

# Socialist Worker

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## RYANAIR BOSS MAKES £25 MILLION IN A DAY

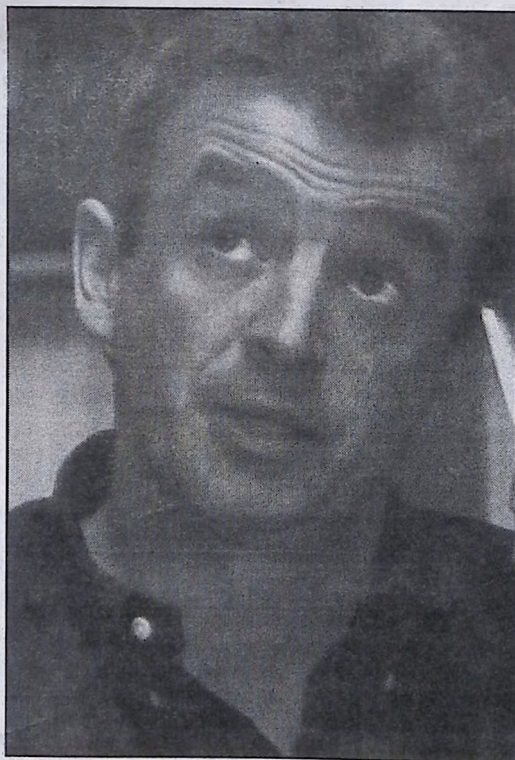
# THE GREED

# AT THE

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# OF THE

# CELTIC



Michael O'Leary

WHILE AER Lingus and British Midland workers at Dublin Airport are striking for better pay and conditions, anti-union Ryanair boss Michael O'Leary, has just pocketed £25 million.

O'Leary made the £25 million following the sell off his Ryanair shares on the stock market recently. This is in addition to the £17 million cash he received during Ryanair's initial stock market floatation. Two other subsequent share sales netted him nearly £49 million.

### Private

O'Leary is set to make even more money over the following months as he pushes through plans for deregulation in the building of his own private terminal at Dublin Airport.

While O'Leary gets millions, workers in the notorious Ryanair call-centres continue to be poorly paid. Workers are also facing worsening conditions, as O'Leary, who is viciously anti-union, demands more and more productivity.

But striking workers at the airport show the only way to fight for decent pay and conditions and put some manners on the greedy bosses of the Celtic Tiger.

# TIGER



# Qatar sticks in the throat

**THE WORLD Trade Organisation (WTO) has confirmed it will hold its next big meeting in Qatar, one of the most repressive states in the Middle East.**

November's ministerial meeting will see around 4,000 delegates and hangers-on come together for the most important WTO gathering since Seattle in 1999. WTO leaders have been so shaken by demonstrations that they

have scheduled the meeting for a state that forbids protest of any sort. The US State Department's own report on Qatar published last year points out that there are "severe restrictions on freedom of assembly and association".

## Criticise

The government does not allow membership of political parties or international organisations that criticise Qatar's ruling regime or any other Arab government. Private, social, sports, trade, professional and cul-

tural societies must be registered with the government, and security forces routinely monitor the activities of all such groups.

Susan George in an appeal for NGOs and campaigners to boycott the conference writes, "By welcoming Qatar as the venue for the next meeting, the WTO and the European Commission have made their choice clear.

"Democracy and human rights are messy and they get in the way of proper deal-making among like-minded elites.

"Lots of WTO members, of course, care nothing about human rights... Forget democracy, forget

participation, forget accountability.

"This is the perfect illustration of what the WTO is and what it wants."

The country has never had a parliamentary election.

## Repression

The only elected body is a "central municipal council" which contains no women.

Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch, says, "This decision sends the signal that it is okay to build the global economy on a foundation of repression."

# Education scandal

**A RECENT report by the INTO has highlighted the appalling neglect of Irish schools by the government.**

The INTO published a list of 40 of the most seriously substandard schools.

Some of these schools are vermin infested, overcrowded and totally inadequate in terms of basic hygiene and hazardous from the point of view of health and safety.

Schools were asked to complete a checklist outlining the substandard features in their buildings.

## Substandard

The checklist was to include only the worst possible features that a school had.

Of the 40 schools on the list:

- 50 percent of these schools say that there is evidence of vermin;

- Over 75 percent have inadequate toilet facilities, with 25 % of

them having outdoor toilets;

- 65 percent have inadequate handwashing facilities;

- 45 percent do not have an adequate heating system;

- 50 percent have either no drinking water or water unfit to drink, and

- All of them have identified a serious health, fire or safety hazard for the children in the school.

## Workers life worth £4,000

**LIAM TYRELL (18) died on his first night on the job at Galway city building site.**

Working conditions were so bad on the site that it had been threatened with closure only days before.

Liam was overcome with toxic fumes from a generator.

After hearing the evidence about the lack of safety, electricity, water or toilet facilities, Judge Michael Connellan fined the construction company and security contractor a mere £4,250 in total.

## CLINTON RETURNS

**IF YOU were one of the people who sat in traffic for over an hour last November when Bill Clinton went shopping, be prepared, he's coming back.**

## Paying

But this time they're paying him. £100,000 pounds to be precise, courtesy of Ireland's richest man 'Sir' Tony O'Reilly.

Independent Newspapers have invited him to give the keynote address at Trinity this year.

## Minister for bone meal

**LAST DECEMBER it emerged that Junior Minister of State for Agriculture, Ned O'Keefe, was feeding the pigs on his 200-acre farm, near Mitchelstown, meat-and-bone-meal, which has been linked to the cause of BSE.**

Since 1997, the use of this meat and bone meal in animal feed has been banned for all creatures — except pigs.

But not only did

**A 24-YEAR old Nigerian worker, Anthony Benson, who has been living and working in Dundalk has been locked up in Mountjoy and is facing deportation.**

Anthony came to Ireland almost 3 years ago and was one of the few asylum seekers to be given the right to work.

He has been working in the Quantum computer factory in Dundalk paying tax and PRSI.

Gardai came to the factory at 9am just after he started work one morning and removed him in handcuffs to the outrage of his fellow workers.

He was told his applica-

tion for asylum was refused and he was placed in Mountjoy prison to await deportation.

## Informed

His 17-year-old girlfriend, who is six months pregnant, was not even informed of his detention.

In Mountjoy he was subject to racist abuse where he is described as "an alien".

The Stop Deportations Campaign immediately organised a protest outside prison demanding his release.

He remained in prison for five days and as *Socialist Worker* went to press the court was hearing his case.

**JOHN O'Donoghue has caved into pressure from the National Union of Journalists and has dropped the draconian law which prevented the media from naming asylum seekers without the consent of Minister for Justice.**

O'Donoghue enacted the law after the

media attention from Ebi Ojoh's case highlight the racism inherent in the FF government.

However it will take a number of months for the Minister to change the law.

## Anti-racists unite to fight deportations

**SOME 200 people attended 'Stop the Deportations Campaign' meeting in Dublin recently.**

There were representatives from refugee and asylum seeker groups, third world activists, trade unionists, community activists and anti-racist groups.

Ursula Fraiser from Amnesty International was one of the speakers at the meeting. She spoke about Fortress Europe and the inhumane conditions faced by asylum seekers and refugees in Europe, which had resulted in deaths of several asylum seekers.

She said that she feared that it would only be time before the same thing would



## Spain stands up to racism

**THOUSANDS OF immigrants and Spanish workers attended rallies across Spain in protest at new racist laws. Government measures allow authorities to expel those without correct papers within 48 to 72 hours. The banners read, "Papers for everyone" and "Long live united immigrants." Since January, a total of 700 immigrants have been holding sit ins in churches across Spain and over 500 people are on hunger strike.**

## Anti-racists unite to fight deportations

happen here. John Bisset, a community activist, said that experience has shown that when people stand together that racism can be fought.

He cited the case of the Costinas from Blachardstown and Ebi Ojoh who was also a speaker at the meeting.

## Organised

Ebi spoke about how people in her local community had organised themselves to fight against her threatened deportation.

Ebi's case clearly illustrates how public protest and mass mobilizations can force the government to back down on it attacks against asylum seekers.

## Public patients still waiting

**ACCORDING TO a new report, public patients face a longer wait for some operations than they did four years ago.**

In 1996, 45 percent of those waiting for orthopedic procedures, such as hip operations were on lists for more than 12 months — this has now risen to 50 percent.

The figure for those waiting more than a year for urology treatment was 37 percent but this has grown to 52 percent.

The figures were revealed in a report for the Oireachtas Committee on Health.

The study also showed that around 74 percent of patients needing cardiac surgery were waiting for

more than 12 months last June - worse than four years ago.

Yet last September the government announced that waiting lists stood at 29,657 and the lowest figure since the waiting list initiative started in 1993 when the figure topped 40,000.

*Socialist Worker* spoke

to a nurse who is working at one of Dublin's major maternity hospitals.

She said, "The situation is getting out of control. There's a shortage of beds and staff.

It's gotten to stage where I've seen women miscarry on trolleys in the corridor of the gynaecology ward."

## Haughey's aide goes offshore

**A US Senate report is claiming that a former aide of Charles Haughey is operating an offshore bank from his Irish home.**

According to the report, Michael Anthony Fitzpatrick was named as the owner and operator of Hanover Bank Ltd, which

is licensed by the government of Antigua in the Caribbean.

Fitzpatrick was a former head of Government Information Services when Haughey was Taoiseach in 1981-82.

The Senate report claims Fitzpatrick operates an offshore bank from his home that has become a conduit for millions of suspect dollars.



## what we think

# McPOLLUTION, McCHEAP LABOUR, McNASTY!



"THE PROFITS of the fast food industry have been made possible by the losses imposed on the rest of society". This is the damning conclusion of a new book **Fast Food Nation** that has become a best seller in the US.

