

Socialist Worker

inside

**Eamonn McCann:
From civil
rights to
socialist
politics**



Pages 6&7

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

Tribunals are not enough!



Jail the corrupt politician

Politicians have always had the knack of "being seen to do something" about a crisis, without actually doing much at all.

In Ireland their favourite method is to set up a tribunal of inquiry.

Unlike the courts,

where working class people are tried, tribunals ensure that the rich and powerful escape punishment.

Farce

The Flood and Moriarty tribunals into corruption can unearth all the evidence they like but they cannot put

crooked politicians or businessmen behind bars.

It is time this farce was ended.

When big business or politicians avoid paying their taxes it has a knock on effect.

It can even be a matter of life and death.

Take the funding crisis in Tallaght hospital.

The £86 million fiddled by Allied Irish Banks would pay for the shortfall in the hospital's budget ten times over!

Demand

If our trade union leaders called demonstrations to demand the jailing of corrupt politicians, thousands of

workers would respond.

But so far the unions have only issued words of condemnation.

They should follow this up with action.

Without demonstrations and stoppages we will end up with another round of tribunals where nobody is punished.

CORRUPTION WITNESS JAMES GOGARTY COMPLAINS

'They're on £1,350 a day to laugh at me!'

FIANNA FAIL and the business elite are nervous. As the Flood and Moriarity Tribunals open, more information may leak about the ties that bind them together.

Some have already begun to take pre-cautions. Bovale Developments is a building company that was closely linked to the former Fianna Fail Minister, Ray Burke.

As soon as the Flood Tribunal began it hired a PR consultant to put its spin on the story.

Its PR agent just happened to be Pat Heneghan who worked for Larry Goodman during the beef tribunal.

Heneghan's 'work' then cost the Irish taxpayer £162,361.

Protect

Over twenty barristers have been hired to protect those accused of giving and taking bribes.

Their strategy is to bully and intimidate the principal witness of the Flood Tribunal, the 81 year James Gogarty. Sometimes Gogarty appears as if he has been driven into despair.

"They are laughing at me and they are getting

£1,350 a day for laughing at me" he said. Justice Flood has complained that he has faced 'almost weekly' threats of injunctions from the overpaid barristers.

Here is *Socialist Worker's* guide to the Tribunals

The big fish

TONY O REILLY is Ireland's top fat cat.

He moved from the rugby fields of Belvedere College - an exclusive fee paying school - to becoming a super millionaire.

His Independent Group of newspapers are renowned for their right wing and anti-refugee stance.

The current tribunals may throw further light on Ireland's media mogul. It has already emerged that one of his companies, Rennick's Manufacturing, gave Ray Burke £30,000.

Subsequently, Burke ensured that another of O'Reilly's companies got the licence for the MMDS multichannel TV system which brings British channels to rural areas. The Irish government even agreed to crack down on 'deflector systems' to help shore up O'Reilly's profits.

Now evidence is growing that O'Reilly may be involved with the Ansbacher account. This was the secret account used to fund Charlie Haughey.



The brothers Bailey

Planning for the millionaires

IN DUBLIN a small clique of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael councillors helped re-zone land for businessmen who paid bribes.

Re-zoning could increase the selling price of land by up to ten times.

Hard evidence of these activities emerged when James

Gogarty, a former managing director of Joseph Murphy Structural Engineers spilt the beans because he was annoyed over his pension arrangements.

Gogarty's evidence has thrown light on the Fianna Fail operation in North Dublin.

Michael Bailey, a prominent Fianna Fail activist and the busi-

nessman involved in Bovale Developments, wrote to companies such as JMSE promising help in acquiring planning permission.

Money

Within three days, a figure of money of between £30,000 and £80,000 was handed over in a brown paper bag to Ray Burke.

But this is only the tip of the iceberg. Other Fianna Fail representatives were playing a similar game.

The Fianna Fail TD for Dublin West, Liam Lawlor, for example, was paid £3,500 a month 'to represent the interests' of Tom Gilmartin, a major property developer who wanted a shopping centre built.

Gilmartin has also named Padraigh Flynn and Bertie Ahern as people who also had some 'influence' in sorting out planning problems.

It's only a tribunal: nobody will be hurt

The Beef Tribunal cost over £30 million yet no one was punished for wrong doing. The presiding judge, Liam Hamilton, was instead promoted to Chief Justice.

The Flood and Moriarity Tribunals may cost even more. Yet no matter how damning the evidence that is produced, they cannot impose a fine or a sentence on any of the culprits.

Even when the McCracken Tribunal exposed Haughey as a liar and a recipient of £2 million in bribes, no arrest warrant was sent out for him.

Tribunals help to let off public anger - but they also ensure that the ruling class does not turn on each other.

When the poor commit relatively small crimes they are visited by the police and little consideration is shown to their dignity or right to privacy.

When the rich rob millions in public funds, they appear before tribunals that can do nothing and then protest loudly their 'good name' has been interfered with.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

THE POLITICAL establishment hope that workers will get lost in the legal detail and get bored with the issue of corruption. They are hoping that whole affair will be over before people organise major protests.

The SIPTU newspaper, *Newsline*, has publicly called for the jailing of corruption politicians. But these are only words. To get the corrupt politicians and businessmen behind bars, the unions should be calling their members out onto major demonstrations.

This is what the Italian unions did during the corruption scandals and it put some of the crooks in prison

WE URGE OUR SUPPORTERS TO:

■ Organise local anti-corruption rallies while these tribunals are taking place. Get trade union, labour and socialist speakers to put their case.

■ RAISE THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION IN UNION BRANCHES AND STUDENT UNIONS

"This branch expresses its anger at the fact that No politician or businessman has been jailed over the recent scandals involving corruption, bribery and tax dodging.

No charges can be laid against the alleged culprits on the basis of evidence gathered at expensive and lengthy tribunals.

Noting that while union leaders have condemned the corruption, no organised focus has been provide to allow people express their rage.

This branch therefore agrees to sponsor an anti-corruption to demonstration in March and publicise this among other union bodies."

Haughey's henchmen

THE MAIN target of the Moriarity Tribunal is Charles J Haughey's funds.

Bertie Ahern claims that Haughey belongs to the dim distant past and has no longer any links with the party.

Publicity

But nothing could be further from the truth. During the last General Election in 1997, Haughey publicly canvassed for his son Sean, a Fianna Fail TD, outside the Cadbury factory in Coolock.

Ahern only became the leader of Fianna Fail because he was the key lieutenant for Haughey's faction inside the party.

Haughey was at the centre of a network of top business people which established an 'unofficial state' in Ireland during the sixties. Almost



every key business group was linked to Haughey's network. They include:

■ DERMOT DESMOND: When he ran National City Brokers, he got many of the lucrative contracts for privatising state companies.

His company did a project on Aer Lingus and then handed over commercial secrets to its rival, Celtic Helicopters owned by Ciaran Haughey.

■ PV DOYLE: The owner of this hotel chain never had

any problem with planning permission. He contributed to the Ansbacher account.

■ MICHAEL SMURFIT: Was appointed to the Board of Telecom Eireann. The telephone company later rented offices from his property at high rent.

■ LARRY GOODMAN: A regular attendee at Fianna Fail Ard Fheiseanna who could call in, by helicopter, at the Haughey's at any time. His company got the pick of state grants and the Department of Agriculture turned a blind eye to its swindling of EU funds.

■ CEMENT ROADSTONE: Were able to buy a quarry at Glen Ding for a knock down price. Haughey's bag man, Des Traynor, was on the board of directors.

■ BEN DUNNE: Gave a £2 million bribe to Haughey. His company paid little tax because it was classified as a trust.

what we think

How to stop the housing chaos

DUBLIN CORPORATION has declared a housing crisis and it's no wonder.

Nearly 12,000 people in the city are on the waiting lists for a local authority house. Many can no longer afford to buy their own houses. Rent in flats and bedsits have shot up.

Even Fianna Fail politicians have raised 'concerns' about speculation.

But the housing crisis is a direct result of right wing pro-market policies.

Take the issue of local authority housing. In 1975, local authorities built nearly 8,000 council houses. Yet today when there are 45,000 people looking for a council house, they are building only 4,500.

The political establishment reduced public spending in order to cut the tax bills of the rich.

Instead of building houses for low earners, tax breaks were given to the rich.

Or look at the issue of rents. Last year in Dublin rents grew by 25% because the landlords used the housing crisis to increase their profits.

Only a socialist approach which shows no respect for the laws of the free market can overcome the crisis.

■ We need an emergency housing building programme to give council houses to everyone who needs them. That can only be funded by large tax increases on the wealthy.

■ Building land should be taken into public ownership. It should not be left in the hands of speculators who bribe politicians to get it re-zoned.

■ Rent control should be imposed on the landlords. Housing is a basic need and should be guaranteed to all regardless of income.

Defend
South
Korean
socialists

Extradite Pinochet now!

The British law lords have given General Augusto Pinochet a chance that his victims never enjoyed.

They overturned a decision to extradite him because one of the judges who made the original decision was compromised through an association with Amnesty International.

Yet the right wing associations of judges have never been a problem in the past. In 1977, the British law lords ruled that postal workers could not continue their boycott of mail to apartheid South Africa.

Yet one of the judges, Lord Lawson, had stood for elections for the British Union of Fascists in 1936 and had shares in companies which traded with South Africa.

Whatever the outcome of the new court proceedings, Pinochet has powerful protectors. The rich have always been grateful for how his coup smashed a powerful left wing movement in Chile.

Thousands were tortured and murdered in his bloody regime of terror. Later Pinochet began an economic experiment where the theories of the monetarist Milton Friedman were put into practice causing great suffering for the poor. Later Thatcher took up these economic strategies and



■ Demonstrators in London demand Pinochet is brought to trial

applied them in Britain.

