been made to curb their activities.

The other group who have made huge profits are big landowners who have pushed up the price of building land by 200 percent since 1995.

After a similar hike in land prices in the early 1970's, the government set up a special committee under Justice Kenny. His main proposal was that local authorities should be able to acquire building land at a cost of 25 percent above its value

Even this modest proposal was rejected out of hand. It was denounced as an 'unjust attack on property rights' and contrary to the Irish constitution. The right wing parties believed that the rights of

property came before people rights to decent accommodation.

Social housing slashed

OVER 100,000 people are now on waiting lists for a local authority house.

But the right wing parties have cut back on public housing over the last two decades.

In 1975, local authorities built 7,794 houses but by 1989 this had fallen to a mere 768.

Even though there is now a major housing shortage local authorities are still only building half the number of houses they built in 1975.

Instead of increasing the amount, Housing Minister Bobby Molloy has only 'urged' the builders to provide more affordable housing.



There is a building boom across Ireland — but not in houses for people

The sharks who feed off rent

CELTIC Tiger yuppies are buying up houses, hoping to make a fortune from rents.

According to the Housing Commission Report Irish landlords enjoy ample opportunity to exploit their tenants.

It notes that; tenants can be evicted at four weeks notice and no reason need to be given. rents are increased at frequent intervals and by substantial amounts. many prop-

erties are below the legal minimum standards which are in themselves very basic. only a small number of landlords are complying with the need to register.

Despite the growing complaints the number of inspections on rented property decreased from 6,048 in 1996 to 3,846 in 1997. Landlords know that the right wing government will not interfere with their activities.

Corpo con pensioners

Dublin Corporation is trying to con elderly tenants into a scheme to privatise part of the Sandyhill Gardens estate in Ballymun.

Residents in the enclosed area of Sandyhill, many of whom are pensioners, are being invited to sign up to a sheltered housing scheme run by a private charity.

The St Pancras Housing Association are promising new social facilities and a live in warden if residents agree to sign.

But many local people see hidden dangers in the plan :

They will have to pay an additional service charge, estimated at £5 a week, to fund the improvements. But there is no guarantee that the charge will not rise over time.

St Pancras say the rent will be "more or less equivalent" to the rent now paid to the Corpo. But with the scheme being privately run, this could change in a few years' time.

When Ballymun is refurbished, the district heating scheme will disappear and flats in Sandyhill will be individually metered. This will result in additional charges for people trying to survive on pensions.

One resident, John, told *Socialist Worker* that the new

scheme would be run like an institution. "It's a violation of people's civil liberties".

If the Corpo claim they want to improve residents' quality of life then why are they handing pensioners over to a private landlord instead of putting more money into public housing?

According to Christy Watts, a resident who returned to Ballymun from England ten years ago:

"The Corpo don't want to build houses for the poor. The Government here are going the same way as Thatcher in Britain—and she's the reason I came back here to live!"

What we think

THE BACON Report was supposed to offer a strategy to deal with the housing crisis.

But it has been a complete failure because it wanted to use market mechanisms.

Bacon recommended that landlords be given tax incentives so they would increase supply. He rejected out of hand proposals for rent controls.

But landlords already enjoy huge tax incentives and this has not stopped them increasing rents by an average of 30% last year.

The continuing crisis shows we need to break with the laws of the market.

★ Rent controls should be brought in immediately. No landlord should be allowed to raise their rent beyond the rate of inflation and many should have their rents cut.

★ There needs to be a crash programme of public housing.

★ The banks and big business should be taxed to provide the resources.

★ Building land in major cities should be taken into public ownership.

Instead of allowing developers to bribe politicians to get their properties re-zoned, the land should be nationalised to deal with the housing crisis.

SWP Branch meetings - all welcome

ATHLONE:
Contact 01- 872 2682 for detail

BRAY:
Meets fortnightly on Thursdays at the Mayfare Hotel at 8pm

BELFAST CENTRAL:
Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Garrick Bar, Chichester St.