Eric Schlosser has revealed the sheer greed that lies behind companies like McDonalds. It spends \$2 billion dollars a year on promoting its image but according to Schlosser the fast food industry is responsible for food poisoning, rural poverty, environmental degradation and exploitation of workers.

Here are some of the facts that Schlosser reveals

- Poor hygiene practices at US meat factories which supply the fast food industry have been responsible for a sharp rise in E Coli 0157.

- Fast food is stuffed with chemicals. A typical artificial strawberry flavouring is a cocktail of more than 50 chemicals.

- Out of every \$ 1.50 spent on a large order of fries at a fast food restaurant, a meagre two cents goes to the farmer who grew the potatoes.

- McDonalds has denied workers rights and bitterly resisted minimum wage laws.

- McDonalds invest large sums in designing equipment that requires as little skill as possible - and then accepts vast US government subsidies for teaching job skills to those forced off social welfare.

McDonalds hates an inquiry into its methods. They tried to persecute two anarchists, Helen Steel and Dave Morris, because they dared to distribute an anti McDonalds leaflet.

Their British head of security Sidney Nicholson who once worked for South Africa police force organised infiltration of environmental groups to get evidence against the pair. But even the trial judge dammed McDonalds for 'exploitation of children', 'helping to depress catering industry wages' and 'cruelty to animals'.

In Cork, McDonalds claimed they would not hire black people to work on their front counters and protests have been organised against them.

McDonalds is a real symbol of global capitalism.

And just as the symbol stinks so does the overall system. All the more reason to spread the anti-capitalist movement to every corner of Ireland.

## Indonesia in turmoil



Thousands of Indonesians took to the streets of Jakarta recently demanding that President Wahid step down amidst mounting allegations of corruption. If he fails to resign Wahid is facing impeachment after a report claims that he was aware of an illegal transfer of \$4 million from the state food distribution agency by his business partner. He also failed to declare a \$2 million donation from the Sultan ruler of neighbouring oil-rich Brunei.

## Fine Gael: A spare wheel for the Golden Circle

**THE ELECTION of Michael Noonan as leader of Fine Gael will not change the policies of a party that is a mirror image of Fianna Fail.**

Noonan's election followed a disastrous slump in the polls, with Fine Gael falling to third place in Dublin with only 11 percent of the vote.

The party was originally built by big farmers and it is still run by regional factions. The best thing

that candidates for the leadership could say about themselves was that they came from Limerick or Dublin or Mayo.

Fine Gael has always been the spare wheel for the Irish ruling class. Fianna Fail has been the main conservative party that once had a huge national base.

When they get into trouble the wealthy switch to Fine Gael because there is no difference between them.

As soon as Noonan was elected he said the party would no longer take any

corporate donations.

This was a bold attempt to win back voters who are moving against the establishment.

But Fine Gael is run by big business as much as Fianna Fail. Noonan himself took money from Ben Dunne.

### Contract

The Fine Gael Minister, Michael Lowry, handed out a cheap contract to ESAT after its owner Denis O'Brien made a donation to Fine Gael.

Noonan's new measure will not stop wealthy individuals like O'Brien or Dunne continuing to give money to Fine Gael — they just won't write it as a company cheque.

The whole charade shows why no radical party should have any truck with the conservative parties.

Yet tragically the Greens and Labour have not ruled out coalition with Fine Gael and Sinn Fein has not ruled out an alliance with Fianna Fail.

The best electoral alternative is to vote for socialists who pledge to oppose both the right wing parties.

# Globalisation &

Trinity College Fri 2 / Sat 3 March

# RESISTANCE

### Friday

6pm Room 1: **Poverty and social exclusion in the Celtic Tiger** Emmet Bergin from the Simon Community and Deirdre Cronin (Primary School Teacher)

6pm Room 2: **From Iraq to the Balkans — humanitarian intervention or new imperialism?** Sandeep Vaidya (Campaign to End Iraq Sanctions - Ireland)

### OPENING RALLY

7.30pm Main Hall: **Seattle, Prague, Nice... GLOBALISATION AND RESISTANCE**  
Patricia McKenna (Green Party MEP), Kieran Allen (Author of *The Celtic Tiger - The myth of social partnership*), Claudine Galdoni (ATTAC Ireland), Speaker from VOICE

### Saturday

10.00am Room 1: **The threat of global warming** Pat Finnegan (Earthwatch delegate to the Hague Summit)

11.30am Room 1: **Is overconsumption destroying our planet?** Conor Kostick

1.30pm Room 1: **Is there an alternative to the free market?** David O'Kelly (Foundation for the Economics of Sustainability)

3.00am Room 1: **Fighting the rise of racism** Gabriel Ohkenla (Pan African Organisation), Melissa Halpin (Anti-deporation Committee)

Organised by Trinity College One World Society, Socialist Worker Student Society, Society against Racism and Environmental Society — For tickets (£3) or more info please write to: Rory Heame c/o Student Union, Trinity College, D. 2 Phono 087 9890330

10.30am Room 2: **Exposing the media** Simon Basketter

11.30am Room 2: **The arms trade and the militarisation of Europe** Joe Murray (AFRI)

1.30pm Room 2: **Can the IMF/World Bank/WTO be reformed?** Grace Lally (Socialist Workers Party)

3.00am Room 2: **The fight for womens liberation today** Goretti Horgan (researcher)

5pm Main Hall: **Towards the G8 summit in Genoa — BUILDING THE ANTI-CAPITALIST MOVEMENT**  
Jean Sommers (Debt and Development / Jubilee Ireland), Ahmad El Baradie (One World Society), Rory Heame (Eye-witness from Prague protest)





# news of the world

— Ecuador —

## Revolt against IMF cuts met with repression

**THE GOVERNMENT of Ecuador brought in severe repression as indigenous people rose up against IMF imposed fuel price rises.**

The protests are the largest since January 2000, when a popular uprising inspired by the Council of Indigenous Nations of Ecuador (CONAIE) forced then-president Jamil Mahaud to relinquish power.

President Gustavo Noboa's government and the International Monetary Fund, preparing the country for a US\$304 million loan that could lead to almost US\$2 billion in additional funding, have imposed economic "adjustments," including the dollarisation of the Ecuadorian economy, wage restraint, the removal of subsidies and widespread privatisation.

Last year tens of thou-

sands of Ecuadorians participated in a general strike. Said Wilson Alvarez, president of the Workers United Front: "We're going to take to the streets again to reject the economic package, reject the miserable increases in salaries and the hikes in fuel and electricity costs."

Ecuador's economy is in a crisis that saw it default on its debt in 1999 and post the highest inflation in Latin America three years running.

Only about 25 percent of Ecuadorians who want to work have a full-time job. The country's foreign debt is equal to about 80 percent of its gross domestic product.

### Threatened

After the government threatened a crackdown on "all subversive agents who are responsible for fomenting destabilization." At least three protesters were killed by state forces.

In Quito, riot police

met protesters who tried to march on the government palace during the strike with tear gas. One confrontation attack by soldiers on indigenous people in Tena, the capital of Napo province, left three dead, including a child, and 23 injured by bullets.

A 24-hour national strike was called by left-led unions and student groups. Some 5,000 indigenous people occupied the Salesian Polytechnical University, in Quito.

President Gustavo Noboa has offered to lift the state of emergency and hold back on some cuts if all the protests are called off.

Some of the indigenous leaders and trade union leaders are trying to calm down the protests in response of the offer.

But it was the protests last year that brought down one IMF stooge. And strikes and protests are the only way the people of Ecuador will be able to stand up to the IMF and their repressive rulers.



Protestors shout at State troops as they surround the univeristy in Quito

— Israel —

## War criminal elected

**ARIEL SHARON, the man responsible for the massacre of 2,000 Palestinian refugees in West Beirut in 1982, is now the head of the only nuclear power in the Middle East.**

Sharon's election as prime minister of Israel will sent shockwaves throughout the Arab world.

He is a vicious racist who has made his living over the last 50 years repressing and persecuting Palestinians.

### Expelled

The state of Israel was founded in 1948 after settler militias forcibly expelled 750,000 Palestinians from



A teenager shot by Israeli troops in the aftermath of Sharon's election

their homeland.

Since then the Israeli state has claimed it occupies a land that was previously unpopulated.

He was the military commander of Gaza throughout the 1970s after Israel invaded and occupied the West

Bank and Gaza in 1967.

Israel attempted to eliminate any form of Palestinian resistance and culture.

It banned the Palestinian flag, independent organisations and "subversive" literature.

Sharon took on his role

with glee. He ordered troops to take extreme measures to deal with demonstrators.

He was defence minister in the Israeli government in the 1980s and urged soldiers to beat Arab school children in the West Bank.

His advice when asked

how to deal with demonstrators was, "Cut off their testicles."

Arabs despise Sharon for his racist and brutal past.

That is why they rose up and began a new intifada, or uprising, when he visited the Temple Mount, one of the holiest sites in Islam, in

Jerusalem to prove Israel's superiority.

Everyone should support that uprising against oppression.

### Barak was no alternative

**THERE IS little difference between Barak who lost the election and Sharon. Barak was elected prime minister in 1999 with the backing of the one million Arabs allowed to live in Israel.**

He promised peace. Instead he has arrogantly forced Yasser Arafat, the leader of the Palestinian Authority, to make constant concessions. Barak supports and protects the Jewish settlers in

Palestinian areas.

These settlers, in league with the Israeli army, continue to violently attack Palestinians and steal their land.

He refuses to allow the three and a half million Palestinian refugees who are scattered through the Middle East the right to return to their homes in Israel, though every Jew in the world has the right to live in Israel.

Barak has allowed Israeli soldiers to shoot dead over 320 Palestinians since the start of the intifada. Israeli forces have taken over 1,000 acres of Palestinian land around

Jewish settlements since September.