Pinochet was also an inspiration to other generals in Latin America. In the early 1980s, he set up Operation Condor which involved Argentina, Paraguay and

Uruguay. As a result, tens of thousands of left wingers in these countries died as Pinochet promoted the Chilean example abroad.

Today Pinochet sits in his gilded

cage in the leafy suburbs of Surrey waiting for a decision. If there is any attempt to let this brutal tyrant free, demonstrators all over the world should congregate on British embassies.

WE CALL on all our readers to respond urgently to an appeal for solidarity by socialists in South Korea.

Twelve more socialists in that country are facing court hearings that could see them jailed.

Their only 'crime' is to read the kind of socialist literature that is available in bookshops and libraries in Ireland and to discuss socialist ideas

In the last few years over 140

members of the International Socialists of South Korea have been arrested and many jailed for the same reason.

Persecution

South Korea is supposed to be a democracy. Yet the persecution of socialists shows what a lie this claim is.

In the past, South Korea was praised as a Tiger economy

because of its high levels of growth. But this collapsed in the recent recession and its government has launched a major crackdown on trade union activists and socialists.

The South Korean socialists in jail or facing imprisonment are refusing to bow down before persecution and continue to organise despite the repression.

They need your support. A number of Irish TDs including Pronsias de Rossa, John Gormley

and Caoimhghin O Caolain have called for their release. Campaigners are now calling for a new wave of international solidarity as new trials have begun.

■ Send letters of protest to the South Korean Embassy, 20 Clyde Road, Ballsbridge.

■ Send messages of support to the Committee to Defend South Korean Socialists P.O. Box 1648 Dublin 8.

JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

THE SOCIALIST Workers Party is establishing branches all over the country. A new East Belfast branch is being formed immediately.

■ On all the major issues that have emerged, the party is promoting a clear action programme that breaks with the political consensus.

■ On housing: The SWP has campaigned for rent control to stop landlords hiking up rents; an emergency local authority house building programme; and the nationalisation of building land.

■ In the unions: The party is fighting to break Partnership 2000. It openly supports groups like the bricklayers who are defying anti-union laws.

■ On Northern Ireland: The war is over but behind the continued sectarian bickering, all the main parties from Sinn Fein to the DUP want to cut taxes on profits. Only the socialists say: Tax the fat cats.

■ As another major recession looms on the world economy, we need a strong socialist alternative.

■ I would like to join the Socialist Workers Party

■ I would like to receive more information about the party

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

Tel:.....

Return this form to a *Socialist Worker* seller or post to PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.



news of the world

Brazil

World crisis wrecks Brazilian economy

BANKERS panicked in January when Brazil, the world's ninth biggest economy, was forced to devalue its currency, the real. The move was a hammer blow to financiers' and politicians' plans to stem the financial and economic crisis which has spread around the globe over the last year and a half.

Last autumn the Brazilian government and the International Monetary Fund agreed a deal which they hoped would stave off the threat of turmoil.

World leaders hailed the plan as drawing a line under the financial chaos which had spread from Asia to Russia earlier in the year. The IMF pumped in £25 billion to help stabilise the Brazilian real.

The price for ordinary people in Brazil was severe. The government of President Cardoso pledged to push the country further into recession and cut welfare spending to satisfy the bankers.

Cardoso won re-election as the country's president in the autumn by

pledging that the price was worth paying, saying that heading off financial chaos would allow the country's economy to recover.

Now that talk is in tatters, and the government, backed by international bankers, is set to impose even harsher austerity measures.

The Brazilian crisis came just days after "experts" and ministers were smugly congratulating themselves that the crisis which hit money markets last year was finally over.

Euphoria

Their mood saw a bout of euphoria among speculators who at the start of

the year pushed stock markets into a new surge, driving share prices upwards.

The euphoria burst in January and share prices plunged.

The insanity of the capitalist system was underlined even more by what happened next.

Just days later stock markets almost everywhere surged upwards once again.

That surge once more had the bankers and many commentators talking as if the crisis was over.

While nobody can predict what will happen next in such a crazy system, it would be foolish to believe such talk.

The crisis in Brazil shows that the financial and economic turmoil which began in the summer of 1997 in south east Asia is spreading to more and more countries.

Around half the world's population are already paying the price of the capitalist system's latest crisis.

In Indonesia around 100 million people, have been plunged into crippling poverty.

Tens of millions have simply been thrown out of work and left to fend for themselves, barely getting enough for one meal a day.

In South Korea, long held up as one of the miracle "Tiger" economies, unemployment had



Brazilian stock market in chaos

soared to one in ten of the population even before the mass lay offs now threatened.

Japan, the world's second biggest economy is mired in its biggest economic crisis since 1945.

Industrial production has fallen by almost a half in Russia during the 1990s, a collapse all but unknown in modern history.

Even in the US and

western Europe, which have so far not been hit by the full force of the crisis, the picture for ordinary people is far from rosy.

Some 18 million people are unemployed in the European Union.

Even if the global crisis does not get any worse it is already causing human misery on a massive scale.

Thieves falling out over the loot

THE COLLAPSE of their plan to stave off chaos in Brazil has seen those at the top of the financial system begin to fall out.

In an amazing attack Jeffrey Sachs, a former IMF adviser, last week said, "The IMF is currently scoring five out of five-

big rescue packages since mid 1997 and five big failures."

He says the IMF is only worrying about making sure western financiers get their money safely out of countries threatened with financial chaos.

Crisis

Here Fianna Fail say there is no need to worry about the crisis, yet the closures at Fruit of the Loom show that Ireland can't isolate itself from the world economy and that when things go wrong it is workers who have to pay.

Bosses demand that workers pay for the crisis

AT Volkswagen, the biggest car producer in Brazil, workers have had a 15 percent wage cut. Ford and General Motors have laid off thousands. "Yesterday I was dreaming," said one Ford worker last week, "today I can't even sleep."

Penny

"We're eating less meat and more rice and beans," said another, "doing everything we can to save a penny here and there."

Thousands of workers at the Ford

plant in Sao Paulo occupied their factory two weeks ago in protest at the lay offs, and under pressure from angry workers, trade union leaders denounced the planned new austerity measures.

That underlines is the real issue in the crisis gripping the bosses' system: who will pay?

Only by fighting back and refusing to accept the crazy logic of that system can workers ensure that still more millions do not have their lives wrecked.

What caused the crash?

THE IMMEDIATE cause of the crisis in Brazil was the inability of the government to defend the value of its currency against the US dollar.

That peg was a central part of the economic plan on which the government had won office.

The policy was first designed back in 1994 by the government led by then president Itamar Franco and his finance minister Cardoso.

Financial

But in the wake of the financial crisis in Asia and Russia last year speculators turned on Brazil, thinking they could make money by forcing its currency down.

They saw that many of the same weaknesses that underlay the crisis in Asia were there in Brazil.

Although the most obvious sign of the economic chaos has been in the world's money mar-

kets its underlying cause lies in the real economy.

The madness of the capitalist system means that in recent years governments and bosses have piled investments into churning out more goods than they can profitably sell.

When they find that the profits do not arrive it can cause panic and chaos on the money markets and stock exchanges.

That was what underlay the financial panic in Asia. And it was what lies behind the panic in Brazil today.

A sharp example is the car industry, one of Brazil's biggest employing almost 300,000 workers.

Big car companies like Ford, Volkswagen and General Motors have invested billions in expanding production in Brazil.

But because production under capitalism is not based on any rational plan of what is needed, car companies have found they cannot sell all they produce.

Car sales in Brazil crashed by almost a third last year.

Eamonn McCann

The rise of class politics

THERE IS an intense political focus on decommissioning, and on whether Sinn Fein will be fully included in the Stormont Executive if the IRA hasn't handed some of its arsenal over.

The impasse is widely taken as confirmation that the North is still trapped in the old contradiction, that the question of whether Nationalism can be incorporated into the State must be answered before questions of class can come onto the agenda.

The constant refrain from self-appointed "progressives" in both Nationalist and Unionist parties is of frustration at being unable to move on to the Left-Right agenda which they devoutly desire. This can only happen, they lament, when the "national question" has been put in the past.

Then they strike up the endless argument about how to put the national question in the past.

That this is just deliberate evasion of class politics is clear from the latest edition of the *Labour Market Bulletin*, produced by the Department of the Environment's Training and Employment Agency.

Miniscule

The 80-page report has largely been ignored. It's short on political sex-appeal, being flatly written and packed with graphs and graphics and footnotes in miniscule print.

But its dry prose speaks eloquently about the reality of working-class life.

Its main message is that, contrary to the impression commonly conveyed, the Six Counties is already set on the economic path taken by the South a decade ago, and has begun to reproduce some of the most negative aspects of the Southern experience.

Between 1990 and 1998 Northern Ireland recorded an 11.1 percent rise in employment. No other region of the UK came close. The second-highest rise was in the South West, with 6.8 percent; the UK average was 1.4 percent.

"Numbers employed have risen much faster than any other region, our fall in unemployment has been the largest and we have the greatest growth in GDP, with manufacturing performing relatively much better".

In other words, measured in conventional terms, the Northern economy has been doing well. But the benefits have been unevenly spread.

Between 1983 and 1996, the gross weekly pay of the top ten percent of male earners (allowing for inflation) went up by 25.4 percent—from £438.39 to £549.83. In the same period, the gross pay of the lowest ten percent rose by 6.4 percent, from £153.24 to £163.00.

The pattern of "wage dispersal" among women was "very much similar". That is, the high-paid have been racing ahead at four times the speed of the low-paid.

Thus, the extent to which people have benefited from economic growth has depended hugely on how well-off they were to begin with, hardly at all on which community they came from.

Still, and not unexpectedly, given the turmoil and pain of the last 30 years, a majority of all classes identified "The Troubles/Political Instability" as the most important problem facing society.