BELFAST EAST:
Contact 01- 8722682 for detail

BELFAST SOUTH:
Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in Queens Students Union

CORK:
Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in Dennehy's Pub, Cornmarket

DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL:
Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Conways, Parnell St

DUBLIN NORTH WEST:
Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in the Vietnamese Centre, Hardwicke St (off Parnell Square).

DERRY:
Meets every Thursday at

8.15pm in Badgers Bar upstairs, Orchard St.

DUNDALK:
Contact 01 - 872 2682 for details

DUN LAOGHAIRE:
Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Christian Institute

DUBLIN ARTANE / COOLOCK:
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Artane / Beaumont Recreational Centre opp. Artane Castle

DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL:
Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Conways, Parnell St

DUBLIN NORTH WEST:
Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in the Vietnamese Centre, Hardwicke St (off Parnell Square).

DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL:
Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Trinity Inn, Pearse St

DUBLIN TALLAGHT:
Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in Jobstown Community Centre

June 23rd: After the Balkan War . . . NATO: The New Imperialism

June 30th: What causes nationalist conflict

DUBLIN RANELAGH:
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in Tom Kelly Flats, Charlemont St. Community Centre

DUBLIN RIALTO:
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm St. Andrews Community Centre, SCR, Rialto

DUBLIN RATHMINES:
Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in O'Connell's Pub, Richmond St.

DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL:
Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Trinity Inn, Pearse St

DUBLIN TALLAGHT:
Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in Jobstown Community Centre

ENNISKILLEN:
Meets fortnightly on Saturdays at 4pm. Phone 01 - 872 2682 for details of venue

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

LIMERICK:
Meets fortnightly on Thursdays at 8pm. Phone 01 - 872 2682 for details of venue.

MAYNOOTH:
Meets every Wednesday in Classhall D, Arts Block, Maynooth College

TRALEE
Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm Harty's Bar, Tralee

WATERFORD:
Meets every Thursday in at 8.00pm ATGWU Hall, Keizer St.

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.....

Union.....

news/reports/politics/industry/unions (01)8722682; fax (01) 8723838;
email: swp@clubi.ie web: www.clubi.ie/swp

Firefighters

Victory on 9% pay claim

FIRE-FIGHTERS have achieved an important victory in their battle to retain parity with the pay of the Gardai.

The Gardai got a nine percent pay rise after just two days of action, known as the 'blue flu'. The government at first tried to deny a similar award to other groups.

Then as the pressure piled up, they demanded huge levels of productivity in return for the rise.

Operations

One of their main objectives was to 'civilianise' a number of operations in the fire depots. This was simply jar-

gon for trying to introduce a special yellow pack grade of lowly paid employees.

Fire-fighters began a major campaign to resist these demand. They held enormous mass meetings all over the country.

A ballot for industrial action scored over 95% support.

Faced with this determination, management backed down.

Hurried last minute discussions involving the SIPTU Vice President Des Geraghty brokered a deal where few concessions were made.

Fire-fighters had already offered ten points of productivity and only gave three additional points, which included use of new technology, were given.

"We won a total victory.

They knew we were determined to win and they could not do anything to stop us" one shop steward told *Socialist Worker*. The fire-fighters victory has important implications.

By sticking to their guns they achieved an award that was higher than those designed under P2000.

They have now set a target which other groups of workers will seek to follow.

Build on the anger in the North

OVER 5,000 firefighters lobbied talks between union leaders and employers representatives in London last weekend. Dozens of firefighters from across Northern Ireland joined the lobby.

The employers want to push through attacks that will hit the firefighters and undermine a service which everyone depends on.

Already across the North, the death rate from fire has escalated from 8 a year to 24 for the first 6

months of 1999.

The employers want:

★ Greater flexibility with the breakup up of national wage bargaining.

★ The scrapping of higher ranks. Ordinary firefighters will have to do the work of station officers.

★ A new shift system which could mean an extra day at work every fortnight.

★ Loss of overtime pay.