The average unemployment rate in areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority is now 45 percent.

Azmi Bishara, an Israeli Arab member of the Israeli parliament, said:

"If after all the killing we vote for Barak, it would give the green light to the next prime minister to shoot and do whatever he likes to us because he knows in the end the Arabs will vote for him."

That is why most Israeli Arabs cast a blank vote in the elections.



## Eamonn McCann

### Rotten record of Israel's leader

ONE OF the most telling aspects of this month's Israeli election was that the Palestinians were caged in for the duration.

All exits from the patches of the West Bank and Gaza under the nominal control of Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority were blocked off with barbed wire barricades manned by military units. Israeli armour shut down the Palestinian airport at Gaza. The only crossing between Gaza and Egypt was closed.

The purpose, according to an official Israeli spokesman, was "to facilitate the poll".

The affirmation of Israeli democracy involved the negation of the Palestinians as human beings with human rights.

*It was a democracy built on this basis, which was personified in the emergence of Ariel Sharon as Prime Minister.*

Mr. Sharon has a record, which, were he Serbian, say, or Iraqi, would ensure him a reputation across the world as a war criminal to be hunted down and hauled to justice at the Hague.

*Instead, he is set to be accepted, even by those sections of "the international community" which regret his accession to office, as the legitimate leader of a democratic State without whose involvement and agreement over the coming months no progress towards peace in the region will be possible.*

Mr. Sharon first came to world attention in 1982 when, as Israeli Defence Minister, he launched an invasion of Lebanon intended to drive out Palestinian refugees who, with their supporters, had been using the territory as a base from which to try to fight their way home.

### Slaughtered

More than 20,000 civilians, overwhelmingly Lebanese, died as the Israelis slaughtered their way north to the outskirts of Beirut. There, Sharon's forces sealed off the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatilla as Christian paramilitaries went in and butchered hundreds of women, men and children, using weapons including guns, knives, axes and clubs.

The description by journalist Robert Fisk of wandering through the camps in the aftermath past bloodied heaps of huddled bodies, even today, would take tears from a stone.

It wasn't Sharon's first crime against humanity. His record goes back at least to 1953, when men under his command massacred 50 refugees in the El-Bureig camp in Gaza. In the same year, his unit attacked the Jordanian village of Qibya.

The official report of UN observers who arrived on the scene shortly afterwards declared that: "Bullet-ridden bodies near the doorways and multiple bullet hits on the doors of the demolished houses indicated that the inhabitants had been forced to remain inside until their homes were blown up over them".

*Sharon can't rise to be Defence Minister in 1982 despite these bloody stains on his record, but because of them. Israel, founded on the notion of the Palestinians as non-people, can regard the elimination of the indigenous people of the area as the restoration of the natural order of things.*

The imprisonment of the Palestinian people yesterday in what are effectively reservations was an expression of the same implacable attitude.

It is scarcely to be wondered at, then, the occasion of Sharon's recent re-emergence as a front-line political player and front-runner for the Premiership was the calculated provocation of a high-profile incursion last September into a disputed area of Arab East Jerusalem where sites sacred to both Muslims and Jews stand on the same ground. Today, there is less common ground than ever for the Muslims and Jews of the region to stand on.

The prospects for all the people of the region are terrifying. There is much talk now of the need somehow to get the "peace process" back on track. But the arbitrary nature of the morality which applies in international politics in our time, illustrated in the ready acceptance of Mr. Sharon into the community of world leadership, is a prime factor making peace less attainable than ever.

RUC lets UDA off the hook as ...

# Loyalist attacks escalate

WHILE DAVID Trimble continues to demand IRA decommissioning as the price for peace, the wave of UDA terror attacks in Northern Ireland is spreading.

Already this year there have been almost 50 pipe-bomb attacks and numerous gun attacks by loyalists.

In the last two weeks alone, there have been attacks on homes in Larne, Derry, Limavady, Dungannon, Coleraine, Newry, Lurgan and North Belfast.

### Escaped

Numerous families have narrowly escaped death and it appears only a matter of time before some one is killed.

Loyalists have also issued threats against workers at the Mater Hospital in North Belfast.

All of the attacks have taken place in areas where there is a known UDA presence.

Six of the UDA's seven brigades broke links with the Ulster Democratic Party in January, claiming that they no longer had any faith in the peace process.

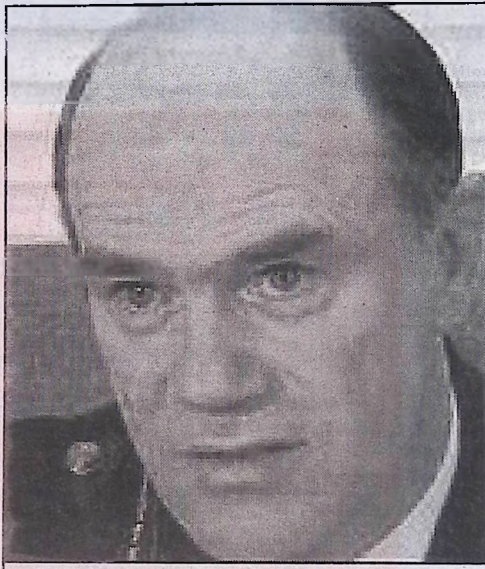
They alleged that it was a 'one way street' for nationalists and republicans.

The pipe-bomb campaign is clearly an attempt to direct the despair of run-down Protestant areas back into sectarian terror against Catholics and present the UDA as the hardline defenders of Ulster.

### Evidence

Despite overwhelming evidence that the UDA have been behind the co-ordinated terror campaign there are many claims, from people in areas like Larne, that the RUC is doing little to stop them.

In January, RUC Chief Ronnie Flanagan said the attacks on Catholic homes were being carried out by loyalist paramilitaries and he was in "no doubt" that members of the Ulster Defence Association were involved.



Ronnie Flanagan using Loyalist attacks to oppose RUC reform

But only last week, Flanagan publicly claimed that the UDA ceasefire is still intact.

On the TV programme *Spotlight*, Flanagan used the recent wave of attacks to defend the need for the RUC Special Branch, a key issue in the debate over reform of the police.

It was the RUC Special Branch which notoriously ran the loyalist organisations, particularly the UDA, directing their terror campaigns in the 1980's and 1990's.

Flanagan was a senior officer in the Special Branch in the early

1980's when it operated a shoot-to-kill policy against suspected republicans and developed close links with Johnny Adair's C Company of the UDA on the Shankill Road.

John White, close associate of UDA terror boss Johnny Adair, is being allowed to get away with ludicrous claims such as, "Their (the UDA's) integrity and my integrity is under scrutiny."

"I am on record as saying I would resign if it came out the UDA was carrying out attacks. I am confident it is not the



UDA." Astonishingly, White said last week that loyalists should be fearful because there is now "a real danger" of the whole community being engulfed in violence.

### Targeted

All of the attacks this year have targeted Catholic homes and families in mixed relationships, along with the families of prominent republicans such as Martin Meehan and the North Belfast offices of the SDLP's Alban Maginness.

The UDA claim to be growing, but they remain a tiny minority, which is increasingly fragmented and divided.

Claims that they would mount a 'Free Johnny Adair' campaign in January have amounted to little more than a picket at Downing Street by a handful of National Front nazis and a few pieces of graffiti.

But the posturing of respectable Unionist politicians, which focus on IRA weapons and holding back demands for reform of the police, are grist to the mill of the loyalist terror gangs.

## 11+ results show up inequality

AS THIS year's 11+ results arrived on door-mats across the North, the class nature of the exam and of all selection in education was highlighted again.

The Post-Primary Review Body was set up by the North's Education Minister McGuinness to recommend changes in the system of transfer from primary to secondary schools.

There are growing signs its recommendations will maintain discrimination against working class children.

It is now generally accepted that the 11+ has to go.

It has been shown to distort how children learn in the last two years of primary school and to ruin the first years of their secondary school.

### Defended

Even supporters of grammar schools agree the 11+ cannot be defended.

Unfortunately, the public meetings and open days held by the Review Body have tended to concentrate on issues that will mean a continuing apartheid in the education sys-

tem. In particular, there has been a concentration on how to cater for 'vocational' and 'academic' pupils without a transfer test.

Dividing children in this way is saying those destined to become factory fodder don't need to learn French, history or other 'academic' subjects.

Apart from being a very limited and anti-working class view of education, it is also incredibly out of date.

Most employers today, especially in the new jobs coming to Ireland North

and South require both high levels of literacy and IT skills - a mix of 'academic' and 'vocational.'

Any division of children in this way is just selection in another form.

It will be as anti-working class as the 11+. Pressure has to be put on the Review Body to ensure it ends all selection.

The next step is to build the demonstration called in Belfast for Sat. 24th March to demand a fully-funded, fully comprehensive system of education for all the children of the North.



## Porto Alegre

# We can build a different world

WHILE THE rich and the powerful attended the World economic Forum in Davos Switzerland, they faced demonstrators who were brutally attacked by the police. On the other side of the world an alternative conference took place in Porto Alegre in Brazil. Here SEAN PURDY

reports from the debate.

"OUR EXPECTATION is that the World Social Forum will provide an incentive for the organisation and mass struggle of the people."

With those words Joao Pedro Stédile of the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST) in Brazil opened the World Social Forum.

The forum is the latest mass gathering about resistance to globalisation.

It began with a militant 10,000-strong demonstration which brought together trade unions and community groups from all over South America as well as activists from Europe, North America and many other countries.

Some 1,300 members of the MST opened the second day with a brilliant occupation of land owned by the multinational Monsanto.

With the help of José Bové, the left wing French farmers' leader, and peasant activists from Central and South America, MST activists completely destroyed 2.5 hectares of genetically modified soya and corn.