Majority

But, intriguingly, the report suggests that this majority is higher (70 percent) among the comfortably off, relatively low (57 percent) among those not so well-off. And this despite the fact that, generally speaking, the poorer the area you come from, the harder the Troubles are likely to have hit home.

This would seem to suggest that North Down is more concerned than North Belfast about "The Troubles/Political Stability".

The obvious explanation is that pay, prices and unemployment are relatively more important to the poor, even living in the midst of the Troubles, than to the rich who have no direct experience of the Troubles but who desperately want a stable environment in which they can continue to enjoy the fruits of an economic bonanza.

The conclusion which shines through the report is that a material basis for class politics exists in the North, here and now. The reason some don't see it is that they don't want to see it.

Stop these beatings now!

MAUREEN Kearney's son Andrew was killed by a republican punishment squad last year.

She spoke to *Socialist Worker* about her campaign to highlight his death and ensure it doesn't happen again.

"Andrew was never involved in crime. All his life was his football and darts, a wee bet and his children. But he would stand up for himself and he could handle himself.

"He'd been in a couple of fights with people in the republican movement and he'd been given warnings. He'd try to avoid trouble. But then when he was out he'd get people who knew he'd been warned and who would try to wind him up. They kept provoking him.

Minders

"He told me, 'Mammy I can't live my life with this hanging over me'. One night a senior republican from Ardoyne started on him and he just snapped.

"There was a fracas outside the bar and Andrew beat him in the fight, in front of his six minders. That was it. Two weeks later Andrew was killed."

Andrew Kearney died after being shot in the legs at his flat in New Lodge, North Belfast. Six republicans dragged him into the hallway, dressed only in his shorts. Before leaving they ripped out the phone and jammed the lift. Andrew bled to death in the hallway.

"I've been a republican all my life and I just couldn't believe that my son had been killed over a fight," says Maureen.

"Because I made a fuss, the republican movement contacted me. I was brought to a house to meet them and they said they would hold an internal inquiry. They got back to me seven weeks later.

"They said they hadn't jammed the lift, that it was a mechanical fault. But Andrew and his girlfriend had used it earlier that evening. They said that the fella who was supposed to phone the ambulance just forgot. They just insulted my intelligence.

"Since then I've met a lot of other victims at meetings and none of them have ever got any compensation. Andrew left behind four young children, one of them is autistic.

"I just don't know where they are going to get the money to bring them up. I decided to go down to the Sinn Fein headquarters and give them a bill for £2,000 for his funeral. I told them 'You murdered my son, the least you can do is pay for



Andrew Peden with his son. He lost his legs after a UVF 'punishment beating'

his funeral.

"Gerry Adams came to see me. I would have had a lot of respect for Gerry Adams, I thought what he was trying to do was important. He told me he was off to America for three weeks and that he would see to it when he got back. But I never heard from him again."

"What's given me the will to keep going is the support I've been getting. I've had messages and cards from all over.

"Too much of this has been happening and people have been afraid to say anything. I've had a lot of support from prisoners, some of them very senior people.

People

"People who I don't even know have come up to me and said 'Keep on doing what you are doing'.

"I supported the republican movement 100 percent over the last 30 years, in whatever way I could, helping with welfare, visiting prisoners, going on marches, whatever needed to be done."

"The war is over now. Everybody knows that. For years people looked to the republicans to protect them. In the local areas they had a position of power.

"Now they want to hold on to that position and are turning in on their own.

"And the same is happening all over. There have been eight of these sorts of shootings already since the New Year.

"The worst thing was a few months after Andrew was killed and there was nothing in the papers about it. It was all just going to be forgotten.

"People are living in fear. They're afraid to talk about it. I want to try to break that cycle of fear and make sure that what happened to Andrew never happens again."

what we think

PUNISHMENT beatings are on the rise in the North as paramilitary organisations in both loyalist and republican areas try to set themselves up as an unofficial police force.

Tory politicians in Britain have loudly condemned these attacks and claim they will adopt a 'name and shame' policy against the organisers.

But this is disgusting hypocrisy. They had nothing to say when the RUC or the British police beat up working class people in their cells.

Support

The reality is that punishment beatings sometimes receive local support. Many people in republican areas, for example, despise the RUC because of the way it has harassed working class Catholics.

Socialists support that opposition to the RUC. It is a sectarian and

repressive force with a long history of bigotry. Increasingly it has also found itself in conflict with working class Protestants.

But the repressive nature of the police will not be changed by a few former paramilitaries joining a restructured force. In Southern Ireland, former republicans joined the gardai in the 1930s -- and then proved to be as repressive as any other police officer.

In Palestine former guerrillas of the PLO became the police. Within months, they were torturing those who continue to oppose the state of Israel.

Socialists stand for the liberation of working class people. We have no aspirations to become a police force over them. We want to see an end to the poverty and despair that breed crime.

This puts us in a very different tradition to republican and loyalist paramilitaries who may talk about social justice but see military discipline as the key to all change.

And this is why we openly call for an end to punishment beatings by official and unofficial cops.

QUEEN'S VICTIMISE PROTESTOR

QUEEN'S University are taking disciplinary action against one of the students involved in the four-day occupation against student fees in November.

Stuart Simpson, one of the organisers of the United for Free Education protest which led to the occupation, is faced with serious charges arising from the violent eviction of the occupiers in a dawn raid.

It is alleged that he broke a window and assaulted a security guard. At 6.00am, over 25 security guards dragged protestors out of the administration building. One student was dragged out by a towel wrapped around his neck. Another was dragged out by the hair. Stuart was badly beaten by security guards, receiving cuts to his face and extensive bruises. His partner was violently thrown to the ground. The University authorities want to victimise Stuart in order to criminalise the occupation. Stuart is due to appear before a disciplinary committee on 9 February and faces the real danger of being expelled from university. The committee is made up of the Vice-Chancellor, two Student Union representatives and four faculty heads. The evidence sent to Stuart by the administration admits that the Vice-Chancellor, George Bain, personally ordered the dawn raid against the occupation. Bain had refused all requests to meet with the protestors during the occupation. The Student Union representatives issued regular press releases to attack the occupation.

A defence campaign is being organised to defend Stuart and to expose the violence of the university authorities. A public letter of protest is being circulated. Phone Belfast (01232) 314083 for copies. Messages of support to Stuart Simpson, c/o PO Box 354, Tomb St, Belfast, or email s9608508@qub.ac.uk

Medical scandals

THE CONSULTANT gynaecologist-obstetrician Dr Michael Neary at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda, carried out 21 Caesarean hysterectomies, removing wombs, and in some cases ovaries, in a relatively small obstetric unit in a three-year period.

Dr Neary removed wombs from an extraordinarily high number of women. Three Dublin colleagues and some local ones backed up the consultant's actions. But an outside UK consultant finally reported that something was seriously wrong.

A large number of patients have been subjected to needless physical pain and emotional trauma. In one case, a 20-year old woman will never have children because of a caesarean hysterectomy, which was regarded as unnecessary by an external report.

Resorted

Dr Neary resorted to caesarean hysterectomies quickly, according to the external report.

Some of those he described as bleeding profusely had not needed blood transfusions at the time. Other means of controlling bleeding were not used enough.

The external report shows that in many cases the consultant's decisions to perform hysterectomies were taken unnecessarily. In a number of the cases, surgical notes written by the consultant stating that there were uterine or placental abnormalities were not borne out by subsequent pathological examination of the removed uteruses.

The external report said caesarean hysterectomies might need to be performed by a doctor occasionally, and that one case a year might be expected at the hospital the size of Drogheda. In fact nine a year were occurring.

A caesarean hysterectomy is carried out only when the various measures, which have been taken to control the bleeding, have failed and there is concern over the woman's life.

It is not routine to remove ovaries during this procedure, as performed a number of times by Dr Neary.

To remove both ovaries would send a woman into "crash" menopause because no oestrogen would be pro-

duced. This results in hot flushes, breast shrinkage, vaginal dryness, accompanying psychiatric problems, loss of libido, rapid onset of osteoporosis and related heart disease.

One of the reasons for the high level of the hysterectomies is not just the incompetence of the consultant but the ethos of the hospital.

The Drogheda hospital, was run by the Medical Missionaries of Mary until it was taken over in 1997 by the North Eastern Health board. The hospital had a policy of not carrying out any birth control procedures.

This meant that the sealing of fallopian tubes was forbidden. This encouraged the practice that if there was any problem the womb should be removed. In a horrific twist to the case, it appears that some of the women requested this procedure.

Enforce

When the North Eastern Board took over the hospital it changed the rules but did nothing to enforce them. This meant that caesarean hysterectomies became the norm rather than the exception in difficult pregnancies. For some women the procedure was presented as the only option, after a dangerous pregnancy, if they did not want to have any more children.

This calls into question not just the practice of one consultant but the way in which the health service is run.

The Medical Council is a body in control of the consultants. In recent years anti-abortion groups have organised themselves to gain control of the council. Yet, this is the group that is supposed to regulate the practices of the obstetricians.

Many hospitals are run on out dated church controlled practices. In another hospital, for example, the practice of a general surgeon was reviewed twice by his profession but no restrictions on his activity were recommended.

An external review reported a series of poor judgements and decisions, at least one needless death, another lucky escape, some gross negligence and poor patient management.

Concerns expressed by nursing staff rather than by consultant colleagues led to the investigation.

The investigation has in reviewing a number of cases, including two in which patients died, concluded that the deaths "need not have happened".

Until we have a properly funded health service run in the interests of patients, without the influence of the church, tragedies like that in Drogheda will continue to happen.

Eamonn McCann:

EAMONN McCANN was a leading figure in the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement. He has written extensively on the North. Author of War and an Irish Town. He spoke to Socialist Worker about his new book McCann: War and Peace in Northern Ireland, a collection of his writing from Hot Press. Eamonn McCann is an active member of the Socialist Workers Party in Derry. He spoke to Socialist Worker

Would it be right to say that the main theme of the book is that there's always been an alternative to sectarian politics?