★ The removal of subsistence payments when firefighters are posted off station.

★ An assault on pensions.

At the moment the employers are trying to drag negotiations out through ACAS. The employers want to spin out the talks and ride out the mood of anger shown in the FBU's conference vote to ballot for action and the size of the lobby.

FBU leaders should not delay in balloting for effective action. This is no time to get trapped into conceding further negotiations. A fight to defend firefighters conditions and to win funding for the service can gain massive public support.

Otis Lifts

US multi-national victimises steward

A GIANT US multi-national has employed private detectives to help victimise a shop steward.

Otis Lifts, which is part of the giant United Technology company, has sacked Tony Grant who has been a shop steward for more than ten years.

Throughout that time he actively defended the pay

and conditions of his members.

He helped set up the Lift Industry sub-committee in the union. The committee helped to organise industrial action on pay last year.

Otis took out an injunction against eleven of the committee members for organising the strike action. But the workers fought back and Otis were denied their injunction.

Since that time they have

set out to sack Tony.

They hired a company of private detectives to pursue him at work and at home.

Tony knew he was being followed and reported the activities to the Gardai on a number of occasions. He thought he was being targeted by a criminal gang because there were so many of them.

He was involved in a car chase around the city as these private detectives shadowed

him. He ended up having to hide and needed time off sick.

Tony worked no differently to anyone else in the industry. He went out by himself and fixed lifts and there were few complaints.

Two years ago he was even promoted by the company and praised to the skies.

But after he helped organise a strike and humiliated them in the courts the attitude changed.

Otis made a profit of \$533 world-wide last year. Their parent company United Technologies is a prominent arms dealer and one its directors in William J Perry.

Perry previously served as US Defence Secretary between 1994 and 1997 - so he should know all about selling arms

Tony's union is now actively defending his case.

Howden Sirocco

"SOLD DOWN the river" was the response of workers from Sirocco to news that 72 jobs are being cut.

One worker who has worked there for over 25 years told the *Belfast Telegraph* that "Our jobs have been sacrificed for the shareholders of Charter — Howden's parent company . . . the 72 jobs which are due to go won't be the end of it."

The engineering factory in East Belfast is situated very close to the Waterfront area which is being developed by big

business. Howden management want to sell the land to increase profits and move to a scaled-down plant elsewhere.

The danger of the campaign to prevent the job losses is that it is looking to Ulster Unionist Councillors to press the case of the workers.

But they are more concerned about where the new factory will be relocated than fighting to keep the jobs and factory where it stands.

The lessons of the closure of Mackies is that workers should use their own strength to fight the losses.

NI Buses

More than 1,800 bus drivers across the North are to be balloted on strike action over pay.

Drivers from both Ulsterbus and Citybus will vote because management have refused to increase pay above 3 percent.

This is a significant move since usually drivers from the two companies are played off against each other.

SIPTU elections

Growing mood against Partnership

THE GROWING mood against partnership in the unions was shown in recent election results in two SIPTU branches.

SWP member Marnie Holborow won the presidency of the SIPTU Education Branch with 69 per cent of the poll.

Meanwhile Carolann Duggan won the Vice-Presidency of Waterford SIPTU branch with 70 percent of the vote. She polled over 2,000 votes despite a strong challenge from a pro-partnership candidate.

Both Marnie and Carolann are well known socialists and opponents of partnership deals.

The Education Branch has also passed the Action Programme for Workers' Rights which will now be discussed at the SIPTU conference in October.

The Branch also threatened industrial action and won permanent jobs for ten temporary lecturers at DCU.

This type of victory shows how it is possible to bypass the strict terms of Partnership 2000.

Partnership has come under huge strain as a combination of labour shortages and militancy has forced employers to concede bigger claims.

In numerous restaurants and shops, employers are effectively conceding the minimum wage a year earlier in order to hold onto staff.

Loyalty

Computer workers are winning loyalty bonuses as companies try to tackle the millennium bug.