News of this action was greeted with rousing applause at the conference.

### Forum

Organised as a counter-forum to the meeting of the world's rich in Davos, Switzerland, the World Social Forum brought together thousands of anti-capitalist activists from around the world.

The five-day conference had over 450 workshops and numerous plenary sessions in the morning and evening in a large 2,000-seat hall.

Featured speakers included José Bové; Lula, leader of Brazil's Workers Party; Bernard Cassen, president of the Attac movement against globalisation in France; the left wing South American writers Ariel Dorfman and Eduardo Galeano; and

Hebe de Bonfimi, founder and leader of the Argentinian human rights group the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo.

While the forum discussed a wide variety of questions, two main issues gained most of the attention. One was the struggle against organisations such as the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The other was the related question of US intervention in Colombia through Plan Colombia. These issues also brought out clear differences in strategy.

The official hosts and organisers of the event were the Workers Party governments of Porto Alegre and the state of Rio Grande do Sul.

They act like more left wing versions of European-type Labour parties, and have talked tough about institutions like the IMF and WTO, and foreign debt.

Yet they refuse to call for the abolition of debt and such institutions.

This position was also shared by some campaigning groups at the forum. Representatives of small and medium-sized businesses, mayors from more right wing parties, and people like Danielle Mitterrand, wife of the late French president, were also invited to Porto Alegre.

They spoke of the importance of "reforming" global institutions through parliamentary action, neglecting the importance of mass struggle.

But it was also clear that the majority of ordinary workers and students at the forum believed in such struggle, and in smashing the institutions of capitalist globalisation. Filipino sociology professor Walden Bello received massive applause when he argued that the IMF needed to be smashed. Patricia Perreira, a Brazilian student and Workers Party activist, summed up the mood of many participants.

She told *Socialist Worker* that we needed to link up with other activists to build an alternative to neo-liberalism: "We can build a different world. We can build revolutions of fraternity, revolutions of liberty, revolutions of equality."

# Tds get 20 percent rises...

# The millionaires and landlords

POLITICIANS CLAIMED poverty when they gave themselves from 10 to 30 percent of a pay rise. The rises mean that Bertie Ahern now 'earns' £140,000 a year.

The reality is no TD could describe themselves as poor — their basic salary is £46,506. And some are super rich. One in every eight Dail deputies is a millionaire.

One hundred and twenty TD's declare other sources of income besides their annual salary and extra expenses.

Three of them are simply the beneficiaries of their parents' wealth — Deirdre Clune, Sean Haughey and Simon Coveney. Even those who aren't millionaires are very well off. Finance Minister Charlie McCreevy is one of these. He has 20 acres in Co. Kildare worth over £200,000, while his house and stables are worth a further £500,000.

Even the senators who get a paltry £32,000 don't do all that bad. For instance, Feargal Quinn has £94 million from his Superquinn shops. While the rest of us are stuck with miserable pay rises Dail dossiers are cashing in — and that's not counting the brown envelopes.

## The Socialist Worker guide to millionaire TDs

ALBERT REYNOLDS (Longford FF) worth about £15million

Central FG), Tom Moffat (Mayo FF), Theresa Ahearn (Tipperary FG).

DEIDRE CLUNE (Cork FG) is part of the Barry's Tea empire worth £10 million

SEAN HAUGHEY (Dublin North Central FF) The son of the father is worth about £5million

SEAN BARRETT (Dun Laoghaire FG) owns a blood-stock business as well as investment companies. His house in Killaney is worth over half a million. He is worth about £4 million.

MICHAEL LOWRY (Tipperary Independent) the disgraced ex-minister is valued at £4million

JIM O'KEEFE (Cork FG). With a portfolio of shares and property he has about £3million

NOEL O'FLYNN (Cork FF) Commercial and private property give O'Flynn about £3million

SIMON COVENY (Cork FF) A 455-acre farm worth over a million and lots of property take Coveny to £3million.

ALAN SHATTER (Dublin South FG) The top lawyer has about nine properties in Dublin taking him to £3million.

The rest of the known millionaire TDs are, Michael Collins (Limerick West FF), Ned O'Keefe (Cork FF), George V Wright (Dublin North FF), Sean Doherty (Longford FF), Liam Lawlor (Dublin West FF), John Bruton (Meath FG), Sean Ardagh (Dublin South Central FF), Michael D'Arcy (Wexford FG), John Perry (Sligo Leitrim FG), Denis Foley (Kerry FF), Billy Kelleher (Cork North Central FF), Richard Bruton (Dublin North

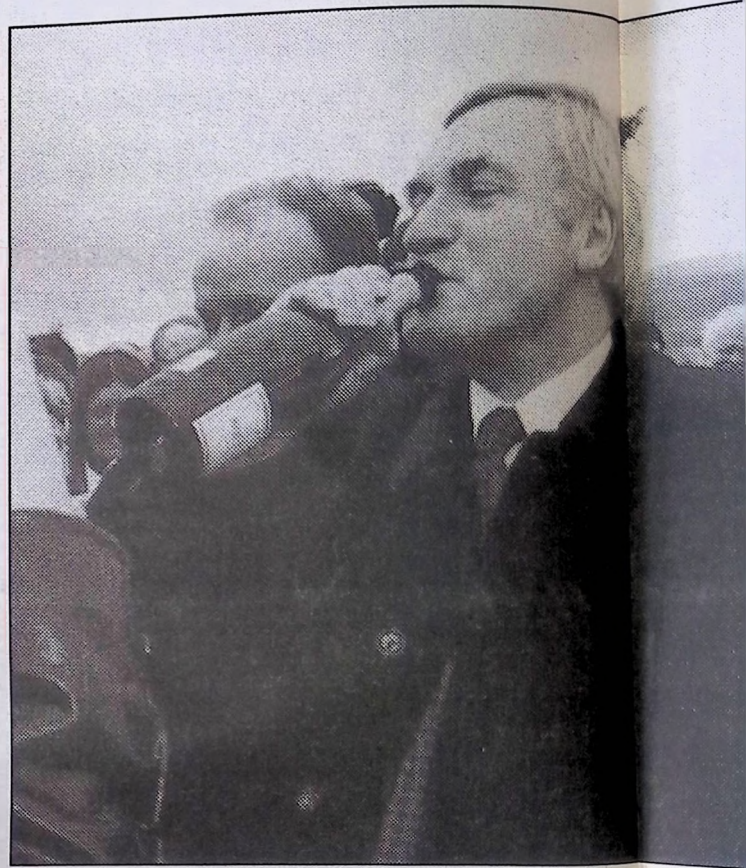


### Honest Albert

ALBERT REYNOLDS is the wealthiest man in the Dail and is worth at least £15 million. As he himself says, "I have always been interested in business, that's my first love."

On top of his Dail salary, he gets a further ministerial/Taoiseach's pension of £44,103, taking his cost to the taxpayer to £85,000. He earns a further £20,000 as a director of Jefferson Smurfit, a similar sum as a director of AON, an insurance company, while his remuneration from oil exploration company Bula resources, has not been disclosed. He has about £5.3million in shares in that company.

His home in the plush Ailesbury Road in Dublin is worth £3 million. He receives about £300,000 as a director of his C&D pet food business.



AHERN celebrates wages of £140,000

# Put it on th

ON TOP of their salaries, the TDs get enormous tax-free expenses. Over £8 million a year goes to politicians in mostly unchecked expenses.

The government claims that the average level of expenses claimed by TDs last year was just under £25,000. In fact, the true figure is almost twice that. The figures published include allowances for travel and subsistence; telephone; constituency office setup; and on-going maintenance and foreign travel.

### Mention

They don't mention secretaries, constituency travel and meeting expenses. All of which

means almost £450,000 is claimed by TD's every month in additional expenses.

Even on the official list of expenses some TD's do quite well.

Tom Enright, Fine Gael TD for Laois-Offaly, received just under £45,000, only slightly more than the amount claimed by the Fianna Fáil Cork South Central TD, Batt O'Keefe.

Fianna Fáil's Rory Kiely from Limerick and Brian Mullooly from Roscommon topped the expenses list for members of the Seanad.

They each received over £41,000.

Politicians get a £4,000 telephone allowance.

A TD is permitted £4,000 for traveling within his constituency and a further £4,000 in miscellaneous expenses.

Members who live within 15 miles of Leinster House receive a daily allowance of £45.

Those who miles away overnight allowed along with mi Every Oire entitled to a m of 1,750 pre-

Wh the no CO



# aire ranchers rds of the Dail

## TDs real pay:

Basic salary: £46,506

Average expenses: £42,000

**TOTAL: £86,506**

\* Not including Ministers' expenses and pensions, money for attending committees or "donations"

## Come fly with me

**THE GOVERNMENT is set to purchase a new jet to fly ministers and civil servants on trips abroad.**

Among those being considered is the Boeing Business Jet, the most lavish on the market, worth up to \$50m. Its features include large bathrooms and customised rest areas, and the aircraft has seating for up to 40.

Ministers already have a state-owned aircraft at their disposal, a 14-seater Gulfstream IV, but it is considered too small.

The Gulfstream IV costs more than £5,000 for every hour of flying time.

Ahern and his ministers ran up a £3m bill last year on the government plane. Ahern made

33 trips to destinations such as New York, South Africa, Washington, Los Angeles, Lisbon, Cairo and Warsaw. Mary Harney flew eight times to locations such as San Francisco and Bangkok.

The Gulfstream has even been used to take politicians to football matches and race meetings.

In 1998 Ahern and his daughter Georgina flew to the World Cup final between France and Brazil in Paris on the government jet at a cost of £30,000 to the state.

On a trip to Iran, Joe Walsh, the agriculture minister, asked the pilot of the government jet to stop off in France where he attended a horse-racing event with French government ministers.

## Crooks cash in

**TDS VOTED in the pay rises for themselves at the time Liam Lawlor was apologising to the Dail for having obstructed the Flood Tribunal. It essentially meant Lawlor gained £7,500 while he stood making a speech.**

He isn't the only one cashing in. A whole number of politicians involved in corruption are sitting on fortunes while sitting in the Dail.

Disgraced former Fine Gael TD Michael Lowry has around £4 million. While most of us are lucky to have one bank account Lowry has nineteen.

### Owns

John Ellis, the Fianna Fail TD had the National Irish Bank write off his £243,000 debt to stop him going bankrupt and being thrown out of the Dail. But he owns a 150 acre farm and is now chairman of the Dail Committee on Agriculture and Food which earns him an extra £10,370 a year. He has an interest in a bank in Pakistan and declared his earnings to amount to £100,000 a year.

Denis Foley Fianna Fail TD for Kerry North, who still has so much money in the notorious Ansbacher accounts, that he forgot to declare. He owns a guesthouse and numerous shops in Tralee, and is worth over a million.

Tipperary worth £700,000, while Monaghan's Fine Gael deputy Seymour Crawford has 130 acres worth over £300,000.

Several other TDs including PD Junior Minister Liz O'Donnell and Labour leader Ruairi Quinn, own expensive properties in Dublin, while a number of other deputies such as Fianna Fail's John Moloney in Laois-Offaly and Joe Jacob in Wicklow own pubs.

Of course none on this means politicians want high rents and prices.

## what do socialists say?

# Why are FF attacking pensions?

**PENSION RIGHTS is producing a wave of anger and action across Europe. Hundreds of thousands of workers took to the streets over the issue. German workers have protested at the SPD's new pension plans, which have led to the government cutting the state pension from 70 percent to 67 percent of final wages.**

In France at the end of January some 200,000 marched on a day that saw strike action across public services.

They were taking action against a threat issued by the employers to raise the age of retirement by five years.

The employers warned that from April they will cease making their contributions to 60 years olds retiring after this date.

The same attack on pension rights is starting in Ireland. One of the main considerations that led to nurses calling off their strike in 1997 was that their claim for early retirement would be given priority.

Now they, like thousands of public sector workers, are going to be furious at the findings of the recent Government Commission on Public Service Pensions.

### Reservations

This Commission, with reservations from the trade union representatives on it, has proposed a new 1 percent tax to cover the promised pension.

They have also come out against early retirement schemes and benefit improvement. Most significantly of all they also propose raising the age of retirement. At the moment the age at which public sector workers retire varies, with the most common ages being from 60 - 65.

The Commission wants to set the age of retirement at 65.

"This was consistent with improvements in life expectancy" was how they justified their proposal. In other words, if workers are going to live longer, then they should work longer.

The reason for such a conflict over the pensions issue is that population trends are leading to a growing bill for pensions, a bill that business is not prepared to pay.

In Ireland it is estimated that the cost of public sector pensions will quadruple by 2027.

The French system of funding pensions will go into deficit in 2005. Germany expects to have 50 percent more pensioners in the next 30 years.

What is happening is that the retired population is growing, with a huge leap expected soon from the "baby boom" after the war.

At the same time the working-age population of Europe is actually declining (an extra-ordinary fact when refugees are told that there are enough people here already).

### Forecasts

The employers magazine the Economist sums up their fears, "The effect of all this has been forecast as cataclysmic. Adverse demographics threaten to bankrupt governments and in the meantime wreak macro-economic havoc."

So across Europe the right are trying different methods to attack pension rights: increasing the tax to cover it, increasing the age of retirement, reducing the payments.

They also have another strategy which is being pushed by the OECD, and that is to promote private sector pensions.

A prospect which will no doubt be mouthwatering to the wolves in the financial markets.

But this route is one of potential disaster for workers.

The example of Robert Maxwell stealing his worker's pension fund to fund his business is an important one. Even better regulated private pension funds are invested on the stock market. If the markets collapse, then so does your pension.

Even if that doesn't happen there is no evidence that returns on accounts invested in the stock market actually exceed what public pension systems have delivered so far.

Capitalism has no use for those who do not work, and big business resents every penny spent on support for pensioners. But workers' receiving a reasonable standard of living after a lifetime's work is a basic, and hard won, right.

And it is a right that the labour movement is going to have to fight in the coming months.

by CONOR KOSTICK

# n the expenses

£450,000 is every month's official list of TD's do quite

Fine Gael TD received just only slightly amount claimed at Cork South O'Keefe.

Rory Kiely and Brian Roscommon's expenses list for Seanad. received over £4,000 tele- ce. permitted £4,000 within his con- a further £4,000 us expenses. who live within Leinster House ly allowance of

That means a cost of £120,000 to the tax payer.

All those who have served in a government receive a pension whether they have retired or not, so Michael Lowry gets £16,710 from this alone.

Finally sitting on a Committee can up a politician's salary a little further.

Chairing a select committee can even net an extra comfortable £10,000 for the over-worked politicians

**ONE IN five TD's are owners of agricultural land.**

They include Jackie Healy-Rae, who has a 300-acre farm in Kilgarvan as well as a pub and shops. John Bruton own owns some of the country's best land is worth nearly £2 million plus his Taoiseach / Minister's pension of £29,696.

A whole number of TD's are landlords including Alan Shatter and Sean

Doherty who owns several large properties and is worth at least £2.5million.

Minister for the Marine, Frank Fahy owns a fancy Florida apartment that he forgot to declare in the register of members' interests.

### Property

In addition to the Florida pad, he owns property in Gort, a house and apartment in Galway, properties in Athlone and Dublin and a house north of Naples, in Italy.

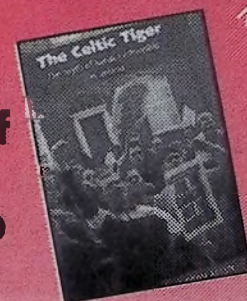
Defence Minister Michael Smith has 200 acres in

**Why there is no rent control**

by SIMON BASKETTER

**The Celtic Tiger and the myth of Social Partnership**

£13.60 plus £1.50 p+p  
Available from SW Books,  
PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.





# GLOBAL CORPORATIONS

# Not so strong as they look

"GLOBALISATION" has become a symbol of the way giant multinationals rip lives apart and destroy our environment.

But what exactly is globalisation, and how we can we fight against it? HAZEL CROFT explains.

**M**ULTINATIONAL corporations can seem an unstoppable force, roaming the world at will, devouring anyone who stands in their way.

These firms do wield enormous economic power.

Individual multinationals are bigger than many countries.

But there are limits to the power of the multinationals, and they are vulnerable to demonstrations, protests and strikes.

Some of the fiercest critics of globalisation see it as something different to the way capitalism operated in the past.

World trade and investment have massively increased in the last 30 years. But this is not a new process.

The trend towards bigger and bigger firms dominating the world was something that the revolutionary socialist Karl Marx identified in the 19th century.

He saw how the ruthless competition at capitalism's heart meant firms would spread their operations over the globe in their quest for raw materials, new markets and profits.

**F**INANCIAL speculators today move trillions of pounds around the globe. But multinationals cannot switch the production of material goods, upon which their wealth ultimately rests, at a moment's notice from one country to the next.

In some industries, such as textiles and clothing, multinationals have moved to take advantage of lower wages in the Third World.

But this is the exception rather than the rule.

The production of goods like aircraft, cars, machine tools, fridges, cookers and much more takes place in big, expensive industrial complexes that have taken years of planning and investment to build up.

These complexes can't merely be dismantled overnight.

And when multinationals do switch production, it is most often to nearby industrial countries.

Multinationals need access to the latest technological developments.

They want a safe domestic market to sell their goods, and their workforce to have a certain level of skills, education and health. They need easy access to transport and delivery systems.

And they also want stable governments to guarantee their profits.

So 90 percent of multinational companies concentrate investments in advanced industrial countries.

Four fifths of world manufacturing is based in North America, Western Europe and Japan.

Multinationals are nearly all tied to one national state—for example, Mitsubishi in Japan or General Motors in the US—which they look to to protect their interests.

Each multinational expects "its" government to fight for its interests, such as altering interest rates or in international negotiations.

They expect governments to step in to prop up failing companies and institutions.

This is what happened when the US government rescued the hedge fund



**MARCHING** against Job cuts in Vauxhall in Britain

Long Term Capital Management two years ago or the Japanese government nationalised banks in the 1990s.

Competition between multinationals can take the form of bitter trade disputes, such as the recent rows between the US and the European Union.

Ultimately such rivalry can also take the form of wars.

That is why the 20th century not only saw the rise of giant corporations but was also the bloodiest ever.

As the US pro-business journalist Thomas Friedman says, "You can't have McDonald's without [giant arms firm] McDonnell-Douglas."

**G**LOBAL corporations have enormous power, but they can be beaten. Governments and big business have been terrified by the wave of anti-capitalist protest that has swept the world since Seattle in 1999.

And they live in fear of the workers whose graft and sweat creates the bosses' profits and whose collective action can halt the flow of profits.

The increasingly international character of production has increased, not diminished, workers' power.

As production is concentrated in fewer plants, small groups of workers have huge potential to disrupt the international operations of companies.

New production techniques such as "just in time" add to the potential impact of strikes.

A strike at just one General Motors plant at Flint, Michigan, in the US in 1998 halted production at 25 of its 29 US assembly line plants.

There is also another side of "globalisation", less talked about but just as important. It is a trend to what has been dubbed "glocalisation", the concentration by multinationals of their production and supplies in particular regions.

You have had the development of regional networks of production in, say, the European Union, or in the North American Free Trade Agreement zone of the US, Canada and Mexico.

So it is not a question of workers having to leap from their local workplace to organising worldwide resistance all at once.

Instead these multinationals can be hit by regional solidarity, involving workers in, say, the US and Mexico, or Ireland, Germany and France.

What has held workers back from more such action is not the power of the multinationals but the timidity of trade union leaders.

Strikes and occupations can also act as a powerful focus for international resistance to the multinationals.

They can force even governments which love to go along with the global corporations to intervene to protect jobs too.

And as the story from McDonald's in France shows (right), when workers do fight they can humiliate the most hated and seemingly powerful corporations.

## 'We beat them'

**AFTER 13 days on strike over Christmas McDonald's workers in Paris won many of their demands.**

"**TAKEN BY surprise, management stirred themselves (that's a first!) and in the corridor told us they were surprised at our attitude (pfffl).**

**We decided to occupy the restaurant. By the afternoon we'd covered our bodies with stickers and the main entrance with flags.**

**We gave out leaflets with our demands on and began to gather signatures of support. The signatures rained in!**

**We slept in the basement and the delivery wagon arrived as usual at six in the morning. The driver didn't come back after that: "It's the first time I've seen a McDo shut by a strike!"**

**We laughed as we watched the "gentlemen" of the management unload 1.4 tonnes of**

**deliveries (in other words, nothing) and heard them complain about their backs the first time they had to carry the boxes!**

**Those exploiters hoped to open the McDonald's, but they hadn't counted on the strikers...and the support we got from students.**

**While our student colleagues blocked the entrance we chanted, 'We are not burgers! Power to the workers!'**

**Our dear exploiters called in the big guns—the managing director of all of McDonald's-France. But that did no good!**

**I went to the Sorbonne university to tell the students about our struggle. It was the first time I had spoken in front of so many people.**

**From then on our slogan became, "Workers are angry, students in solidarity." For me and for other strikers solidarity was the key to our struggle.**

**We decided to spend Christmas in the restaurant. Everyone joined in. I had the best Christmas of my life."**

**by Joselito, McDonald's worker in Paris.**



## in my view

### Stardust tragedy — 20 years on

ON FRIDAY night the 13th of February 1981 young people as usual began arriving at the Stardust nightclub in Artane for a night out. Also taking place in the club was a trade union function with a band in the Lantern Room.

Just after midnight a small fire began in a closed off balcony area. An attempt to extinguish the fire failed and the people at the function in the Lantern room were advised to leave which they did.

Security staff pushed up the screen dividing the area but this caused the fire to rush out and set light to the ceiling tiles and walls in the disco area which immediately began to produce large volumes of thick black smoke. People began to panic and a stampede ensued as people tried to escape.

Many were trampled in the rush, others collapsed unable to breathe in the noxious atmosphere. But as people rushed to the exits they found many of them were locked. Many went to escape via windows but were met with iron bar grilles, which prevented their exit. Rescue personnel watched in horror from the outside as victims were crushed against the grilles desperate to flee the smoke and flames.

The city morgue quickly became overloaded and Army personnel had to erect tents in the yard to cater for the high number of fatalities. The fire took the lives of 48 young people many of whom were from the local area and some who were from the same family. More than a hundred others were severely injured suffering horrific burns and smoke inhalation.

Eight families have still not to this day had their sons and daughters fully identified because they were so badly burned.

#### Nightmare

*Socialist Worker* spoke to one of the people who escaped the fire. "Even though it's twenty years ago I still have nightmares. That night destroyed so many lives. It makes me sick to think that something like this could happen again because politicians don't care enough to enact the law they made so much about after that night."

A millionaire property owner Butterly owned the Stardust Nightclub. He was never charged or held responsible for the 48 people who died that night. In fact no one went prison, no one was charged. "It was like we didn't even matter," said the survivor.

The Stardust fire was the worst fire Ireland has seen in modern times and it could happen again. One of the firemen who fought the horrific Stardust came out recently to warn that "Another tragedy is waiting to happen . . . Every pub, club and school is a potential Stardust."

The 1981 Fire Safety Act that was brought in after the Stardust was meant to ensure that such a tragedy would never happen again. But today there are only three fire inspectors available to carry out random safety checks on the growing numbers of pubs and nightclubs in Dublin.

The Act stated that there should be an independent inspector but that has never happened. The Fianna Fail government at the time also promises a massive investment in the fire-fighting services to ensure an increased number of station inspectors and firefighters.

But all the fire service has gotten over the years is severe cutbacks. It is the fire fighters themselves that have fought to improve resources. Through strong trade union organisation they have ensured that there are never less than 100 firefighters on duty at any one time in Dublin.

Twenty years on, ten local authorities have still not even approved fire and emergency operations plans. Three councils have still not even drawn up any such plans. And these local authorities are still insisting that the 20-year time lag in introducing fire and emergency operations plans is not affecting public safety.

At the height of the Celtic Tiger the very least those who died and were maimed deserve is decent investment in fire services and safety.

by SINEAD KENNEDY

film

# Gibson found a bit wanting

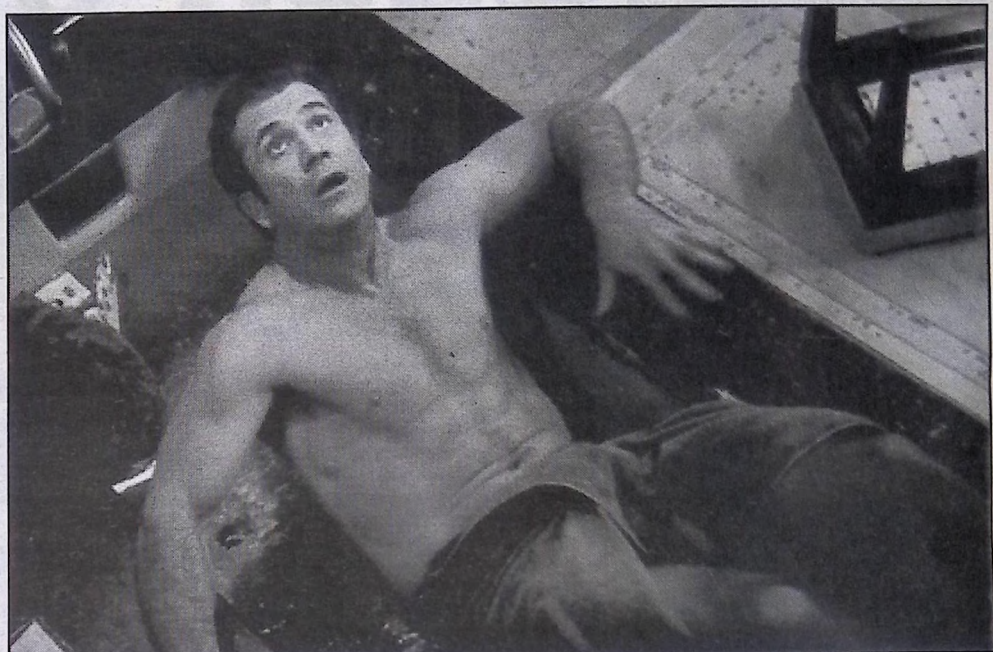
IN *What Women Want* Mel Gibson plays every woman's worst nightmare, the misogynist Nick Marshall who thinks that women are there to fix him food and laugh at his demeaning jokes.

However problems start for Nick when he discovers that he has not gained his guaranteed promotion to Creative Director of an Advertising Agency.

#### Target

Instead the job went to Darcy Maguire (Helen Hunt), who as a woman is more in touch with the ad company's biggest target, Women.

That evening whilst trying to gain an incite into women by trying on various feminine products, he acciden-



#### What anyone wants?

tally electrocutes himself and thus develops the ability to hear what women think.

What starts like a good idea, however does not work.

Women, according to this film are only obsessed with food, finding the right men and getting a chance to prove themselves.

Women are portrayed as nice and caring whilst men are selfish and out for themselves.

This is "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus" on film. Only by learning Venusian (understanding women through their thoughts) can Mel Gibson be reformed into a decent guy.

The other problem with this movie is that it is set in the world of advertising.

It is obsessed with selling and takes product placement to new lows.

The moment of Mel's greatest triumph is when he uses Hunt's ideas to produce an advert to sell Nike to women. The only reason Mel wants

to understand women is in order to sell to them.

The movie itself is a cross between an advert and a self help book where Mel gives out sugar coated advice to the females in his life.

Well it certainly isn't what this woman wants.

— FIONA HESKIN

book

## Capuccino cubs

SUNDAY Tribune journalist Ann Marie Hourihane book *She Moves Through The Boom* sells itself as a journalist's investigation into the changes Ireland has faced as a result of the boom.

It promises to tell the stories of the boom "that can't be quantified by statistics nor squared with the hollow cliché of the Celtic Tiger" painting the pictures the newspapers and tourism propagandists are missing.

She also promises to talk to ordinary people about living in the midst of the biggest economic boom

Ireland has ever seen.

But while Hourihane writes with ease and humour the book rings hollow and fails to live up even remotely to any these promises.

The book at some level gives voice to those that the Celtic Tiger has forgotten most notably in the section dealing with people who fell victim to the Quarryvale / Liffey Valley development.

The problem however is that Hourihane thinks whatever the inequalities of the Celtic Tiger everyone is becoming more middle class.

But the only evidence she supplies for this is the increased consumption of cappuccino, wine and mineral waters.

To make matters

worse she constructs the book around posing chapters titled 'coffee', 'wine', 'water', 'moving' and 'talking'.

Ireland is onwards and upwards as far as Hourihane is concerned.

This impression is easy to construct if you ignore inflation, wage restraint for workers with increased profits for the rich and the growing tide of racism.

The only real impression this books leaves is that the world Hourihane inhabits is very different to one that you and I live in.

*She Moves Through The Boom* by Ann Marie Hourihane. Published by Sitric Books Price £7.99

— SINEAD KENNEDY

## Kelly's heroes

PETER CAREY'S *True History of the Kelly Gang* provides an account of Australia's most famous bushranger (outlaw), Ned Kelly.

He was hanged on 11 November 1880 after a shoot-out with police in Glenrowan in rural north east Victoria. During the battle Kelly donned his famous suit of armour, hammered out from ploughshares.

While Carey does not take on the big political questions, his powerful and entertaining book does give a real feel for the social conditions that created Kelly.

In 1841 Kelly's father was transported from Ireland to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) for seven years for stealing two pigs. When Ned Kelly was 12, his father died and his mother eventually moved north to farm on "selected land".

"Selection" was an attempt to promote small-scale farming as the basis for rural development and social order. The policy clashed directly with the large landowners who had seized the best tracts of land.

Kelly and the bushrangers sought a way out of their personal hardship through thieving what they needed to survive, and targeting institutions like rural banks that locked the selectors in debt.

In 1879 Kelly's gang held up a bank and handed one of the tellers a 58 page letter justifying his actions and throwing the blame for bloodshed back on the police.

When Kelly was captured and sentenced to death, over 8,000 people demonstrated in Melbourne demanding a reprieve.

True History of the Kelly Gang, price £16.99





**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 here.

Rank and File Conference promises to...

# Organise to win back our unions

**A CONFERENCE of one hundred and forty trade unionists has agreed to establish a Trade Union Rank and File Solidarity Network that will act as a beacon for workers who want their rightful share of the Celtic Tiger.**

The network will seek the affiliation of union branches who oppose social partnership and also individual trade unionists. Groups are also to be established in individual unions to press for policies which will help to return them to their members.

Opening the conference, **Kieran Allen, author of the Celtic Tiger: The Myth of Social Partnership** said,

"We have started to win the argument against social partnership. There is a new mood among workers.

"They recognise there is huge inequalities in the Celtic Tiger and they are putting in pay claims. The ICTU leaders are frightened. That is why they did not put the last PPF review to a vote.

**Clare Daly, a shop steward at Dublin airport took up the theme**

"Aer Lingus was once seen as a good job but it has been made ready for privatisation. They slaughtered workers conditions. We have been organising resistance for a few years and now many members are listening.

"We had Des Gerahty from SIPTU out at the airport but when we asked him questions all he could say was that partnership was working. It did not impress even the moderate trade unionists."



Teachers marching shows there is life outside partnership

**Eddie Conlon, an executive member of TUI:** "The union leaders are using undemocratic methods to defeat us.

"They cancelled a special conference of our union because they did not like the resolutions which supported striking teachers in ASTI."

**Owen McCormack, a member of the**

**Busworkers Action group said,** "Rank and file organisation works. We have been organising for some years in Dublin Bus, producing a regular bulletin and campaigning against the CIE viability plan. We managed to defeat the union leaders on several votes and played a major role in getting a 20 percent rise for workers.

**Dennis Keane, the President of the CPSU agreed,** "We formed the activist group some years ago and made sure our bulletin went to every union branch. We realised it was not enough just to try to get resolutions passed at conference.

"You had to organise before hand. Then you had to put people up for election to show you were willing to give a lead

to the rank and file. I was elected by two thirds of the CPSU delegates

because I said it was not a personality contest but about policies."

## Union recruitment drive needed

**THE conference agreed to launch a Trade Union Rights Campaign to help organise non-union workers.**

**Jimmy Kelly, an ATGWU Executive member said,** "There are sweetheart deals where by certain companies are not being organised into

unions. We have to break that.

"The US recession is going to have a devastating effect in the Celtic Tiger.

"The computer sector is now wide open to a union organising drive.

"The Trade Union Rank and File Solidarity Network will be producing literature to encourage workers to join a union".

**Join the Rank and File Network**  
If you want to join the network or get a regular bulletin from the network, write to 103 O Hogan Road Dublin 10

## NO TO BENCHMARKING

**THE CONFERENCE agreed to urge a policy of non co-operation with benchmarking.**

**Pat Cahill a member of the Standing Committee of the ASTI explained,**

"Benchmarking is all about introducing market mechanisms into the public sector. But how can you quantify the achievements of nurses or teachers?"

"Benchmarking can mean that jobs are under valued. There will be 'discounts' given because we have job security in the public sector".

The ICTU leaders are pressurising shop stewards into making representations to the benchmarking body.

But it is a device for dividing up workers and putting more pressure on them.

The alternative is to put in straight pay claims rather than follow methods devised by Thatcher in Britain.

### SWP branch meetings

- **ATHLONE:** Contact 01- 872 2682 for details
- **BRAY:** Meets every Wednesday at the Mayfair Hotel at 8.30pm
- **BELFAST CENTRAL:** Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Kitchen Bar, 16 Victoria Square, near Cornmarket
- **BELFAST SOUTH:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Queens Students Union
- **BELFAST WEST** ring for details 01774 781 958
- **BELFAST QUEENS UNIVERSITY:** Wednesdays 1pm, Peter Frogg's Centre
- **CORK:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in O'Donoghue's, Drantage St
- **DERRY:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.15pm in Badgers Bar upstairs, Orchard St.
- **DROGHEDA:** Meets Wednesdays 8.30pm in McHugh's Pub St. Lawrence's Gate
- **DUNDALK:** Contact 01- 872 2682 for details
- **DUN LAOGHAIRE:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm 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 Corways Pub, Parnell St
- **DUBLIN KILLBARRACK:** Phone 087 6235071
- **DUBLIN CABRA:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Aughrim St Parish Hall, Prussia St
- **DUBLIN BALLYMUN:** Phone

- Kevin at 8622209
- **DUBLIN DUNDRUM:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Dundrum Family Recreation Centre
- **DUBLIN RIALTO:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm St Andrews Community Centre, SCR
- **DUBLIN RATHMINES:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Tom Kelly flats community centre, Charlemont Street.
- **DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL:** Phone Simon 087 6561455
- **DUBLIN TALLAGHT:** Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in Jobstown Community Centre
- **ENNISKILLEN:** Phone 01- 872 2682 for details
- **GALWAY:** Meets every Wednesday in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square (beside Cuba) 8.30pm
- **LIMERICK:** Phone 01- 872 2682 for details
- **MAYNOOTH** meets Thursday lunchtime ring (01)8722682 for details
- **SLIGO** Meets fortnightly on Saturdays, phone 087 6329511 for details
- **SWORDS:** Meets Tuesdays 8pm Senior Citizens Hall
- **TRALEE:** Phone 087 6329511 for details
- **TRINITY COLLEGE:** Meets Thursdays 7pm see posters for details
- **UCD** meets Wednesdays 1pm see posters for details
- **WATERFORD:** Meets every Thursday at 8pm in the ATGWU Hall, Keizer St.

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**Airport****Aer Lingus**

# Action to escalate

**AFTER VOTING overwhelmingly to reject a Labour Court offer, cabin crew at Aer Lingus took to the picket line in a one day-strike action.**

As *Socialist Worker* went to press another one-day strike was planned for 16 February followed by two further stoppages the following week.

Some 1,400 of Aer Lingus' 1600 cabin crew are represented by IMPACT. The main issue in the strike is low pay. Cabin crew are notoriously badly paid. "I don't think most people realised how badly paid we were until we went on strike" one worker told *Socialist Worker*.

**Earn**

Workers at the bottom of the pay scale get a miserly £10,866 a year and must work for 24 years before they earn £21,223.

Management at Aer Lingus are demanding a longer day, faster turnaround time for aircraft, reduced access time to time off in lieu of overtime and more intensive working on longer routes.

"Management better get it into their head that we are determined to win.

"They'll need to come up with something better than that pathetic labour court offer. We gave enough productivity with the Cahill Plan in 1993" said another worker.

"They expect you to be simply available to work

**CPSU**

## Ballot to reject PPF

**THE CPSU executive has agreed to ballot their members on the PPF review offer of 2 percent. They are the first union to do so and have shown that the rest of the union leaders are frightened of their own membership**

The executive is also recommending that members vote against the deal and that would leave them free to put in new pay claims.

Anger has grown in the CPSU because top civil servants are due to receive a 25 percent increase due to the Buckley review while the low paid grades have to put up with increases that barely match the rate of inflation.

whenever, whatever way they want.

All they keep talking about is flexibility; they want us at their beck and call.

You are not allowed to have a life that does not revolve around working for them.

"The majority of cabin crew are women and a lot of

us have young children. How are we supposed to be available 24 hours a day? It's not as if they are paying us loads of money to do it."

While health is not a major issue in the strike, it is still a concern felt by many of the cabin crew workers.

A major study by the Danish Cancer Society published recently shows that

many women who work unsocial shift patterns, like cabin crew, are up to 70 percent more likely to develop breast cancer than women the same age in regular day time jobs.

Meanwhile Cabin Crew who are represented by SIPTU have voted 95 percent in favour of strike action.

**British Midland**

## Why did Aer Rianta give security passes to scabs?

**BRITISH MIDLAND has flown in scores of strikebreakers into Dublin Airport. Aer Rianta management who run the airport have facilitated them by giving them security passes.**

"It took the rest of us about three or four weeks to have our airport passes cleared.

"It allows you access to the ramp and it is also a security pass. But these strike breakers got a pass immediately.

"They did not have to show they were trained for the job - they just got an immediate pass" one ATGWU shop steward said.

"We approached the airport police who are members of SIPTU and asked why they had issued the pass. In fact they refused. At one

point management was going to discipline them for refusing but they knew that would cause an immediate walk-out. So top management issued them themselves".

The open connivance with strike breaking by a state company is an affront to all trade unionists at the airport.

The ATGWU have now applied for an all-out strike from the ICTU but if it does not come quickly the British Midland workers should seek solidarity action at a rank and file level.

**Transfer**

The strike was caused by a company decision to transfer the workers to Gatwick Haulage International.

The transfer would mean that workers lose their flight privileges and would have to accept much worse pension arrangements.

"Some of the workers

**National Car Testers**

**"IF YOU want to see what privatisation means look at what is happening at the National Car Testers. The government franchised out the service to a British company who are squeezing their workers." This is what one striker told *Socialist Worker*.**

The NCT workers have been on strike for over a month and have received official backing from their union, SIPTU.

"We were told this was going to be a good job. But we found ourselves working over 10 hours a day. When you get to a certain age, time is valuable. You want to spend time with your family. But this com-

pany was saying that it was in our contracts that we had to work long hours," the striker said.

Car testing can be a dirty and grimy job. But the company have refused to use proper extraction equipment to get rid of fumes because it might cost too much.

They have also tried to divide their workforce by paying non-Dublin workers less and telling them the situation will improve only if profits stay up. But the workers have stuck together and all two hundred employees are on strike.

They are putting up a determined fight. They have forced the company to cancel many tests. The issue is being referred to the Labour Court.

have been with this company since it started back in the eighties.

"They helped to build it up so that they are making about £10 million a year from Dublin Airport.

"We think they should at least show us some loyalty and pay decent compensation," the shop steward said.

The company have also employed a lot of contract staff with nearly 40 of the 160 strong workforce on contracts.

"You would think that with all their profits they could at least have made a gesture and given those workers permanent jobs' another striker said.

Workers in Britain are due to follow suit but under the anti-union laws brought in by the Tories they have to give 28 days notice.

The Dublin workers have begun the struggle and are determined to carry it through.

**Benchmarking**

**INSTEAD OF condemning the huge pay rise given to politicians, union leaders have put out a spin that it shows how benchmarking can work for everyone.**

But the politicians were not forced to give any extra productivity. And there was no question of putting them on performance related pay.

The Buckley report also said, "We warn against drawing conclusions about other public service groups

**Waste Management Crisis**

# Protest can stop the incinerators

**FIANNA FAIL and PD councillors in Galway have rammed through a plan to build an incinerator. But they are set to face even more opposition in the future.**

The Galway council took the decision after Environment Minister Noel Dempsey and local waste hauliers manufactured a

waste crisis.

After Ballinasloe turned away commercial waste, a picket of small business people closed it down for domestic waste as well.

Some 2,000 people had marched through the streets of Galway to stop an incinerator being built but Dempsey is determined to stamp on any form of local democracy.

He is bringing in new

planning regulations that will enable him to classify some developments as a 'national priority' and so the time for making objections will be cut dramatically.

Dempsey is justifying this measure by claiming that "there is a huge culture of NIMBYISM (or not in my back yard) me feinish, call it what you will."

But this is an insult to the thousands of local campaigners who are trying to protect their environment.

Groups like Galway for a Safe Environment have made it clear that they do not want incinerators anywhere because they produce a toxic emission known as dioxins.

They argue that incinerators are being closed down elsewhere.

A gasification plant in Frankfurt that was supposed to be a model for Galway has just been closed.

In America, the Environment Protection Agencies have ordered the closure of several incinerators after rising dioxin levels were associated with an increase in cancer rates.

Campaigners in Louth have shown that Indaver, the Belgian Company that has won a contract to build an incinerator there, is withdrawing plans for incinerators in Belgium and is proposing alternative waste treatment techniques.

As Dempsey moves to crush local democracy it is clear that direct action will be needed to stop the incinerators.

**Breton Rocrete**

## No job description — no work

**WORKERS AT Breton Rocrete, a subsidiary of the giant Roadstone firm, have gone on strike because their employer will not provide them with job descriptions.**

The reason is that he wants to avoid paying the agreed Construction Industry Federation pay rate.

The workers took the issue to the Labour Relations Commission but then refused to wait around any longer. Their union, SIPTU, has refused to make the strike official claiming they did not

go through all procedures.

But the workers have every right to take action. They want proper pay rates. In a set of demands issued to the employer they stated that they wanted a rate of £9.40 an hour for labourers and £10.20 an hour for craft workers and crane drivers.

The company has also been employing workers on three week contracts to avoid their legal obligations.

SIPTU should make this strike official and urge workers at a sister plant in Blessington to get involved in the struggle.

**BATU**

## Carpenters strike back

**"TALLAGHT IS not exactly the Beverly Hills of Dublin. But I cannot afford a house in Tallaght. It must be the first time a carpenter cannot afford to buy a house in Ireland." This is what one worker who was on strike at the new supermarket complex in Swords told *Socialist Worker*.**

The carpenters are paid a basic £8.45 an hour by Sisks, the giant building firm. Bonuses are paid on top of that but they do not figure on pensions and they

do not impress bank managers who hand out mortgages.

One striker told *Socialist Worker*, "In a burger restaurant, you can earn £7 an hour and they give you a uniform and free meals. Here we have to provide our own clothing and tools."

The carpenters want a substantial increase on the hourly rate. They have seen the bricklayers increase their pay and they want to follow. Sisks can well afford to pay up. They are making over £400 million a year in profit. The company invested massively in the old apartheid regime in South Africa and are now expanding again in Ireland because there is so much profit to be made.

The strike has real international colour about it. Sitting on the picket line at Swords were two New Zealand carpenters.

"We have also had great support from the Portuguese lads. They all know what trade unionism is really about."

The carpenters have won solid support from other tradesmen and from labourers. But there are also numbers of scab firms who are

trying to break the picket. They are Cramptons, Edgar and McHugh's.

The strike has been made official by BATU. Even though the employers have used the media to claim the union is making outlandish claims, workers are determined to stick it out.

**Eircom**

**SEVENTY Eircom workers walked out of the Marlborough St. call-centre for more than six hours in unofficial action recently. It was the third unofficial action in three weeks.**

Workers are being forced to leave the company's share scheme when they are transferred to Vodafone who are purchasing Eircom's mobile phone subsidiary Eircell.

Loss of the employee share option trust (ESOT) would mean that each worker would lose an estimated £45,000 in forgone shares.

As *Socialist Worker* went to press workers, who are represented by CWU, had severed official strike notice and were planning to step up the action.



# Socialist Worker

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## Millions die in agony from lack of drugs

# Multinationals make a killing from AIDS

**THE MAJOR drug companies are putting their pursuit of profit above the lives of millions of people. And they are backed by the US government and the WTO.**

In total 42 pharmaceutical companies are taking a case against the South African government.

The case is an attempt to block South Africa from importing cheap medicines.

The drug companies have spent three years and millions of pounds prepar-

### Obscene profits

- Bristol-Myers: £3.7 billion
- Glaxo Wellcome: £1.95 billion
- Boehringer Ingelheim: £430 million
- Merck: £3.78 billion
- Pfizer: £3.8 billion
- Total Profits of the six top drug companies = £15.81 billion

ing the case.

More than 2.5m people die every year from AIDS-related illnesses.

More than 13m children have lost one or both parents to the condition.

There are more than 32m men, women and children infected by HIV in developing countries.

No drug has yet been found which can cure AIDS. But particular treatments

can dramatically slow down the deadly progress of HIV.

The problem is that the multi-national pharmaceutical companies charge a fortune for them.

The drugs AZT and 3TC, keep people alive, but the price tag is \$10,000 (£7,000) to \$15,000 per patient a year.

The majority of employed people in South Africa, with whole families to support, earn less than \$3,000 a year, and on the rest of the continent it is far worse.

Almost half of Africa exists on less than 65 pence a day.

There are now alternatives - cheap copies of life-saving medicines called generics. But the drug companies and the WTO are fighting to stop developing countries buying or producing the drugs.

### Property

They drug barons are able to do this because of a little known international agreement called Trips — trade related intellectual property rights.

It was agreed within the World Trade Organisation in order to ensure patent rights were respected around the world.

There were supposed to



**No treatment for a baby born with AIDS in Africa**

gaps in the case of emergencies.

What is happening now is that the US is using every available means to close the loopholes.

The US Government has threatened sanctions against South Africa, Brazil and India

for buying cheaper drugs.

The drug companies made over £15 billion last year.

They would rather see tens of million die than see their profits reduced.

That is the sick reality of globalisation and a system that puts profit before people.

## Drop the debt

**AIDS is at its most deadly in partnership with poverty.**

Debt repayments and structural adjustment programmes have sucked more than £70 billion out of Africa in the last ten years.

The health care system is often the first to be targeted in cuts.

This means that dressings are reused and needles shared. Drugs are no good without hospitals, doctors, nurses and basic equipment. The Aids crisis has exploded most terribly in the highly indebted countries.

Many African countries spend four times as much on debt as they do on health

■ Tanzania spends nine times as much on money for bankers as on health.

■ Zimbabwe spends 3 times as much on debt as it does on health.

■ Zambia spends £11 per person on health, £21 on debt.

■ The money for health budgets in Africa is pitiful. Kenya spends £5.20 per person per year, Uganda £6.

## AIDS: a disease of poverty

**HALF OF all 15 years olds living in South Africa and Zimbabwe face death from AIDS.**

AIDS now kills 10 million people a year in Africa — 10 times more people than war.

The disease has created some 12.1 million orphans on the continent, most of them prey to abuse, neglect and a short life of illness and crime.

AIDS is also causing serious social problems. One in five adults are living

with HIV. In Zambia, there was a 13-fold increase in deaths among healthcare workers in the 1980's, largely due to AIDS. An estimated 860,000 children in sub-Saharan Africa lost their teachers to AIDS last year, according to the latest UNICEF Progress of Nations report.

But statistics do not convey the horror of AIDS sufferers; especially poor AIDS sufferers are forced to endure. A horror that could be alleviated if people could afford the drugs.