People who say that there's no alternative to sectarianism are frequently covering up their unwillingness to take sectarianism on.

It's like the notion of Margaret Thatcher and now Tony Blair, that there's no alternative to the market - a notion more important to Blair than to Thatcher.

She was a free marketeer by tradition and conviction. Blair comes from a tradition supposedly against market priorities. So he has to argue that there's no alternative.

Similarly, the people most insistent that there's no alternative to sectarian politics are often covering up their own capitulation.

Nobody denounces class politics in the North more vehemently than the "realistic" ex-socialist who now accepts the Orange-Green divide as the axis of politics.

But hasn't talk of non-sectarian politics always been abstract?

There have been periods when the dominance of sectarian ideas has made all alternatives seem abstract. But there has never been a time when sectarianism went uncontested.

The most important strain of anti-sectarianism has lain in the long tradition of working-class politics.

At times, it's been politically weak, concentrating on bread-and-butter issues for fear of a split if the question of British imperialism was introduced.

Nevertheless, class has always been shimmering

FROM CIVIL RIGHTS TO SOCIALISM



Derry in 1969 and inset Eamonn McCann

through the layers of sectarianism, signalling that down underneath there's something better.

Hasn't this usually remained buried, as it is now?

Not always. It's repeatedly burst through, and transformed the thinking of tens of thousands of workers every time. The point is that only action can make class politics practical.

It's when workers in sizable numbers are actively involved in struggle, for wages, against victimisation, in defence of public services, whatever - that the notion of class as the basis for political allegiance seems simple common sense.

The link between working-class action and fighting sectarianism is fundamental for socialists.

It is the failure to make the link which renders trade union officialdom incapable of challenging sectarianism effectively.

Even after Drumcree, there hasn't been a call on union members to shun the Orange Order and its intimidatory mass gatherings.

If union leaders saw their task as mobilising their members against the bosses, it would be axiomatic.

They'd see workers supporting the Orange Order siege of Garvaghy Road as something appalling. They'd say so loudly.

That would significantly affect how workers, Catholic and Protestant, see the issue, help make it clear that the way out isn't for Catholics to out-mobilise the Orangemen but to appeal to Protestant workers to disown Orange intimidation.

What prevents them taking this line is not that they aren't Green enough, but that they're not Red enough.

A number of articles look at the effect of the Troubles on the victims. What effect did meeting victims have on your own views?

I've talked a lot, about the politics of Sunday but I still find talk of the human Deaths in major events spread a sense of involvement beyond friends.

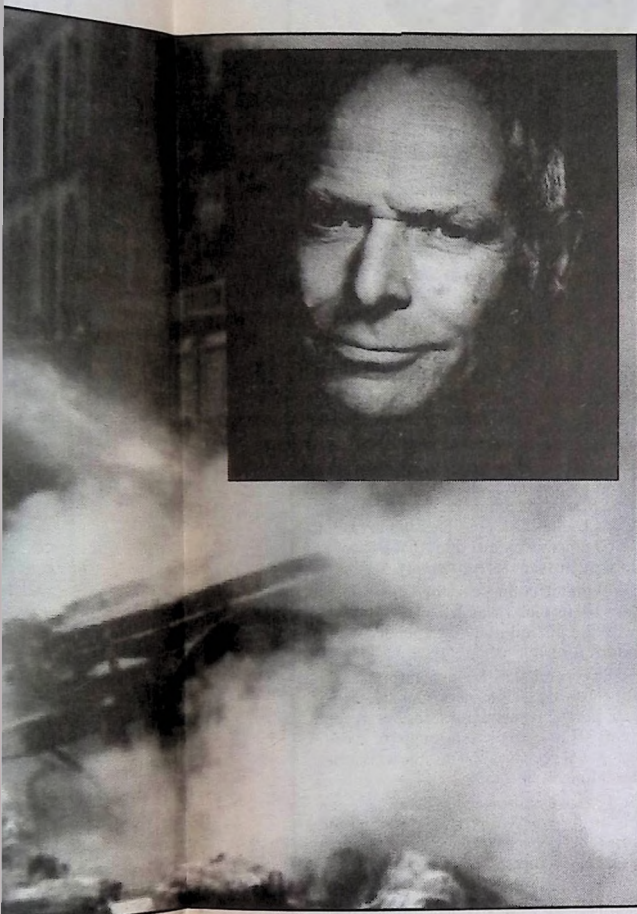
When you come in contact, there can be immersion in emotion in relation to deaths of you don't know.

After the Shankill in 1993, I met a young man who had lost both his legs. They had gone up the stairs to buy curtains for the house.

She was more real, the news, with a bit of immersion in emotion against the Long prisoners were being brought home.

But I remember her she was, and now me brought home to me the joy of imagining you anybody being about the killing of inr

CIVIL RIGHTS TO LIST POLITICS



I've talked a lot, over time, about the politics of Bloody Sunday but I still find it hard to talk of the human reality. Deaths in major atrocities which affect the course of events spread a sense of involvement beyond family and friends.

When you come into close contact, there can be an immersion in emotion, rare in relation to deaths of people you don't know.

After the Shankill bombing in 1993, I met a young woman who had lost both her parents. They had gone up the Shankill to buy curtains for their new house.

She was more recently in the news, with a bitter statement against Republicans, and demonstrated at Long Kesh as prisoners were being released at Xmas.

But I remember how sweet she was, and how meeting her brought home to me the stupidity of imagining you can free anybody by being careless about the killing of innocents.

I argued from the outset that the Peace Process was pre-programmed to deadlock.

It didn't offer an alternative to Orange-Green politics, but institutionalised the division. These aren't new crises, just the old crisis unresolved.

Are you surprised the Republicans have gone along with the Process so far?

They are following a well-trodden path. But I have been surprised at the willingness of virtually the entire rank and file to go along with the drift, not only stopping far short of a united Ireland, but veering sharply to the Right in other areas at the same time. I didn't see a single Sinn Fein face on the march in Dublin against the US bombing of Afghanistan and Sudan last October. That's a big price to pay in political principle for access to the White House.

What are the prospects for Northern Ireland if the Assembly gets going?

It won't be a happy ending, people content and fulfilled and feeling, well, we got through it and it was all worthwhile.

It will be sour, grudging and suspicious, communal politicians outdoing one another as they watch like hawks to ensure that "the other side" doesn't gain an advantage. Not an end to the conflict, but its continuation by other means.

What do you consider to be the legacy of the civil rights movement?

Almost anybody who was around at the time can lay claim to the mantle of the civil rights movement.

Its semi-spontaneous nature made it impossible for Right wing Nationalism to control it. But the Left was chaotic and incoherent, too. In the early stages, people who regarded themselves as revolutionary socialists had a fair amount of influence. But the influence was never consolidated, ideas never clarified. We were revolutionaries without a party.

What was best about the period was its openness to new thinking and instinctive internationalism. We looked out into the world, not back into

history, for inspiration, saw the oppressed in America, for example, as our natural allies. Now it's the ruling elite Northern leaders run to.

For anyone serious about socialism, the lessons, what should be retained and what discarded, are obvious.

Most writing about the North assumes that the people and issues are totally different from those in the South, Britain, anywhere. You seem to disagree.

The idea that the minds of Northern people are permanently set in a sectarian pattern is untrue.

Most of the time most working-class people have the same hopes and the same concerns as people in the South or across the water.

It is this which provides potential for united action across both the sectarian division and the border, not the complex of assemblies, councils, conferences and implementation bodies envisaged in the Agreement.

Only class politics can relate to the total reality of the way most people live in the North.

What are the prospects in the North for socialists today?

There is tremendous potential. The Agreement is as far as Nationalism can carry things forward.

The churches are as discredited as they are in the South. Young people are not hide-bound by old ideas.

Many are cynical, but when dominant ideologies come close to their sell-by date, cynicism can be the beginning of wisdom.

Ninety percent minimum of the disadvantage experienced in the Bogside stems from the same cause as disadvantage in the Waterside, and there can be no remedy for one which is not a remedy for the other, too.

The material basis for socialist politics is there. We can't blame objective circumstances if we fail to carry the cause forward.

Eamonn McCann's book *War and Peace in Northern Ireland* is available from SW Books PO Box 1648 D.8 Price £8.50 + £1.75 postage.

Questions on the crisis Russia on the brink

THE NEW Year is looking bleak for Russians. Since August the rouble has virtually collapsed and inflation is likely to hit 500 percent by the end of the year. Unemployment is growing rapidly and vital food imports have been slashed. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers, teachers, miners and nurses have not been paid for months.

One teacher died on hunger strike recently, and there have been cases of workers setting themselves on fire in protest at unpaid wages.

Even those who do get paid earn only a pittance.

A teacher, for example, earns less than £20 a month.

A decade ago supporters of the market claimed that a spell of 'shock treatment' would rapidly restore the Russian economy to economic health.

The talk in the western media was of miraculous '300 day' or '400 day' recovery programmes. Yet today economic output is well below half the 1988 figure.

The market reformers have no explanation for what went wrong.

If one 'shock treatment' doesn't work they try another and then another.

Today they have introduced savage cuts in the budget to please their advisors from the IMF.

But this has as little likelihood of succeeding as the other programmes in the past.

Supporters of the old Stalinist system do not have the answers either.

After all, the crisis did not begin in August 1991 when Yeltsin took over or even in 1987 when Gorbachev began talking about perestroika or restructuring.

Claimed

Although, it claimed to be a socialist country, the former USSR was organised along state capitalist lines.

A central bureaucracy collectively exploited workers and denied basic freedoms.

The whole system was constructed on the basis of competition with the west. The competition was mainly military in character and devoured between 20 and 40 percent of output. Much of the rest of the economy was devoted to heavy industry in an attempt to support the military programme.

The attempt to compete with a US economy, which was twice the size of the USSR, resulted in huge levels of accumulation, leaving few resources to meet the needs of ordinary people.

As a result consumer goods were poor in quality and in short supply.

The former USSR leader, Gorbachev, tried to introduce gradual reforms but the growing social, political and ideological crisis engulfed him.

Devotees of the free market

Russia is in a similar situation to Weimar Germany in the 1920s when inflation wiped out the savings of a respectable middle class and drove them into the arms of the Nazi party. So far the scale of the crisis in Russia has disorganised all sections of the ruling elite - including the extreme right. But this situation may not last.

gained confidence and after a series of splits in the ruling class, Yeltsin was given a free hand.

Right from the beginning it was obvious that their approach would never work.

The economy was dominated by several near monopolies.

When privatisation occurred the old Communist Party bosses simply became the private owners of the firms.

Once state controls were abolished they sought to maximise their profits by pushing up prices and reducing output.

Today Russia has been caught in the growing recession that began in South East Asia. Its rulers do not know which way to turn, and their confusion is summed up in the figure of Boris Yeltsin who has gone into semi-retirement.

Primakov, Russia's new prime minister, has even had to appeal for Western food aid as certain sections of the population face starvation.

Russia is in a similar situation to Weimar Germany in the 1920s when inflation wiped out the savings of a respectable middle class and drove them into the arms of the Nazi party.

So far the scale of the crisis in Russia has disorganised all sections of the ruling elite - including the extreme right. But this situation may not last.

Much will depend on whether ordinary Russians fight battles to preserve their standard of living and the minimal freedoms they have gained since the collapse of the old USSR.

These fights are mainly local at the moment.

But Russian workers have a fabulous history where they have shown that they can move very quickly from conservative to very radical positions, even in very difficult circumstances.

It would be a mistake to believe that an alternative from below cannot happen again.

by SINEAD KENNEDY

THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

Thorn in Uncle Sam's Side

THIS MONTH marks the fortieth anniversary of the Cuban Revolution. On 1 January 1959 a guerilla army led by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara overthrew a US backed regime.

The revolution, on an island 80 miles off the US coast, drove American rulers mad, and they have been out for revenge ever since.

In US leaders' eyes Cubans must be taught a lesson to ensure no one else in the region dares stand up to the power of "Uncle Sam".

The US considers the Caribbean and Central America its "backyard" and has been prepared to use military and economic power to enforce it. On over 20 occasions this century US troops have directly intervened in the region.

The US has propped up a string of brutal regimes to ensure business can make profits wherever it chooses. The Cuban Revolution challenged all that.

US efforts to break the Cuban regime still continue.

For most of the last 40 years the US has maintained a stringent economic blockade of Cuba. Basic items like food and medicine have been denied by the US embargo.

In 1961 the US backed an invasion of Cuba by right wing exiles and has repeatedly plotted to assassinate the Cuban president Fidel Castro. Socialists are against the US dictating to people and countries anywhere. We stand full square behind the right of Cuba to determine its own future.

THE US justifies its stand by claiming it is fighting for the restoration of democracy in Cuba.

This is a grotesque lie. In 1898 the US invaded and for three years militarily occupied the island.

When the US withdrew it imposed a series of compliant regimes and asserted its "right" to intervene in Cuba should it feel its interests threatened.

The US also annexed a slice of Cuba as a military base and to this day maintains that base at Guantanamo in south east Cuba.

Until 1959 Cuba was little more than a source of cheap raw materials for US business. Sugar made up 80 percent of the island's exports. Casinos and pimps catering for US businessmen and tourists were the only other industries to thrive.

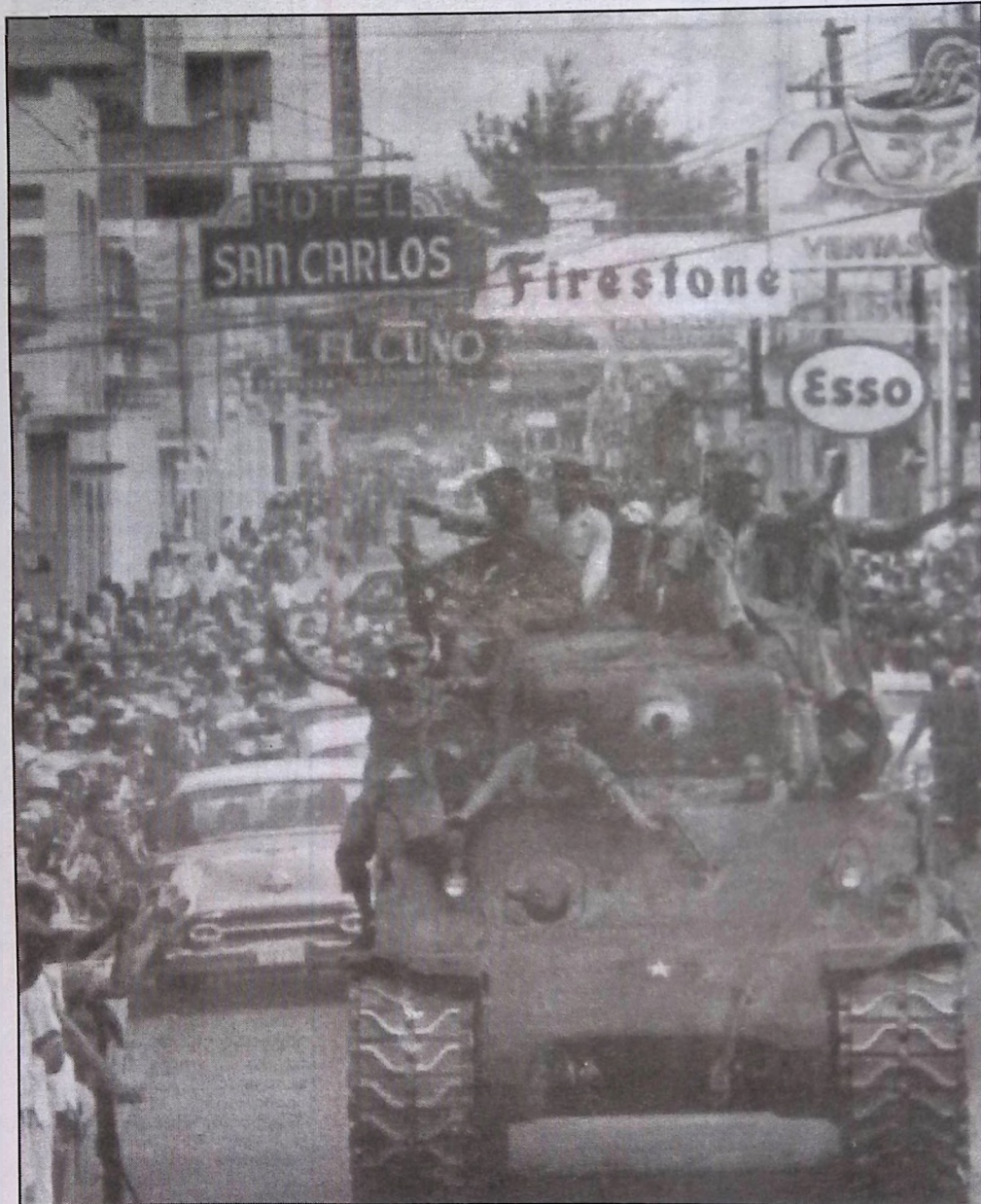
By the late 1950s the corrupt regime of the US backed dictator Batista enjoyed almost no support in any section of Cuban society. This enabled a relatively small guerilla army led by Castro and Che Guevara to topple Batista.

The new regime has popular support among Cubans, who fear the alternative is total subjugation to the US. That support was boosted by the reforms the regime carried through.

After 1959 the new government increased wages, slashed rents and cut the price of electricity. It pushed through land reforms and introduced a decent health and education system. The reforms were popular.

One simple fact should show why. In Cuba today ten out of every 1,000 children die before their fifth birthday, about the same as in the US.

Haiti, on a neighbouring Caribbean island to Cuba, has been and still is subject to almost total US domination. The result is that 127 of every 1,000 children die before they reach the age of five.



CUBAN REVOLUTIONARIES entering Santa Clara, 1 January 1959

IT WOULD, however, be a mistake to see Cuba as some kind of socialist country.

The regime which came to power in 1959 was not at first linked with Russia or Communism. "Our revolution is neither capitalist nor Communist," declared Castro.

The emphasis of the new rulers was little different from that of other nationalist regimes that won independence around the world in the 1950s and 60s.

They stressed national independence, developing and diversifying the

economy and carrying through a series of basic reforms.

Some socialists in Ireland believe Cuba is a socialist country. Socialism is about workers' control and democracy.

There are neither in Cuba. All decisions are taken at the top by those around Castro and the bureaucratic ruling class that developed of ruling party officials, army generals and growing numbers of factory and plantation managers.

Despite Castro dressing in his former guerilla uniform, the reality is that those at the top live a life of luxury in stark contrast to the majority of the population.

Elections consist of people choosing

from lists approved by the ruling party. More often people in key positions are appointed.

All open opposition to the regime has been suppressed, including trade unions. Gays have been a particular target of persecution—homosexuality is illegal—and in recent years AIDS victims have been rounded up and kept in special detention centres.

The Cuban regime accepted the logic of capitalism and therefore the need to exploit workers to keep up in that competition.

It was not a socialist but a state capitalist regime like those in the USSR and Eastern Europe.

The land reform of the early 1960s,

which involved some US owned land, brought Cuba into conflict with the US.

A series of retaliations ended, with the US imposing a total trade embargo.

It was this that pushed Castro into nationalisation of the bulk of the economy and to turn to the USSR. Soon the USSR came to effectively dictate the development of Cuba in the way the US had previously done.

It supplied the oil, wheat and other basic goods Cuba needed as well as military supplies. But the USSR dictated all key economic decisions.

The Cuban regime's hopes of breaking out of the island being a supplier of raw materials have been dashed, with sugar still dominating the economy. Cuba's economic dependence on the USSR was matched in foreign policy. Cuba backed the 1968 Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia and in Africa was the tool of Russian foreign policy.

With the collapse of the USSR in the late 1980s Cuba was left in the lurch—with the oil and trade it depended on in return for sugar drying up.

The result has been harsh austerity for the mass of ordinary Cubans. Food rationing has been imposed in recent years. Hundreds of thousands of workers have been sacked as the economy has plunged into crisis.

Castro's response has been to open up to the world market. That has seen foreign firms from countries like France, Britain and Spain move in.

They have been prepared to defy the US embargo. The Cuban regime supplies labour to these firms, getting foreign currency from the multinationals for the workers' wages, but then pays the workers a much lower sum in Cuba's own currency.

The regime has also imposed even harsher laws against "labour indiscipline" to guarantee the foreign businesses make their profits.

Some of the worst aspects of pre-1959 Cuban society have re-emerged. Tourism has been encouraged, in a bid to earn foreign currency to pay for imports.

The result has been the flourishing of prostitution, with the Cuban capital, Havana, now once again the haunt of businessmen and rich tourists buying Cubans for sex.

Cubans with US dollars to spend, mostly those at the top of society, can buy goods in special shops today, while the majority struggle simply to get by.

So while socialists defend Cuba against the US, the class ridden reality of Cuban society is not one to celebrate and has nothing to do with socialism.

There is, however, an alternative both to US domination and to regimes like Castro's. A huge working class has grown up across Latin America in recent decades. It is there, in the massive power of the working class in countries like Mexico and Brazil, that lies a force which can both stand up to "Uncle Sam" and fight for a decent society.

BY PAUL MCGARR

in my view

Sex, Lies and Hypocrisy in the US Senate

REPUBLICAN SENATORS who are leading the attempt to impeach President Clinton have run into trouble. While they pose as defenders of decency and the rule of law, top Republicans have been exposed as liars and hypocrites.

Afraid of being "outed" by Porn publisher Larry Flynt, who has offered one million pounds to anyone with dirt on leading Republicans, Senators are owning up to extra-marital affairs. One senator famous for his anti-abortion campaigning has even been found to have paid for his second wife

to have an abortion.

But, like Clinton, the Republicans real crimes have little to do with sex. Republican majority leader in the Senate Trent Lott, who is spearheading the impeachment, has been linked to the racist Council of Conservative Citizens (CCC).

The CCC is a direct descendant of the White Citizen's Councils of the 1950's and 1960's which led the attack on the civil rights movement.

CCC leaders have close ties with white supremacist organisations such as the Ku Klux Klan.

Their publications drip with hatred for blacks, Jews and gays. Yet Trent Lott has written columns for their newspaper and has spoke about Clinton's impeachment at a CCC meeting last year.

The impeachment trial has little to do with sex. It is part of a bitter split in the ruling class that developed when the new Republican agenda forged by Newt Gingrich ran aground.

Today the Republicans are attacking Clinton over a sex scandal because he has stolen all the other traditionally Republican issues.

Republican Joe Kennedy spelled this out to Republicans during a House debate.

"He's taken away the issue of crime," Kennedy said. "He's taken away the issue of taxes. He's taken so many of the issues that you in the past have had leadership roles on. And so you get angry at him."

What Kennedy means is that Clinton has handed out tax breaks to the rich, bankrolled more prisons and cops and abolished social welfare. This is to say nothing of Clinton's disgraceful attacks on Iraq.

The behaviour of US liberals and feminists, who have flocked to Clinton's defence has also been disgusting. As far back as one year ago, when Paula Jones claimed Clinton had

by EIMEAR MALONEY

harassed her when he was Governor of Arkansas, feminists abandoned their principles to rally to Clinton.

Gloria Steinem argued that Clinton deserved the uncritical support of feminists because he was "vital" to "preserving reproductive freedom" and because he eventually "accepted rejection" from Jones.

Even Susan Faludi, whose book Backlash decried sexism in the workplace, applauded the judges decision, saying that feminists had to be forgiving.

They abandoned the issue of harassment in the workplace that the Jones case raised and gave right-wingers the green light to take over.

The court eventually threw out the Paula Jones case saying although the President may have harassed her there was no proof that Jones' career had suffered as a result.

This ruling has given sexist bosses in the US a major legal victory and set the whole issue of harassment in the workplace back by years.

By not speaking out on the issue, feminists must share some of the blame.

More recently, singer Carly Simon had the nerve to lead a crowd in singing the civil rights anthem 'We shall overcome' at a pro-Clinton rally while US bombs were dropping on Baghdad. No wonder the American public is paying no attention to the impeachment trial. They have the choice of siding with nasty racist Republicans or with the likes of Clinton and sexist porn boss Larry Flynt.

Clinton deserves to be run out of office - but not for lying about sex and not by the right-wingers whose programmes he has ripped off.

He should be chased out by the millions of people who have suffered under his policies for so long.

Explaining evil

by DEIRDRE CRONIN

THE FIRST volume of Ian Kershaw's biography on Hitler focuses on his life up to 1936.

Kershaw has an impressive track record, most recently having worked as historical advisor to the BBC series *The Nazis - A Warning From History*.

Hitler's ideas were deeply affected by the November 1918 Revolution in Germany which ended WW1. The fear of a more successful workers revolution was to motivate Hitler for the rest of his life. As Kershaw indicates, anti-Marxism was central to his world view.

Hitler appealed above all to the German middle classes who were hardest hit by the economic collapse of the Thirties.

They found themselves squeezed between big business on the one hand and organised workers on the other.

Rhetoric

While Hitler's anti-Marxism rhetoric targeted workers' organisations, the issue of big business was a source of the contradiction and confusion within the Nazi movement.

Anti-Semitism was necessary to bind the movement together. Nazi propaganda advocated the creation of 'a national racial community' and any group that stood in the way of this would of necessity have to be eliminated.

After the failure of his 1923 coup, Hitler became convinced of the need to come to power legally and

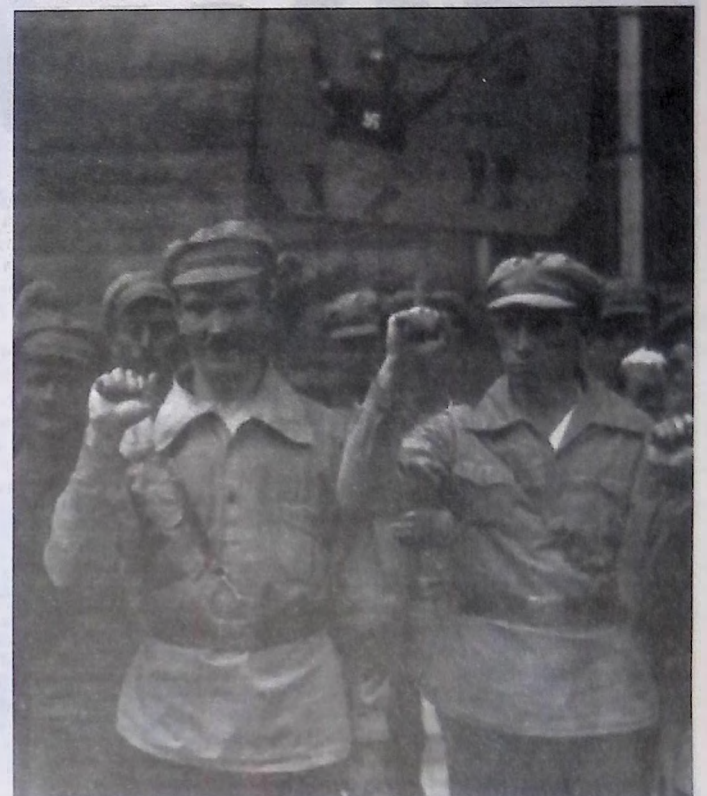
sought the backing of sections of the ruling class. While Kershaw underplays the support of key industrialists for the Nazi movement he does highlight the unity of interest that emerged.

By 1932 the German ruling class was wracked by division and uncertainty. It feared the power of organised labour and the growing influence of the Communist Party.

Repress

However it was too weak to repress them. It needed other methods and these were to be provided by Hitler and the Nazi movement.

While this book is excellent and supports the classic Marxist account of the Nazi's rise to power, there are a number of weak-



German Communists on a anti nazi rally in the 1930's

nesses.

There is little discussion of the working class and a failure to appreciate the full impact of the crisis on all the different classes.

Also, Kershaw himself sees the choice in 1930s

Germany as being between democracy and dictatorship, whereas the choice in reality lay between capitalism, taking increasingly barbarous forms, and workers power.

He fails overall to provide a theory of

fascism as a political movement. To get the most out of this book it should be read in conjunction with Trotsky's writings on fascism.

Ian Kershaw, *Hitler 1889-1936* Allen Lane 1998 £20.

book

Dissecting the weak spots

NORMAN MAILER declares his latest collection of writings to be a sort of history of the second half of this century. In fact, since most of Mailer's writing are about his own response to events it is almost a autobiography.

Mailer has in his time proudly declared himself an atheist and a socialist, but in later years he has been less sure. He has found some religious belief and it seems is less hostile to the establishment than he once was.

From his first novel *The Naked and the Dead*, American foreign policy on the Cold War pushed Mailer leftwards and provided the source for much of his writing.

The Vietnam War produced some of his best

reportage. In *Miami and the Siege of Chicago* Mailer deals with ruling class politics, with a pre-Watergate Nixon and a post b-movie Reagan fighting for the soul of the Republican party.

Then he shows in comparison the protests against the war at the Democratic convention. It is one of the best brief accounts of the American radicalisation of 1968.

His writings on murderers, conspiracies and the CIA have all tried to lift off the gloss of American society. The account of the Ali /Forman fight captures the broader significance of the 'rumble in the jungle' while giving a brilliant account of the fight itself.

Throughout Mailer's work there is an obsession with what America is really like compared to its image of itself. This led to his book on Marilyn Monroe which brilliantly dissects the glamour

and the tragedy of the star.

Mailer is attracted to as well as repelled by capitalism. This runs through all of his writing and is its weakness. Mailer is able to pick the weak spots of society and dissect them. But his purpose is to save us from ourselves rather than try to change anything.

This helps explain his sexism and general machismo. His attacks on feminism are mostly silly, occasionally cutting, but mostly showing someone unable to deal with radicalism different from his own.

Like his hero Ernest Hemingway, Mailer is trapped in his own fame, and the image he has created for himself. He has done too well out of America's capitalism and now seems slightly blinded by the shine he once tried to rub off.

Norman Mailer: *The Time of our Time* £27



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 we 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.

Tallaght Hospital

Time to stop Cowen's cuts

HEALTH MINISTER Brian Cowen is putting lives at risk by starving Tallaght Hospital of cash. The hospital, which has only been open six months, has already been forced to take out a bank loan due to under-funding.

The hospital spent £8.5 million over its budget.

This overrun has to be covered by a private loan taken out in the name of the hospital board. Cowen has refused to guarantee the loan under any circumstances and he won't allow the loan to be repaid from the hospital's allocation for 1999.

The hospital has been allocated £4.4 million less than it requested for 1999. They simply requested funding in line with other acute hospitals in the country.

Report

Cowen has accused the hospital of managerial inefficiencies and commissioned a report on the hospital by consultants Deloitte and Touche.

Deloitte and Touche attacked the hospital for not operating within a budget. It also called for the hospital to give management control over to a management team that would run the hospital according to "management reporting and control" and "service planning and cost containment".

Cowen wants Tallaght

Hospital run as a business that cuts costs even if it costs people their lives.

The staff in Tallaght are outraged at Cowen's attacks on the hospital. According to *The Irish Times* one hospital source said, "The politicians can't demand services, say this is the money you've got, and when they are told it's not enough, then just say 'Go on and do it'".

Tallaght Hospital was supposed to be the country's flagship hospital that would provide proper healthcare to the long neglected Dublin suburbs of Tallaght, Clondalkin and Neilstown.

It was planned for twenty years and finally opened last June.

Closed

Three city based hospitals—the Meath, the Adelaide and the National Children's hospital—were closed and merged into Tallaght.

A number of extra facilities were supposed to be added as part of the overall investment in the new hospital.

Tallaght Hospital was supposed to be the first in the country to offer child adult and geriatric care in one location and provide care in up to 15 different specialities from psychiatry and trauma to accident and emergency. Numerous services are missing because of under funding by the Department of Health:

■The hydrotherapy pool used for physiotherapy has been used to store medical records.

■The children's hospital has neither an intensive care unit nor a high dependency unit.



Under funding means fewer hospital beds for those in need

■The dialysis centre, used for patients with kidney failure is only running to half its capacity.

■Only eight of the hospital's twelve operating theatres are in use because of staff shortages.

■A day hospital for

the elderly has been further delayed and a new chest pains facility has not even been built.

The limited funds given by Cowen for the hospital will mean not only that services will be cut but the already understaffed hospital

will see more of its staff laid off.

People in the Tallaght area are already very angry about the state of their new hospital.

A Tallaght Hospital action group has been set up and they are holding a public meeting.

Tallaght Hospital Action Group Public Meeting Tallaght Arts Community Centre (opp. The Square) Tuesday 26Jan. 8.30pm

Dun Laoghaire flats

Mounttown residents victory

MOUNTWOOD FLATS and Fitzgerald Park residents have won their campaign to have the Mounttown flats demolished and replaced with houses.

The building is to start this January.

The campaign by Mounttown residents, the Mounttown Resource Centre and the Mounttown Action Committee forced the Minister for the Environment, Noel Dempsey, to give to go-ahead to the scheme before Christmas.

Donal Mac Fhearraigh of the Mounttown Action Committee said "This is a victory for everyone in Dun Laoghaire. The council has been forced to look after

workers instead of private developers. It was residents getting organised that forced the council to act. We should now demand action on the growing housing list".

For years families have been forced to live in freezing and damp flats.

According to local doctors every child on the estate suffers from asthma or bronchial problems as a result of the conditions on the estate.

The flats were originally built in the 50's and haven't been renovated since.

They still have the original (now illegal) electrical wiring. For years Dun Laoghaire Council delayed the redevelopment.

Local resident Rhona Kelly spoke for many parents when she asked, "Does a child have to die from these flats before the council will act?"

Sergio, another resident said "An inspector from the Health Board called around and when he saw our flat he told us to move."

However the council is still dragging its feet. Only people who have lived five or more years in the flats will be given a house. Anyone else will be moved to another cold and damp flat in Fitzgerald Park. The renovation of Fitzgerald Park won't start for another five years. This is unacceptable; the Mounttown Action Committee is demanding that all phases of the housing scheme start immediately.

SWP Branch meetings - all welcome

ATHLONE: Contact 01-872 2682 for details

BRAY: Contact 01-872 2682 for details

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

BELFAST EAST: Contact 01-8722682 for details

BELFAST SOUTH: Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in Renshaws in University St.

BELFAST QUEENS UNIVERSITY: Meets every Thursday 1.00pm Mature Students Room

CORK CENTRAL: Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in Dennehy's pub, Cornmarket Feb.4th: The politics of James Connolly

CORK SOUTH: Meets every Monday at 8.00pm in Scellig, UCC

DERRY: Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm Jan. 26th: The International Socialist Tradition Feb.2nd: Is Cuba Socialist?

DUNDALK: Contact 01-872 2682 for details

DUN LAOGHAIRE: Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Christian Institute Jan. 26th: John Maclean and red Clyde-side Speaker: Dave O'Sullivan

DUBLIN ARTANE/COOLICK: Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Artane/Beaumont Recreational Centre opp. Artane Castle Jan. 26th: Marxism and Religion

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

DUBLIN NORTH WEST: Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in the Snug, Dorset St. Jan. 28th: The Portuguese

Revolution DUBLIN RANELAGH: Meets every Thursday at 8pm in Tom Kelly Flats, Charlemont St. Community Centre Jan. 28th: Genetics Speaker: Ger Quinn

DUBLIN RIALTO: Meets every Tuesday at 8pm St. Andrews Community Centre, SCR, Rialto Jan. 26th Can Capitalism survive without war?

DUBLIN RATHMINES: Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in O'Connell's Pub, Richmond St. Jan.27th: Is Cuba socialist?

DUBLIN 5TH CENTRAL: Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Trinity Inn, Pearse St. Jan. 27th: Was Cuba ever socialist?

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

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

LIMERICK: Contact 01-872 2682 for details

MAYNOOTH: Meets every Wednesday at 6.30pm in Classhall D, Arts Block, Maynooth College

UCD: Meets every Tuesday at 1pm (See posters for room no.) Jan. 26th: Is Cuba socialist? Speaker: Terry Connolly Feb.2nd: The Revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx

TRINITY COLLEGE: Meets every Thursday at 7.00pm (See posters for room no.)

WATERFORD: Meets every Thursday in at 8.00pm ATGWU Hall, Keizer St. Jan. 28th Public Meeting: Feb.4th Can there be a revolution in Ireland?

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Rosa Luxemburg; Reform or Revolution

DUBLIN: Thurs. 4th February: 7.30pm ATGWU Hall, Middle Abbey St

BELFAST: Wed. 27th January: 8.00pm Garrick Bar, Chichester St.

CORK: Thurs. 28th January: 8.00pm Metropole Hotel

WATERFORD: Thurs. 28th January: 8.00pm ATGWU Hall Keizer St.

GALWAY: Thurs. 28th January: 8.00pm Curran's Hotel, Eyre Square

JAIL THE CORRUPT POLITICIANS RALLIES

GALWAY: Sat. 30th Jan. at 3pm Assemble outside Moons, Shop St.

CORK: Sat. 6th Feb. at 2pm Assemble at the Daunt Sq

WATERFORD: Sat. 30th Jan. at 3pm Assemble outside Moons, Shop 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

HEALTH SERVICE

Anger growing over nurses' pay

NURSES ACROSS the country are waiting to see the outcome of negotiations in the Labour Court over their pay claims.

In January of last year the government set up a commission to investigate the issue of nurses pay and promised to implement its recommendations.

The commission's report identified a number of improvements the nurses deserve - but the government has refused to immediately implement the recommendations.

Anger is now growing among nurses over a variety of grievances.

The first is the issue of long service increments. Nurses reach the top of their pay scale after ten years and then get one long service increment. Other groups like teachers get these increments once every five years. Nurses believe they should have the same.

Rate

The second issue is the pay rate for ward sisters. Ward sisters take on a heavy duty in managing wards - but they are not

properly paid for it. Ward sisters want this extra responsibility recognised through a 25 percent pay differentiation between staff nurses and ward sisters.

The third issue is that nurses want extra allowances for the extra skills they have gained.

Many nurses undertake further study to enhance their skills but they get no recognition for this.

Intensive

This includes nurses who work in intensive care or acute care units or psychiatric nurses who have studied occupational therapy.

General nurses also believe they should have the right to retire at the age of 55. Psychiatric nurses already have this entitlement but because nursing is such a stressful job it should be extended to all nurses.

The government has consistently refused to pay nurses decent salaries. Instead they expect them all to be Florence Nightingale and work for pittance in underfunded and understaffed hospitals.

When nurses try to demand better pay and conditions the government claim that they cannot afford it, claiming it will cost some bizarre figure like £200 million.

The government could clearly afford to pay nurses if they were prepared to

tax the rich. Instead of lowering tax on corporation profits to 12.5 percent, they should tax the fat cats like Tony O'Reilly and fund a decent health service with proper pay for health workers.

The Irish Nurses Organisation has warned of

an impending staff crisis. Many are leaving nursing and emigrating because of the terrible conditions they face.

The future of our hospitals depends on nurses winning a decent pay rise.

Limerick Shop Stewards

FIGHT THE VICTIMISATION

THE RANK and File Solidarity Network have produced a factsheet on the situation in Limerick Corporation where shop stewards are being attacked for resisting privatisation.

Management have kept out shop stewards who went sick out of work in a deliberate attempt to set them up for victimisation.

A special Labour Relations Commission report recommended that a 'communications forum' be set up - and that shop stewards be

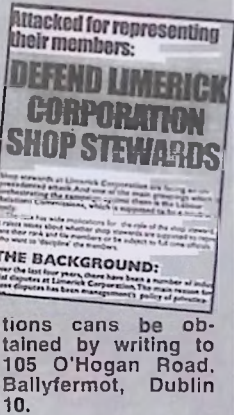
excluded from it.

SIPTU officials also appear to be colluding with management by withdrawing the credentials of one of the shop stewards.

The case has huge implications for the role of the shop steward and the Rank and File Solidarity Network has come to their defence.

They are circulating a petition for workplaces alongside the factsheet.

Copies of the factsheet and the peti-



Enterprise Ireland

71% vote for strike

WORKERS AT Forfas, IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland have voted by 71 percent to take industrial action up to and including strike action from February 1st.

The action is in protest at the failure to tackle the problem of different rates of pay and grading structures in state agencies involved in job creation, training, and services to industry.

The various organisa-

tions have been involved in a series of mergers and reorganisations in recent years and serious pay anomalies have emerged between those originally employed by different agencies.

Work

According to SIPTU, there are pay differentials of up to 40 percent amongst workers doing the same work.

For example, a worker from an IDA background on £20,000 can reach a maximum of £27,000 and can achieve promotion

only through open competition whereas a worker from another background can achieve a maximum of £42,000 and is entitled to automatic career progression.

The vote for industrial action follows the breakdown of talks at the Labour Relations Commission.

Because the work of these agencies is considered vital to enticing companies to locate here, immediate strike action is the most effective weapon to ensure that workers demands are met.

Waterford Glass

WATERFORD CRYSTAL workers have forced the company to concede a 2 percent local productivity clause without a key concession they were asking for.

Management originally demanded that any profit share scheme could only take place if workers again signed up to a new no

strike deal.

But despite threats to reduce investment, workers were not blackmailed.

"We were having none of it. We make the profits - we wanted to have some of our share back, without giving them more concessions" one union activist told *Socialist Worker*.

Bewleys

Strike for £5 per hour

THOUSANDS OF SIPTU members in the Bewley's chain of cafes look set to strike for £5 an hour.

If they win it will be a signal to every other low paid worker that industrial action can make the minimum wage a reality before the promised date of April 2000.

Before Xmas Patrick Campbell, chairman of Campbell-Bewley, complained that he had to recruit foreign workers because Irish workers were making more money on the dole.

Now it looks like Irish and non-Irish workers will be fighting together for a decent pay increase.

Afford

As one worker told *Socialist Worker*: "I'm on £3.50 an hour in a restaurant that charges £5 for a club sandwich. I can't afford to eat here yet Patrick Campbell expects us to continue on these low wages!"

Already Bewley's have begun to give in to the workers' demands. General Manager John Farrell has written to staff saying Bewley's have offered £4 an hour and

pleading with them to vote No in the SIPTU ballot.

For workers on £3.50 an hour, to win £4 is a huge step forward and shows that the threat of action brings results. But £4 still falls short of even the agreed minimum wage of £4.40 an hour.

Bewley's workers should fight for the full £5 an hour and reject John Farrell's claim that the company cannot afford to pay this increase.

Profits

Last year, Bewley's pre-tax profits went up by 28 percent to £3.15 million. They are aiming for profits of £30 million a year under a new ten year plan.

The company has expanded to Britain and as far away as Japan. Bewley's recently bought up the Rebecca's chain of restaurants in the US.

Bewley's is part of the Campbell group which has catering contracts in several countries.

In the middle of the Celtic Tiger boom they can well afford to pay their workers £5 an hour.

IMPACT

Better boycott

THE LOCAL government division of Impact is maintaining its boycott of Strategic Policy Committees. These are new structures that are being introduced under the Better Local Government programme.

Overall

A decision was taken at last year's conference that no aspects of Better Local Government would be implemented until an overall deal had been agreed. However, management is trying to cherry-pick elements for immediate implementation - the SPCs being one of the

main areas. Better Local Government is geared mainly in the long term at restructuring management within the county councils.

There is a big danger that absolutely nothing of any benefit to the lower grades will be forthcoming.

The issues of low pay and promotional prospects are key ones at these levels and yet very little is being done at union leadership level to advance this cause.

Some clerical officers, for example, are paid less than £10,000 at point of entry. This is absolutely appalling and should be the focus of a real fight within the union.

In the meantime, the maintaining of a complete ban on servicing the SPCs is vital as part of that fight.

BATU

A BUILDING workers' picket has shut down the Cleary and Doyle site at Champion's Avenue, near Cathal Brugha St in Dublin.

The pickets, members of Building Workers Against the Black Economy (BWABE), have forced the removal of James Murphy subcontractors.

Murphy is a brother of the subcontractor who was successfully opposed by building workers in last year's dispute at Crampton's sites in Dublin.

Unofficial

BWABE are opposed to subcontracting because it deprives workers of basic rights and undermines safety. A series of unofficial strikes over the past year has forced contractors to employ direct labour on several sites.

The main union opposing subcontracting is BATU. The ICTU has given written confirmation that BATU is the only union with a negotiating licence for bricklayers.

But James Murphy employed 10 bricklayers from the UCATT trade union at the Champion's Avenue site. Cleary and Doyle, the main contractors on the site, have refused to negotiate with BATU.

The employers are obviously trying to avoid employing BATU members because they have led the fight against subcontracting.

The Champion's Avenue pickets were backed by stoppages at Cleary and Doyle sites in Carlow and at Tallaght RTC. Having forced the removal of the subcontractor from Champion's Avenue, the pickets were maintained to demand that the main contractor open talks with BATU.

Socialist Worker

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

Inside

**Eamonn McCann:
From civil
rights to
socialist
politics**



Pages 6&7

Blame spending cuts, not flu

Fund the NHS

PAY THE NURSES

PEOPLE ARE dying as a result of the crisis in the National Health Service.

Two weeks ago, there were no intensive care beds available in the whole of Belfast. A critically ill Belfast man had to be transferred to Altnagelvin hospital in Derry, 70 miles away. The Labour government is

blaming a flu epidemic. But rates of flu have not been any higher this year than previously. The real reason is the legacy of Tory spending cuts that Labour refuses to redress. Hundreds of wards have been closed and there is a desperate shortage of nurses.

In Northern Ireland alone, over 300 operations were postponed as winter admissions exposed a drastic shortage of beds.

Nearly 80 patients, many of them pensioners, were forced to wait for emergency fracture operations. An 82-year old woman was left for four days in South Tyrone Hospital, Dungannon with a broken leg, as doctors discovered that there were no beds available in Belfast. An 87-year old Fermanagh woman waited nearly two weeks for an operation on a broken hip over Xmas.

The assembly is a dead end

NORTHERN Ireland's Assembly politicians have been complaining about the NHS crisis but they have no policies to tackle the crisis because they will not tax the rich to provide extra funds.

All the parties in the Assembly are committed to the same low tax rates on profits as the South. That means that even if the Assembly has control of hospital funding in April they will repeat the same policies as Labour.

They will squabble over scarce resources for "their" areas and "their" communities, rather than tackle the cause of underfunding.

This is what happened with the Jubilee Maternity Hospital. Ian Paisley pledged his support for the campaign, but then whipped up rivalry with the Royal Maternity Hospital, based in Catholic West Belfast. The problem of underfunding of the NHS can't be solved on a community by community basis.

We need to challenge the rotten priorities of this government, who will happily spend billions on bombing Iraq, but squeeze nurses pay. United action by health workers is the only sure way to force Labour to fund the NHS.

Labour's sorry record

SINCE IT was elected nearly two years ago, Labour has kept to the Tories spending limits on hospitals which is why wards are still being closed.

They want to close local hospitals and centralise services in Belfast and Derry. Services at county hospitals have been cut back, with most operations already referred to the big hospitals in Belfast.

NI Health Minister John McFall argues that Northern Ireland has too many hospitals, compared to areas like Yorkshire. Labour sees the end of the Troubles as an excuse to continue the cut backs.

But hospitals in the North face the same funding problems as in Britain. The Tories turned hospitals into trusts, run by business managers. Despite promising to cut red tape, Labour have spent another £250 million employing new managers in the NHS.

The Tories ran down nurses' pay to cut costs, so that now a newly qualified nurse earns £12,800 a year. No wonder thousands of nurses are leaving the NHS. The Royal College of Nursing now estimates there is a shortage of 13,000 nurses.

A survey by hospital workers' union UNISON showed that seven out of ten nurses have considered leaving the job because of low pay and "feeling undervalued."

Yet the Health Minister Frank Dobson refuses to guarantee a decent pay rise for nurses at the end of January.

Disgracefully, Dobson says that "throwing more money at the NHS will not solve the problem". He is wrong. Extra money now would solve the problem of low pay, bring more nurses back into the NHS and reopen desperately needed beds. The crisis in the NHS will only get worse until Labour increases resources for services and health workers' pay.