The push on pay has also been fuelled by rising house prices. The CPSU, PSEU and IMPACT have all called for a Dublin allowance because of the cost of housing in the capital.

The union leaders realise they are under immense pressure to deliver on pay and on a range of other issues including union recognition and childcare. But they are

gearing up to convince workers that improvements can be won under a new partnership deal.

SIPTU has begun this process by sending each branch a questionnaire asking members what they would like included in a new partnership deal. This is being followed up by workshops in ever SIPTU branch.

SIPTU members should insist that these meetings give a platform to opponents of partnership.

The bureaucrats are trying to play it clever by "taking on board" their members' grievances but channelling them into talks for a successor to P2000.

They are pretending that partnership has mostly been good for workers and that it simply needs a "few tweaks" to make it work better next time round.

But behind all the rhetoric, the union leaders are only offering more wage restraint despite the success of the Celtic Tiger.

Another partnership deal will still leave workers at the mercy of the Industrial Relations Act which

puts severe limits on strike action while allowing the employers a free hand.

Meanwhile, the union leaders are prepared to accept a disgraceful compromise on union recognition. Employers like Ryanair will be forced to deal with the Labour Court but will not have to actually recognise unions in the workplace itself. Workers will still be left without proper representation at shop floor level.

There is an alternative to partnership. The only real gains workers have made have come from breaking the pay limits of P2000, as groups like the building workers and the firefighters have done.

The campaign against a new partnership deal has to be accompanied by a drive to build strong rank and file organisation that can fight for real gains for workers.

Nurses

Action at James Connolly Memorial brings results

In James Connolly Memorial Hospital the nurses have implemented a work-to-rule because they are refusing to do nursing duties.

The domestic staff are also refusing to take on extra work.

As a result management were forced to hire outside caterers to serve dinner.

One domestic who refused to work with the outside caterers was suspended. After management brought the caterers in again, 100 staff walked out of the wards in protest, and sat in the canteen from 10 am to 5pm.

Management and union reps met and have now agreed to increase the domestic salary by £18 per week.

Because the increase is on their basic Sunday pay, Saturday pay and Bank Holiday pay will all increase.

The domestic who was suspended as part of the action has also been reinstated.

This is a huge victory, and clearly breaks Partnership 2000.

This impressive deal has nothing to do with the sophisticated negotiations skills of SIPTU branch officials who had previously recommended pay freezes and yellow pack deals for health workers.

They had also argued in favour of permits to bring in non-unionised outside security staff to St James's Hospital.

Wallets

The reason the employers were forced to open up their wallets is a direct result of the 'wild-cat' spontaneous unofficial action which is becoming an increasing culture over the last 12 months.

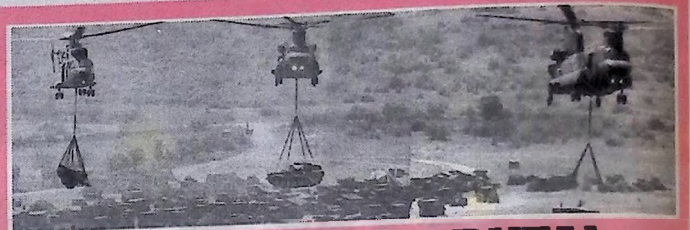
There is nothing more powerful than solidarity - it is the strongest thing in the world.

A general meeting of all SIPTU members has now been convened to process a claim for a Living in Dublin Allowance.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 50p Solidarity price £1

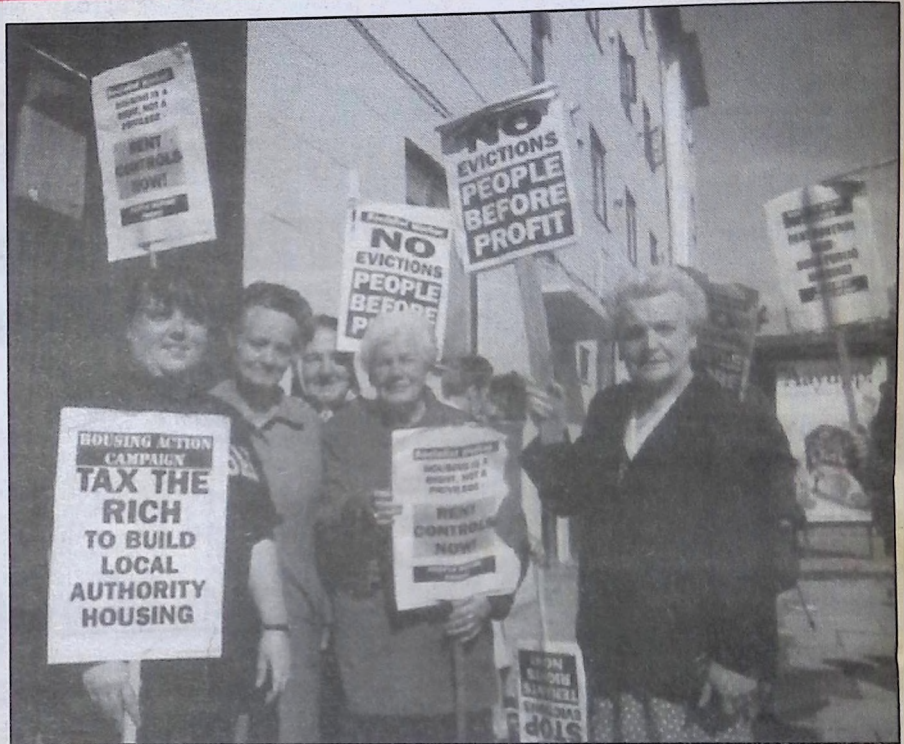
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WAR ENDS IN A BRUTAL COLONIAL CARVE UP PAGES 6-7

As the housing crisis worsens

STOP THE EVICTIONS



ESSIE KEELING and Karl Byrne are fighting to defend their homes from O'Mahony Developers.

O'Mahony's who bought the flats in 1998, plan to demolish them and redevelop the inner city site for more profitable ends.

76 year old Essie has been visited by the builders two or three times a week to pressurise her to leave.

Rubbish collection has been stopped and the buildings have been allowed to fall into disrepair.

The car park has been opened for commercial use which often makes it impossible for Essie to get in and out of her flat.

Despite these despicable tactics, Essie is determined not to leave. She previously led an 8 year rent strike then to win her right to a life-time lease.

Essie told *Socialist Worker*, "I'll fight them to the end. I've fought them before and I'm not afraid to do it again. I've put up with too much to let them get away with it".

Determined

Essie's neighbour Karl has been living in the flats for 13 years and is equally determined to stand up to the developers. After fighting through the courts for more than a year he has now received notice to quit.

Karl has been offered money to go but as he explained, money is not the issue for him.

"If I'm forced to leave I'm worried about what will happen to Essie. I get her messages every day and walk her dog because she can't get out much anymore. She's lived there all her life but she won't be safe there on her own if I go".

"Developers can't be allowed to buy up a place, kick people out and move people like Essie about like objects."

As a single man the corporation have only offered Karl a room in a hostel if his eviction goes ahead.

Both Essie and Karl believe that Dublin Corporation should be buying flats like St. Ultans to provide people

with homes and not allowing them to be knocked down to make room for more offices or hotels. As Essie explained "It

was the people of Dublin that built these flats with St. Ultans hospital - they should be kept for people like us".

We can resist the developers

HUNDREDS OF people are supporting a 24 hour picket called by the Dublin Housing Action Campaign to resist the eviction.

Grace Lally, the campaign secretary said, "Landlords and property speculators are on the rampage in the Celtic Tiger. They have hiked up rents and think they can evict people when they want."

"But now we are drawing a line in the sand. From now on we are organising to resist."

"Big protests can stop these speculators. We want workplaces in the area to send down delegations to the protest - or better still organise a one hour stoppage to highlight their anger at the housing crisis."

PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT