

Socialist Worker

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For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 1.00 / £0.70 stg

VOTE NO

12 years jail for an abortion?

What if it was HIS problem?



FIGHT FOR A WOMEN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE!

Not so clean PDs cash in

The Progressive Democrats have received two separate 'donations' of £50,000 in the past year from Treasury Holdings and Ryanair chief executive Mr Michael O'Leary.

Coincidentally the cabinet has just approved new facilities at Dublin Airport for

low-cost airlines. After much lobbying from Ryanair, O'Leary has long sought to build a terminal for Ryanair's use at Dublin Airport in return for a concession on landing fees.

Treasury Holdings the property development company is still pushing through its takeover of the Dublin Docklands at Spencer Dock.

£10 million to steel magnet... Did we pay for Blairs's bribe?

TLAKSHMI MITTAL, the Indian billionaire at the centre of the cash for influence scandal that has engulfed the government of Tony Blair, had a £10 million loan from ACC Bank guaranteed by the Irish government when he took over the Irish Steel plant at Haulbowline, Cork, in 1996.

When the company went into liquidation last year the government

paid the £10 million.

The formerly state owned Irish Steel was sold to Mittal's Ispat International Group for £1 in 1996 on the understanding of a £30 million investment into the plant and the securing of its 400 jobs under a five-year plan.

Claimed

However, almost exactly five years later, Ispat closed the Cork plant after having pushed through a series of attacks on workers.

The group claimed to have invested £24 million in the plant.

A statement of affairs presented at the time of the collapse showed that Ispat Ireland owed £23 million to its parent group.

During the five-year period, however, Mittal floated the Ispat group on the New York and Amsterdam stock exchanges, an event that pushed his own net worth towards an estimated \$2 billion.

An Irish company, Dumurray, which was registered in Cork, was used to channel a personal profit of

\$31 million.

Mittal has been the subject of a political scandal in Britain in recent weeks when it was reported that Tony Blair had lobbied Adrian Nastase, the Romanian prime minister, to promote the sale of a Romanian steelworks to Mittal's company.

Mittal had previously donated stg£125,000 to the Labour Party.

Whether any donations have been made to the Irish political parties is as yet unclear. Though perhaps they helped out for free.

Malborough recruitment

Football junkets for Ahern... The dole and no wages for workers

WORKERS at Marlborough Recruitment were left without their wages as the company went bust.

But the company directors are unsurprisingly Okay as they are close friends of Bertie Ahern.

Ahern appointed the boss of Marlborough David McKenna to the board of Enterprise Ireland.

Donation

McKenna flew Ahern on a number of trips to Old Trafford to watch Manchester United. McKenna then proceeded to give £5,650 to Fianna Fail.

There was of course no contradiction between running a recruitment

agency and working for Enterprise Ireland. Though Marlborough did get a number of lucrative contracts with new companies in recent years.

Another close friend of Ahern's, Des Richardson is Marlborough's executive chairman.

Des Richardson is a former Fianna Fail fundraiser and is still the fundraiser for Ahern's constituency.

Yet another friend of Ahern's Paul Kavanagh is also a director of the firm. Kavanagh was also a FF fundraiser - under Charlie Haughey.

Sources said some staff knew of the looming crisis last week after months of delayed payment of expenses and the disappearance of management in recent months.

In an e-mail sent to staff, company Managing Director David

McKenna, said it was with a heavy heart that he was writing to them.

"As you know we had arranged with the bank to support us upon certain

events happening.

"This was all going to plan until Wednesday evening when one of the deals fell out of bed and this triggered the events

of yesterday."

While the assets are being handed over to the banks the workers are being left high and dry.

Perhaps the workers' wages could come out of the FF fundraisers' salaries.

US military out of Ireland

Death plane nearly causes disaster at Shannon



A WORLD Airways DC 10 Jet (above) carrying US military equipment was grounded overnight at Shannon airport after the captain reported smoke in the cockpit and was forced to make the emergency landing. Emergency services have

confirmed that there was smoke in the cargo hold which also leaked into the cockpit.

World Airways DC 10s have been transporting US troops through Ireland via Shannon since Bush's war started.

The cargo jet was scheduled to make a refuelling stop at Shannon en route from Bangor, Maine in the United States to Kuwait, via Paphos in Cyprus. Socialist Worker reveal that the plane

was carrying ammunition and weapons to U.S. military in the Middle East.

The plane landed at Shannon at 5.10pm after the Captain reported smoke in the cockpit.

U.S. military personnel, armed with automatic weapons, were on board the aircraft and met emergency crews as they arrived to inspect the aircraft.

There were five people in all on board, a crew of three, two men and a woman and two U.S. military personnel wearing fatigues.

In 1997 - the last year for which figures were available - 3,500 US military aircraft passed through Irish airspace and 425 planes landed at Shannon.

Since September 11th hundreds of soldiers have been transported through Shannon. Many have traveled on supposedly "civilian" aircraft that landed for refueling.

It's time we got the death merchants out of Irish airspace.

Asbestosis cases linked to dump

TWO PEOPLE have been diagnosed with the fatal asbestosis disease in Togher, Co Louth, and their doctors are satisfied that they have contracted this illness because of their proximity to a closed asbestos dump in the area.

The dump was one of two that was used for over 20 years by Tegral, part of the CRH group.

The first woman who was diagnosed was sent for tests as soon as her doctor realised where she was living.

There are also a number of people in the area awaiting results, and it is feared that at least two more will be diagnosed with this fatal disease.

One man, who was a driver to the Tegral dumps, has been diagnosed with mesothe-

lioma, which is a cancer of the stomach, as a result of asbestos infection.

Tegral dumped asbestos waste, including sludge, into Boycettown dump on a continuous basis between 1964 and 1974. Locals recall this period and say it was "like a white Christmas all year round" due to the amount of white asbestos dust that would settle in the vicinity.

Local residents claim that Louth County Council have refused to come up with a properly documented plan for the disposal of exposed asbestos on this site despite numerous requests since 1997.

Residents in the area have written a number of letters to Minister Noel Dempsey. To date, they have not received a reply.

Passports for a bet?

IT HAS been alleged in a petition presented to the High Court that in 1998, Irish passports were issued to various members of the extraordinary wealthy Getty family, in return for the issue of £3m of redeemable shares to GT Equinus Inc.

It was alleged the shares were issued to GT Equinus by Blackhall Racing Company, which managed

the Puncestown Course with another company, Puncestown Management Company (PMC).

A DRAFT Price Waterhouse Coopers (PCW) report into the operation and financial affairs of Puncestown racecourse states that net assets were overestimated by £14m. Apparently missing £14million was a mistake.

THE State spent more than €1.5m on air taxis for the President, the Taoiseach and his Cabinet ministers in the past year, newly released figures reveal.

Air taxis were used because the Government jet is seen as too shabby for the ministers.

Private jets were hired on 21 occasions in 2001 for ministerial air transport and the vast majority of these were for use by Bertie

Ahern. At one point Ahern had two planes going to different places. A flight by the Taoiseach to New York via Iceland on June 23 cost €117,568. A flight to Kerry on the same day, in the name of the Taoiseach, cost €4,317.

Further air taxis hired by the Taoiseach during September and October to Shannon, Brussels, Prague and Northolt, UK cost €170,000.

Disgraced TD Liam Lawlor is getting special treatment in Mountjoy jail. He is holding telephone discussions with his lawyers and 'friends' in a room used to monitor the phone calls of other prisoners.

There are even suggestions that Lawlor had access to a prison computer in the room and is being allowed to spend several hours a day working on legal matters in the room.

Apparently on his visits to his new office Lawlor is using the Prison officers' female toilet as to use an inmates toilet he would have to pass other prisoners. And apparently Lawlor has been subject "to abuse and cat calls" whenever he is seen by other inmates.

BUILDING of the Dublin Port tunnel has six times caused serious displacement of rail tracks.

On only one occasion did Irish Rail consider the alarms important enough to halt train services.

Numerous residents groups expressed concern at the planning stage over the danger of subsidence due to the building of the tunnel. They were told there was no possibility of this happening. But if the underground construction work can cause a track to sink what is it doing to the foundations of people's homes?

An estimated 250,000 Irish children are attending school in sub-standard classrooms.

There are over 850 schools on the Department of Education's waiting list for major repair.

An INTO survey of over 1,200 primary schools in April 2000 had found that many were vermin-infested, overcrowded and totally inadequate in terms of basic hygiene.

Though it is noticeable that all the political parties have suggested using Public Private Partnerships to help school building.

Socialist Worker suggests parents and teachers watch closely for Government announcements in the run up to the election for extra funding for schools. They are likely to be attempts to privatise education by the back door.

what we think

Fight for the right to choose

ACCORDING to the Editor of the *Catholic Herald* if the Abortion referendum is defeated then it will be the end of the Irish Anti abortion movement.

The right wing know this and have gone on the offensive.

They are operating a policy of deliberate confusion. Tens of thousands of women are pro-choice but misinformation means they aren't sure that this means a NO vote.

The Catholic Church has gone as far producing a million leaflets in favour of a Yes vote.

Under orders from head office Fianna Fail members took to the streets for the first time in years to leaflet for a yes vote.

Ahern has attempted to use the referendum to re-build a popular base for right wing politics.

He has not just called the referendum because he is beholden to independents.

He understands that parties such as the Greens and Sinn Fein have always been reticent about this issue and he wants to put them on the back foot before a general election.

But instead of fighting back much of left has been intimidated by the right.

Experts

The referendum debate had psychiatric and legal 'experts' to the fore rather than mobilizing the voices of thousands of women who have had abortions.

The Labour Party are running a defensive campaign that is terrified of admitting they want a 'liberal abortion regime'. The Labour Party National Executive used the referendum as an opportunity to overturn the party's conference decision that favoured a women's right to choose.

The Green Party are notable by their absence and are divided on the issue. Sinn Fein went as far as to publish

articles by the Pro-life campaign and Youth Defence along side a statement from the Alliance No Vote in *An Phoblacht*.

The reason for all this has its origins in a simple myth. Before the X-case it was argued that the "Liberal agenda" would be won not through protest and action but through Europe and lobbying. After the X-case we were then told that this liberal agenda was won.

But the reality is different. The X-case brought thousands onto the streets. As well as the great demonstration of up to 14,000 there were daily angry protests at the Dail.

If Ms X had not been allowed to go there would have been riots on the streets.

Those protests produced a sea change in Irish politics that put the right wing on the defensive for a decade. But instead of pushing home the advantage, Labour went into two coalitions, and didn't even legislate on the X-case judgment.

Freedom

Socialists fight for the right to choose because we want greater freedom for people to control their lives. The right to choose means a right both to have an abortion - and a genuine right to have a child.

In Ireland the right of a woman to choose to have a child is greatly restricted by the lack of affordable childcare facilities, adequate paid maternity leave, decent housing and social welfare.

State-funded childcare facilities are provided only for children who are known to be at risk of physical or sexual abuse. What little childcare is available is so expensive it is beyond the means of most low paid workers.

Richer women can sidestep all these issues. In the same way as money allows them the choice of having an abortion, so money allows them to have a child on their own terms.

It is in the fight for a better world, where no mother has to watch her child starving to death or dying of measles, that real concern

KOREA: Fighting Privatisation and George Bush!



In the space of a couple of days thousands took to the streets of Seoul -- twice. First to protest against a visit of George Bush (right) and then to protest against the government's privatisation plans (left).

for children is expressed. In general, those who support the right of women to contraception and abortion are more likely than 'pro-lifers' to be involved in that fight.

The reason is simple. We are concerned, not with theological arguments about potential human beings, but with the rights and dignity of actual sentient human beings.

It was thousands of people mobilising that even got the right to travel and information.

We need to mobilise again to win the right to

choose. And to make sure that for the first time in its history the *Catholic Herald* has it got right and that the anti-abortion movement in Ireland is finished.

Help us raise 20,000! Socialist Worker Appeal

The *Socialist Worker* appeal is aiming to raise 20,000 euros. This money will be used to help *Socialist Worker* become a weekly paper.

We don't get any financial backing from big business. We rely solely on our readers and supporters to help us build a revolutionary party with its own paper, independent of the establishment media. Our readers and supporters are responding very enthusiastically to the *Socialist Worker* Appeal. So far we have raised over 6,500 euros. We would like to thank all our members and readers who have so generously donated so far.

The *Socialist Worker* appeal has launched a national raffle. Tickets are available from your *Socialist Worker* paper seller and cost 1 euro each. There are several money prizes and the draw will take place on Easter Monday 1st April.

I want to support the *Socialist Worker* Appeal and help keep *Socialist Worker* at the centre of the struggle for a better world. Please find enclosed the following donation:
_____ /€

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Donations in Republic of Ireland should be made payable to:
Socialist Worker, AIB, 37 O'Connell Street, Dublin 1 Account Number: 85173030 Sort Code: 93 11 36 Donations in Northern Ireland should be made payable to
Socialist Worker, First Trust Bank, High Street, Belfast Account No: 00812073, Sort Code: 93 80 92
Return slip to: SW Appeal, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

6500.00

0.00

SWF

Zimbabwe

EU is not a friend of fight for democracy

EUROPEAN UNION (EU) leaders imposed sanctions against Zimbabwe and withdrew election observers. Nobody should believe the EU is a friend of democracy in Africa or anywhere else. The EU says it is outraged by President Mugabe's refusal to allow monitors in to watch over the presidential election scheduled for 9-10 March.

But the EU cares little about electoral fraud, so long as those who cheat follow Western interests. In the presidential election in neighbouring Zambia two months ago there were widespread reports of fraud.

Fraud

Even the EU's monitors expressed reservations about the election, which saw Levy Mwanawasa elected with less than 30 percent of the vote.

However, because Mwanawasa is a friend of the multinationals, the EU shut up and defended the result. There were no sanctions when Mwanawasa declared that anyone who protested faced the death penalty.

The EU is worried about Zimbabwe's white farmers and other capitalist interests in the region, not the black workers and peasants. In Madagascar (see report below) the US and EU care nothing for the ordinary people of the island.

They would be happy with whichever candidate could cheat his way to power so long as he stands

up for business interests. Meanwhile in Zimbabwe repression continues unchecked as President Mugabe fights to hold on to power. Mugabe has recently rammed through brutal laws which make it virtually impossible to protest against him. Despite this, people protested in Harare against the dictatorship. No to neo-liberal poverty". The march called for opposition to privatisation, repeal of repressive laws, an end to political violence, and free and fair presidential elections. It was backed by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, the National Constitutional Assembly, the International Socialist Organisation (ISO) and many others.

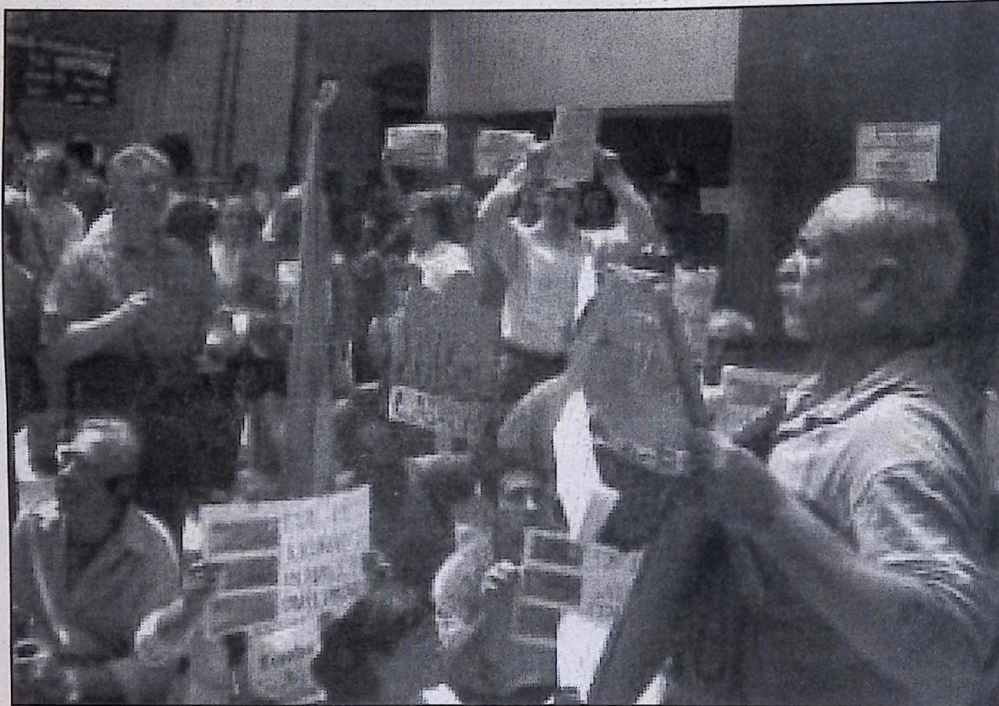
The protest had been banned but the marchers courageously assembled in defiance of the ban.

There was a heavy police presence at the assembly points. Munyaradzi Gwisai, the ISO member who is an MP for the opposition Movement for Democratic Change, was immediately arrested. Another 15 demonstrators were also seized. They were all beaten and many, including Munyaradzi, required hospital treatment. He was detained and appeared in court and was released on bail.

The hope for Zimbabwe is that there will be more, and bigger, protests, and that they will connect the issue of democracy to the resistance to neo-liberalism.

It is therefore a very good sign that the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions is under pressure from worker activists to call a stayaway before the election. Such actions, not EU sanctions, show the way forward.

Argentina



Protests broke out against the IMF

IMF demands more cuts

A NEW wave of agitation has swept Argentina. It comes after the conversion of all bank accounts from dollars to the national currency, the peso.

Friday of last week saw demonstrations right across the country, with unemployed people looting supermarkets in the Cordoba province for food.

Some 5,000 people attended a national conference of the "piqueteros" movement of

unemployed workers in Buenos Aires' Plaza de Mayo square. It called for roadblocks throughout the country to bring everything to a halt. The powerful oil workers' union announced it was calling an all-out strike. The government is paying out \$10 billion to halve the debts of giant industrial and financial firms.

They also reduced by about a third the amount small savers had in their accounts. It amounted to robbing the lower middle

classes and many workers in order to subsidise big business. Government controls still stop many people getting access to savings or wages paid to them through the banks.

Prices have already started soaring by between 10 and 30 percent in a fortnight. This isn't good enough for the International Monetary Fund. It is demanding that the government imposes still bigger cuts in public expenditure.

Italy

Berlusconi forced to retreat

A WAVE of workers' revolt has swept Italy. Berlusconi, said there had been an "absolute convergence of views" between him and Blair.

Berlusconi, whose government includes fascists from the National Alliance, wants to scrap Article 18 of the Workers Charter. Article 18 does not allow bosses to sack workers without a good reason. The CGIL, the main left wing trade union federation, organised a number of regional general strikes at the end of January in response.

These were highly successful, with millions joining the four-hour strike. Around 70,000 demonstrated in Bologna, 50,000 in Milan and Naples, 30,000 in Florence, 20,000 in Modena and 10,000 in Salerno. The government offered to improve public sector workers' contracts. All the main unions accepted and called off a planned general strike.

But the independent rank and file unions Cub and Cobas, which are strong in some of the public services, went ahead with the strike.

Over 100,000 people marched through the Italian capital, Rome, on the day.

They included striking nurses from Milan, car workers from Fiat factories, traffic wardens, firefighters, postal workers, teachers, students and transport workers.

The CGIL has called a march against education cuts for Rome on 9 March. There was also a militant four-day strike involving thousands of cleaning workers on the railways.

Berlusconi wanted to rip up these temporary workers' contracts and sack them all as part of his plans for privatisation of the railways. Their four days of action forced the government to back down and renew their contracts.

★ **STOP PRESS Italy**
Indymedia has suffered a series of police raids in a clear attempt at intimidation. A number of computers and equipment were confiscated. Latest information available from italy.indymedia.org & www.indymedia.ie

Madagascar

OVER A MILLION PEOPLE TAKE TO THE STREETS

HUGE STREET protests and a two-week general strike have shut banks and businesses in many parts of Madagascar.

Over 1.5 million people, one in ten of the island's entire population, were on the streets. The agitation was sparked by electoral fraud.

But the real issue is the poverty

of the people. In the early part of this month around half a million people demonstrated daily on the streets of the capital, Antananarivo.

They were demanding the resignation of the president, Didier Ratsiraka. Ratsiraka rigged the results of the 16 December presidential election. Opposition leader Marc Ravalomanana, the mayor of Antananarivo, is believed to have won 52 percent of the vote. The demonstrations began when the

island's High Constitutional Court said that "after a recount" Ravalomanana had won 46 percent of the vote, against 40 percent for Ratsiraka.

Majority

As neither candidate had an overall majority, the court ordered a second round of voting. Madagascar is an island off the east coast of Africa. Ratsiraka

ruled Madagascar from 1975 to 1991.

He began by proclaiming himself a supporter of "socialist revolution from above" but very quickly accepted an IMF austerity programme. He was removed when he lost the support of the army, but was then returned to power in the elections of 1996.

Around 70 percent of the population live below the poverty line. Yet both the main candidates offer nothing but more IMF-style "liber-

alisation" and pro-business policies. Ravalomanana, a top businessman, is nervous about protests going beyond his control.

The US government is sniffing around Madagascar. There are theories that the US is preparing to site a naval base there in case it loses Diego Garcia. The British, French and US governments were manoeuvring this week to secure a deal between the two candidates to come to an agreement to restore "stability".

Exclusive: PFI bankrupts Derry Tech

THE REALITY of the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) has hit home at the North West Institute for Further and Higher Education [NWIFHE], known in Derry by its old name, the Tech.

PFI is being used across most government departments in Northern Ireland, from SF Martin McGuinness's school building programme, to DUP Peter Robinson's transport plans. "This is value for money, the best way to fund new investment", we are told again and again.

"This is real politics, not play-acting" socialists and trade unionists, who object are told.

It is now just a year since the NorthWin consortium handed over a new block, built under PFI, to the NWIFHE. Already, the college is £1.5 million in debt and unable to pay the exorbitant mortgage costs due to NorthWin. Courses at the col-

lege have had to be cancelled in order to meet the repayments.

Of course, using the term 'mortgage' implies that sooner or later the NWIFHE will pay off what it owes and the building will belong to the college. Not so.

When he was Minister for Finance and Personnel, Mark Durkan admitted that even after 25 years of paying the excessive rents, the buildings would still belong to the PFI consortium.

Warned

Socialists warned that the situation facing NWIFHE might happen. The NorthWin consortium is led by Cement Roadstone Holdings (CRH). If you're not sure where you heard of CRH, think of the Dublin Castle Tribunals into corruption and you'll remember.

But it's not just the students whose courses are being cut that are suffering as a result of the politicians' embrace of PFI. Ancillary staff at the Tech. - porters, cleaners, techni-

cians, catering staff and so on - were transferred from public sector employment into private when the PFI deal was delivered.

At the time, the trade unions involved, mainly Unison and the ATGWU, conceded the fight against privatisation but were triumphant at the deal they had negotiated.

The workers being transferred to the PFI consortium were to keep their public sector pay and conditions for at least seven years.

The private profiteers have now torn up the agreement and workers' pay and already conditions are being eroded - less than one year into the seven year deal.

If the unions had reneged on a deal as blatantly as this, bosses, politicians, and the media would be screaming blue murder. But since it's a private company, there's hardly been a peep.

Anyone in a workplace threatened with PFI should learn the lesson of the NW Institute and fight NOW to stop the disastrous effects of this corporate take-over of our public services.

Army obstructs tribunal

AS THE Saville Tribunal continues to reveal new information about the role of the highest level military and political establishment in the murder of 14 people in Derry on Bloody Sunday, obstacles continue being put in the way of the families of the dead establishing the full truth.

The soldiers who carried out their masters' bidding and shot dead unarmed protestors will not have to come to Derry's Guildhall to give their evidence - they will do so from England. So, unless they win the lottery, most of the relatives will be unable to see the men who shot their loved ones give their evidence, except via a video link to Derry.

The Tribunal's ruling, which allowed RUC officers giving evidence at the Guildhall to do so from inside what is - in effect - a wooden box, is being challenged by the families. They are afraid that the soldiers will also demand to give their evidence from inside the box.

This would mean that, while the soldiers are giving their evidence, the families in Derry would be watching a TV screen showing a wooden box. So much for openness, truth and justice!

Despite the fact that it set up the Inquiry, Blair's government has done the bidding of the 'securocrats', even going so far as to issue Public Interest Immunity [PII] certificates preventing the release of details about two agents "Observer B" and "Inflition". Inflition is the agent said to have claimed that Martin McGuinness admitted to having fired the first shot on Bloody Sunday. Lawyers for the fami-

lies asked for information about the two, so that their reliability could be tested.

Now, lawyers for the families have requested details of the operation of the secret intelligence services in the North around the time of Bloody Sunday since they believe these "may have been mobilized in order to mask the truth about the army's involvement in Bloody Sunday".

Probe

Among the agencies the lawyers want the Tribunal to probe are the Information Research Department (IRD), which they describe as "a fairly shadowy department believed to have connections with the Secret Intelligence Services" and the associated Information Policy Unit, or "Psy Ops", based at British Army headquarters at Lisburn.

They also want information about, and any minutes which exist of, a number of meetings involving senior British Army officers, UK government representatives and intelligence and public relations officials.

These include a meeting at the British Army's Lisburn headquarters at 10pm on Bloody Sunday attended by General Robert Ford, Commander of Land Forces, Col. Maurice Tugwell, head of the Information Policy Unit, a UK Government representative and "others from Operations, Public Relations and Intelligence".

This information is clearly relevant to the Inquiry but there is a real fear that instead of the truth, all the relatives of the dead will get are more Public Interest Immunity certificates.

No change under B-man

WHILE THE activities of Special Branch and other "shadowy" groups are debated at the Saville Inquiry, a former head of Special Branch is doing very well and showing that times have not changed too much.

"Sir" Ronnie Flanagan has just been invited by the Police Board to stay on as chief constable of the RUC, sorry PSNI, until the end of March.

This five-week extension is hardly a career breakthrough but its symbolism is significant. It says "nothing has changed".

The Police Board split down the middle on sectarian lines in relation to the decision, so nothing changed there either.

Flanagan doesn't have to worry about joining the dole queues at the end of March. He's already got a plum job lined up as an Inspector in Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary.

Damning

Quite how Flanagan is seen as a fit person to investigate other police forces is difficult to comprehend, especially given the damning details of his role in the investigation of the Omagh bomb contained in the

report of the Police Ombudsman.

That report was particularly critical of the role of Special Branch in relation to preventing the atrocity in Omagh and subsequently to the investigation.

Hardly surprising that Flanagan is cosy with Special Branch, though, he used to head it up. The Special Branch has consistently refused to

co-operate with inquiries into its activities and did its best to discredit those, like John Stalker, who tried to expose it.

Not only did Flanagan lead Special Branch in more recent times, he was a senior officer intimately involved in both Castlereagh and the Special Branch during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Comment

Grammar schools fight to defend privilege

THE PRIVILEGED grammar schools in Northern Ireland launched an offensive to prevent any change to the selective system.

The notorious 11 plus which is still used to divide children into 'academic' and 'vocational' schools, is currently under review. The review process is dragging on, with some reports saying that the 11 plus will still be in place in two years time.

The grammar schools can no longer defend the discredited 11 plus as it currently exists. But they are fighting a rearguard action to keep selection and maintain the divide between the privileged grammar schools and secondary schools.

Wilfred Mulryne, principle of Methodist College, one of the most exclusive grammar schools in Belfast, said: "We have said that the current transfer test should go but that selective education should remain."

The grammar schools are bastions of middle class privilege. Children from working class families are seven times more likely to go to secondary schools than children from well-off families. Only one per cent of working class Protestant children in areas like the Shankill Road and North Belfast pass the 11 plus each year. The grammar schools, which are a feature of both the Catholic and the state sector in Northern Ireland, have the lowest class sizes, the lowest rates of children on free school meals and the best resources. Mulryne's Methodist College even has its own swimming pool.

BURNS REPORT FALLS SHORT

The Burns report, produced by the review body on the 11 plus, left the door open for this sort of attack by the grammar schools. The report advocates getting rid of the 11 plus exam but leaves the existing division of schools intact, proposing instead that all schools in an area would co-operate in a 'collegiate' system. This is an attempt to avoid challenging the grammar schools, which the Burns Report says will retain their own 'individual ethos'.

But the grammar schools, now assured that their future is secure, are fighting to prevent any change which lessens their power to select pupils.

The Governing Bodies Association, which links Catholic and Protestant grammar schools, are demanding access to the pupil profiles so that they can select the children they want and claims that the Burns Report "can only lead to the gradual introduction of all-ability schools - a comprehensive system of education."

Rejects

But it is precisely because the Burns Report rejects out-of-hand a fully-funded comprehensive system that it has left the field open to attacks by the grammar schools. The grammar schools' scare campaign is being backed by the Belfast Telegraph and by prominent figures in the Unionist Party. UUP education spokesman Danny Kennedy welcomed the grammar schools report. The main Unionist parties, Trimble's Ulster Unionists and Paisley's DUP are attempting to unite Unionists in the Assembly to defend the grammar schools, against any changes proposed by the SDLP or Sinn Fein. This is a recipe for a sectarianised argument.

Sinn Fein education minister Martin McGuinness, in a recent Irish News interview, highlighted some of the problems with the Burns Report and indicated that other options, including comprehensive education, will need to be considered. McGuinness declared that "The Burns Report is a set of proposals which are effectively out for consultation and can be changed, and I think it is important to state that". He also welcomed an article from David Rose of the PUP which argued that Burns should have gone for a full-funded system of secular comprehensive schools.

McGuinness attacked the myth that the selective system leads to better exam result, pointing out, "England, caricatured as a failed comprehensive system, actually has more pupils (than Northern Ireland) gaining five GCSE passes". This opens a space to fight for the comprehensive option, which is the only way to challenge the grip of the grammar schools.

John Price, from the Campaign Against Selection, says, "To get real equality in education means making all schools equal and that means a massive injection of resources into the most run-down schools and a comprehensive system. We need to be demanding research into a fully-funded comprehensive system and that is what we will be campaigning for."

WHAT DO SOCIALISTS SAY

Henry Kissinger — war criminal

HENRY KISSINGER is the biggest war criminal of the last half century, and he is visiting Ireland. He will not be arrested and dragged off to the cell and the trial he deserves. Instead he will be chauffeur-driven in a luxury limousine to a conference of fat cats.

AT HIS trial in The Hague former Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic is accused of horrendous crimes, and he is undoubtedly a monster.

The charges against him are not that he pulled the trigger to personally kill his many victims, but that he is "morally responsible" for their deaths.

By that standard, Henry Kissinger's crimes are on an almost unbelievable scale. In 1969 he became National Security Assistant to newly inaugurated US president Richard Nixon.

He went on to become Nixon's Secretary of State and the effective number two in the US administration.

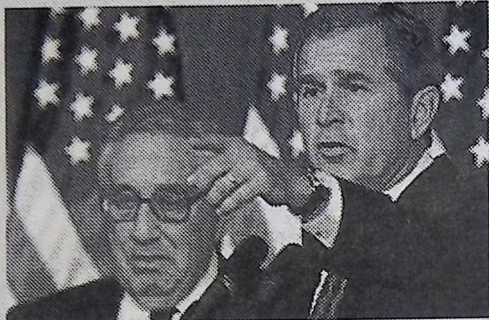
One of Kissinger's first acts in 1969 was to organise the secret invasion and carpet-bombing of Cambodia.

In just 14 months B-52 bombers flew 3,630 missions in an operation codenamed "Menu". Each day's bombing was labelled "Breakfast", "Lunch" and "Dinner", as ton after ton of high explosives rained down on Cambodian villages, fulfilling what one US general called "bombing them back into the Stone Age".

Journalist William Shawcross, in his book on the Cambodian war, *Sideshow*, describes how "that summer's war provides a lasting image of peasant boys and girls clad in black, moving slowly through the mud, half-crazed with terrors, as fighter-bombers tore down at them by day, and night after night whole seas of 750-pound bombs smashed all around."

No one knows how many people died in the Cambodian war as a direct result of US bombing.

At least 600,000 Cambodians died in all before the US-backed regime was toppled in



Kissinger with latest friend George Bush

1975. And it was the horror inflicted by the US that created the conditions in which the Khmer Rouge regime that came to power then went on to inflict even more death and horror on Cambodia.

Kissinger and Nixon kept their Cambodian war secret at first, even from other US politicians. When the truth came out they were forced to call a halt to the bombing campaign.

By then, in just over a year, the US had dropped 539,129 tons of bombs on Cambodia, over three times what US forces dropped on Japan in the whole of the Second World War.

Death his favoured Christmas present

CAMBODIA WAS only one of the horrors that Kissinger was responsible for in South East Asia. In December 1972 he personally persuaded Nixon to order one of the most horrific episodes of the whole Vietnam War. Between 18 and 29 December B-52s carpet-bombed Hanoi, the capital of North Vietnam.

The "Christmas bombing" campaign saw 40,000 tons of bombs dropped on the city, blasting schools and hospitals, and wiping out whole residential blocks. Thousands of people were killed and many more maimed. Indochina was just the start of Kissinger's career as a war criminal.

In December 1975 he paid a personal visit to dictator General Suharto in Indonesia to give the go-ahead for the invasion of neighbouring East Timor.

Just hours later, as Kissinger's plane left the country, the Indonesian regime launched its forces across the border.

Some 200,000 people, a third of the population, died as a result of the Indonesian occupation. At least 90 percent of the arms used in East Timor by the Indonesian forces were supplied by the US.

Philip Liechty later testified, "I was the CIA desk officer in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta. I saw the intelligence that came from hard, firm sources in East Timor. There were people being herded into school buildings and the buildings set on fire."

There were people herded into fields and machine-gunned. "We knew the place was a free fire zone and that Suharto was given the green light by the US. We sent rifles, ammunition, mortars, grenades, helicopters. You name it, they got it, and they got it direct."

Latin America is another continent where there are people who remember the bloody trail left by Henry Kissinger.

Bloody trail left across the world

WHEN SOCIALIST Salvador Allende was elected as president of Chile in 1970 Kissinger tried to organise a coup to overthrow him.

That plot failed, but not before a Chilean general, Schneider, who opposed

Heinz means massacres

Henry Kissinger was one of the few defenders of the Chinese government when they massacred pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen square, saying "No Government in the world would have tolerated having the main square of its capital occupied for eight weeks by tens of thousands of demonstrators."

His sympathy for the butchers of Tiananmen of course had nothing to do with his job at the time getting Heinz baby food onto the market.

The then Heinz CEO Tony O'Reilly said of Kissinger's work: "Kissinger makes a real contribution, and we think they are particularly helpful ...in that shadowy world."

the coup plans, had been assassinated.

Kissinger said, "No country should be allowed to go Marxist due to the irresponsibility of its people."

Three years later the Chilean ruling class and armed forces themselves organised a coup to overthrow Allende.

Kissinger ensured that the coup got full US assistance as General Pinochet's military regime killed thousands of people.

Kissinger was then up to his neck in "Operation Condor", an operation in which the armed forces of Chile, Argentina and other regimes in the southern "cone" of Latin America carried out assassinations, abductions, torture and murder of their opponents.

Kissinger has left his mark on every continent. In South Asia,

Kissinger was involved in backing the Pakistani regime which slaughtered thousands of people as it tried to stop Bangladesh winning its independence in 1971.

If ever there was a living person who should be standing before a war crimes tribunal it is Henry Kissinger.

Yet instead he is still feted by academics, policy-makers and businessmen across the Western world. He lives a luxurious life protected by the US government he long served.

He makes fortune as an advisor to the arms industry.

In a grotesque parody, Henry Kissinger was actually awarded the Nobel peace prize.

That this man is not in the dock shows the holowness of Western leaders' claims to stand up against injustice.

SHUT DOWN

ON FEBRUARY 8 one of the nuclear reactors at Sellafield had to be temporarily shut down.

A "de-fuelling" operation to take fuel rods out of the reactor "core" was underway when a basket containing 24 spent fuel rods fell from a discharge shaft at the top of the giant plant.

De-fuelling is supposed to transfer the radioactive rods to water flasks, where they are cooled from the high temperatures reached during nuclear reactions. The rods were left exposed to the atmosphere within the sealed plant, presenting the risk of fire.

A leading English nuclear expert, Dr John Large, described the accident as "incredible". "An accident involving radioactive nuclear fuel is very serious. Because of continuing radioactive decay, these rods are self-heating".

It is just the latest in a long line of accidents. According to Laurence Williams, the British government's official chief inspector of nuclear installations, "I make no bones about it. Sellafield is probably the most hazardous site in the UK." Here Socialist Worker looks at why Sellafield should be shut down.

Hazardous

When nuclear power was introduced into Britain in the 1950s its supporters said it was safe and would "produce electricity too cheap to meter".

An early newsreel in the 1950s described how it would produce cheap, clean, energy for everyone. This was completely untrue.

The growth in nuclear power was linked to the use of atomic weapons during the Cold War.

The first nuclear power stations were built to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons. Any electricity was seen as a by-product that was used primarily to power the rest of the site.

The development of the British atomic bomb was seen as a matter of urgency during the Cold War years of the 1950s and 1960s. Dealing with the mess caused by the production, operating and even testing of nuclear weapons was something to be worried about later, if at all. This lack of thought for the future spilled over to the nuclear power industry.

As the military and then the civil nuclear industries expanded worldwide, it was thought that uranium was a rare mineral and would soon be in very short supply.

Rather than simply burn up the uranium in the power stations, it was decided to reprocess the used fuel in order to extract various usable elements from it.

These elements included plutonium which was essential for making atomic bombs.

Soon reprocessing was widely used to produce the plutonium needed for nuclear weapons.

The whole process was always a risky and dangerous business but

when accidents occurred they were often covered up.

In 1973 there was an accident at Sellafield involving a steam explosion and escape of radioactive gas.

One plant had to be permanently closed down but in 1977 the new Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP) was proposed which produces very large quantities of dangerous waste.

Dangerous Liars

One of many Sellafield scandals arose from lies about shipments of nuclear fuel pellets. British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. (BNFL) sent shipments to Japan and claimed the consignment had undergone the full range of safety checks.

But a key part of the safety test had not been done and instead the results were simply invented.

At first it was claimed this was just an isolated incident. But a report by the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate found that the lying was systematic.

Records involving 88,000 nuclear fuel pellets had been "deliberately falsified" since 1986.

Potentially the misinformation about the size of the fuel pellets could have led to a nuclear reaction.

A history of disasters

ONE OF the world's first nuclear accidents took place at Sellafield a year after it was opened.

In 1957 a huge fire at the plant, which was then called Windscale, spewed radioactive material across the Irish Sea.

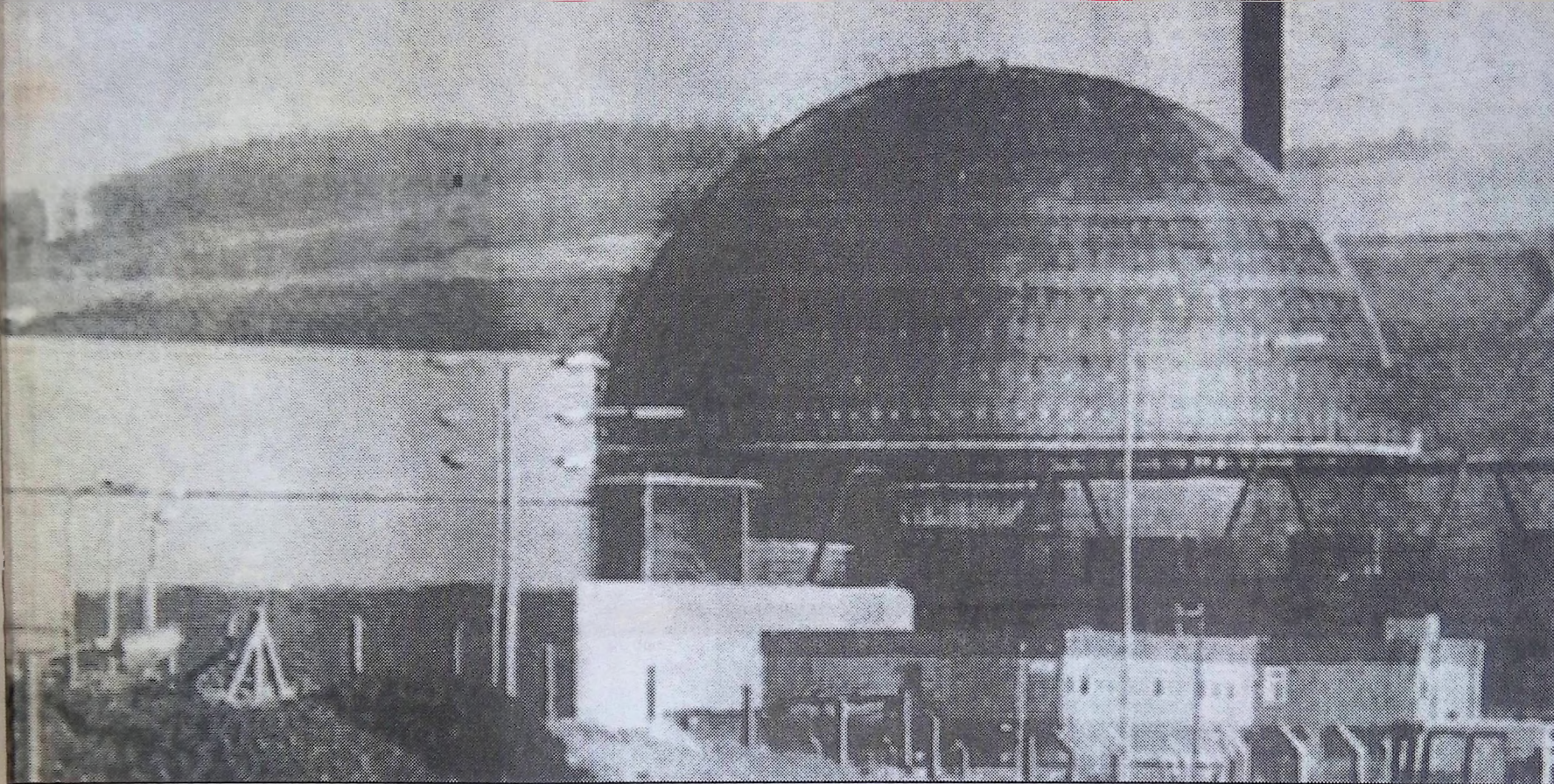
But the full truth was hushed up and an official statement said "There was not a large amount of radiation released. The amount was not hazardous and in fact it was carried out to sea by the wind."

Thirty years later it was admitted that a large quantity of hazardous radiation was blown south east, across most of England and parts of Ireland.

The truth only came out after a number of studies had shown a high incidence of birth deformities in parts of the east coast of Ireland

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Sellafield



History of disasters

... appeared to be associated with the accident. In 1981, after further accidents, the name of the plant was changed to Sellafield - presumably in the hope that the public would quickly forget all about Windscale. But in the years since, the world has seen even more lethal nuclear disasters. Among the worst are:

- Three Mile Island. In 1979 the US nuclear reactor at Three Mile Island went into "meltdown", the most appalling possible incident at a reactor. A full scale nuclear explosion was only narrowly avoided.
- Chernobyl. In 1986 the nuclear reactor at Chernobyl in the Ukraine exploded. Over 50 people died immediately and a huge radioactive cloud spread across Europe. A huge area around the plant is still deadly today.

What a waste

THE PROBLEMS of long term, secure storage of nuclear waste is still unsolved and is growing more acute year by year.

Earlier attempts by the nuclear industry to get rid of their waste by dumping it in the sea were stopped by a combination of environmental direct action and trades union protests.

Sellafield is an old site and has grown up in an unplanned way. New buildings are fitted in between old, sometimes abandoned buildings.

Some areas and buildings are sealed off and polluted by radioactivity, causing severe pollution of the nearby Irish Sea.

Waste from other nuclear plants around Britain is stored at Sellafield. Armed ships also carry waste to the plant from Germany and Japan.

They have no solution for storing the industry's high-level waste.

This waste is very dangerous and so any storage facility has to be made secure and safe over a period of thousands of years.

MOX fuel is even more deadly than plutonium, remaining dangerous for over 250,000 years.

MOX can be burnt in certain types of nuclear power stations but it is more expensive than straight-



forward uranium fuel and the British nuclear power station operators have already said that they see no reason to spend money to convert their power stations to burn it.

BNFL having already built a MOX manufacturing plant, are now looking round for overseas customers for their new product.

In fact they have staked their future profits on MOX, hoping to make up to £1 billion a year from

their MOX business.

MOX safety tests have been revealed as lies.

The pellets were supposed to be measured. But key stages were missed out and readings falsified.

If the pellets were even a small amount different to the planned size they could be dangerous when being shipped.

A nuclear reaction could start.

What we think

SOCIALISTS are opposed to nuclear power because it is an irrational way to produce energy that is linked to the needs of the military establishment.

If coal was subsidised on the same scale as nuclear power, it could be given out for free and there would still be a surplus left over.

The Thorp and MOX plants alone, a small part of the Sellafield complex, cost some STg £2.2 billion just to build.

In the 1990s alone the nuclear industry also received £7.8 billion in subsidies.

The billions poured into nuclear power could instead be used to produce the kind of things people really need. In a decent society, that would include a programme to insulate houses properly so that energy is not squandered.

Today there is a new attempt to justify nuclear power.

It is claimed that it can cut down on burning fossil fuels like coal and gas,

which produce the greenhouse gases behind global warming.

We need to cut carbon emissions but nuclear power is far from the solution.

It brings with it the risk of both short-term disaster in the event of an accident, and long term environmental disaster from the build-up of deadly waste products.

Pumped

Instead, the money pumped by governments into nuclear power could go towards developing clean, safe alternatives such as wind, wave, tidal and solar power.

While every Irish political party claims to be opposed to Sellafield no amount of tea-time chats between Ahern and Blair - or Adams and Bush for that matter - will get rid of Nuclear power.

Tens of thousands protested to keep Nuclear power out of Ireland. We need to mobilise the same numbers in Ireland and Britain to shut Sellafield down.

The real Mother and Child scheme:

When Church and politicians stopped a health service



THE religious right went on the offensive during the Abortion Referendum. The fundamentalist Youth Defence restyled themselves for the campaign as the Mother and Child Campaign.

But the real story of the mother and child campaign in the 1940s was of the religious right combining with right wing politicians to withhold healthcare from women - something they are still doing today.

At the end of the Second World War, Irish health care was a disaster and in serious need of reform. Noel Browne was a doctor who had himself suffered from the scourge of TB. He became Minister for Health in the coalition government of 1949.

Browne's party, *Clan na Phoblachta*, was a moderately left wing Republican party. It was led by the former IRA Chief of Staff Sean MacBride. It was one of a group of small parties - including two Labour Parties - in a coalition government clustered around *Fine Gael*.

Within eighteen months the new Minister had reorganized, improved, and streamlined the Irish Health Service to a degree never achieved before.

He had abolished queuing for tubercular treatment, provided financial help for patients and their dependents and built sanatoriums for the treatment of TB.

He launched a £20,000,000 hospital scheme, designed to give Ireland one of the most up-to-date hospital services in the world. This comprised a national cancer service, a nutritional survey, and, last but not least, a Mother and Child Scheme. In fact, the last was the most important of all.

The reason was an obvious one: Ireland's infant death-rate was the worst in the whole of Europe. During the previous fifty years, other European countries had at least halved the death-rate, many bringing it down by more than three quarters.

"Ireland alone is a clear exception to this rule," stated a World Health Organization report

which showed that Ireland's death-rate was still seventy-five per cent of the rate common at the end of the last century. That meant an infant mortality rate that was nearly treble that of England and Wales.

The plan was to give a free medical service to all mothers and children, without any means test.

He wanted to give mothers specialist gynecological care and to introduce a health education programme.

To avoid friction with the religious authorities, Browne specified in advance that the "education" would be physical and not moral. Doctors, it was directed, were to help in the promotion of these new measures.

But the medical profession proved to be far more concerned with money-making than with social welfare. Terrified of losing fees they launched a vicious attack on the scheme.

The views of the medical profession are, perhaps, best reflected in a letter that one Dr John Stanely of Merrion Square, Dublin wrote to the *Irish Times*.

He denounced "this insidious effort to enslave medical practice" and went on to blame the Russian revolutionary Lenin for the idea of the Mother and Child scheme!

But the most dangerous opponents of the scheme were the Catholic hierarchy.

IRELAND was supposed to be a Catholic state for a Catholic people.

Archbishop John McQuaid had formed a close partnership with the *Fianna Fail* leader, Eamonn de Valera to control all aspects of Irish society.

The measure of his influence was seen in the 1937 Constitution, which de Valera introduced.

"This recognised the 'special position of the Catholic Church' and stated that 'The most Holy Trinity' was the source of all authority. Divorce and contraception were banned. Women were defined solely as homemakers and mothers.

De Valera had even sent McQuaid the proofs of the consti-

tution for his approval before they were presented to the cabinet.

CONTROL of the hospitals and the schools were vested in the hands of the church. Many books were banned and a law was passed which gave the state the right to exclude married women from the workplace.

The labour movement was by no means immune from the influence of the Catholic Church.

In 1951 one of the two Irish trade union congresses sent a telegram to the Pope claiming that their affiliated unions were 'humbly prostrate at the feet of his Holiness'.

During the 1940s, McQuaid used the *Catholic Standard* to witch hunt socialists and to split the labour movement.



When Browne's scheme became public, McQuaid launched a campaign against the "totalitarianism" of free health care.

He denounced the Mother and Child scheme as 'socialist medicine'.

He wrote to the Vatican saying, "The attack is directed from Communist elements in Europe and in the Irish Workers League ... When I broadcast on the issue I took occasion to give the warning that the attack on the church in Ireland would come under the guise of social reform."

The Bishops set up an inquisitorial court, composed of the Archbishop of Dublin, the Bishop

of Ferns, and the Bishop of Galway and having summoned the Health Minister before it, they duly interrogated him.

The bishops then simply read out a letter:

"In their opinion the powers taken by the State in the proposed Mother and Child Health Service are in direct opposition to the rights of the family and of the individual and are liable to very great abuse... If adopted in law they would constitute a ready made instrument for future totalitarian aggression.

"The right to provide for the health of children belongs to parents, not to the State. The State has the right to intervene only in a subsidiary capacity, to supplement, not to supplant.

"Gynaecological care may be, and in some countries is, interpreted to include provision for birth limitation and abortion.

We have no guarantee that State officials will respect Catholic principles in regard to these matters. Doctors trained in institutions in which we have no

a badly needed health scheme were now changed utterly".

BROWNE was prepared to compromise. And at one point he introduced the idea of a charge for the scheme. But such was the power of the church that no compromises were allowed.

The hierarchy had condemned the scheme, Costello told the Dail. Therefore the Irish Government had to comply and reject the Mother and Child Scheme. Archbishop McQuaid wrote Costello's speech for him.

Costello declared "As a Catholic, I obey my Church authorities, and will continue to do so."

"There is going to be no flouting of the Bishops on Catholic morals and social teaching," confirmed the as radical then as now

Labour party, lead by William Norton.

"In Ireland a conflict between the spiritual and temporal authorities is damaging to national unity," added Sean MacBride, ordering his party colleague,

Noel Browne, to surrender his office.

There were protests in Dublin against the abolition of the scheme.

But Noel Browne made little effort to mobilize people in favour of the scheme.

He still believed that good medical care would come from enlightened politicians rather than from change from below.

In a desperate move, he even went so far as to join *Fianna Fail* briefly.

But having failed to mobilize people in his support, he lost his seat at the next election.

Afterwards Browne moved back onto the left.

He was the first politician to speak in favour of abortion rights in the *Oireachtas*. He was the first to denounce the treatment of children in industrial schools.

Over fifty years after the defeat of the Mother and Child scheme, Ireland still has a religious run two-tier health system. We still have politicians using church 'morality' to decide the fate of women's health.

For that to change the labour movement will have to overcome the cowardice of the 1950's and fight for a free health services that excludes private medicine.

And a No vote in the referendum that leads to a fight for a woman's right to choose can speed that happening.

"The hierarchy had become the factual instrument of government on all important social and economic policies in the Republic"

confidence may be appointed as medical officers under the proposed services, and may give gynaecological care not in accordance with Catholic principles..."

Then, having dismissed the Health Minister, they summoned the Taoiseach before their Tribunal. John Costello, however, was flattered and informed the Dail that the Archbishop of Dublin had "kindly sent for him".

Browne wrote in his autobiography *Against the Tide* that "The hierarchy had become the factual instrument of government on all important social and economic policies in the Republic.

Our prospects for the preservation of an effective Cabinet and



New Socialist Worker pamphlet:

Abortion: Why Irish women must have the right to choose by Goretti Horgan

2.50 from SW sellers

film

Monster IN Come

THE CONTRADICTIONS of Monsters Inc. killed Chuck Jones - the great Warner Bros animator who whose death was announced as I write this. Disney, with all the power of an evil corporation is pushing a tale about, well, an evil corporation.

Every television channel has a product placement for Monster Inc.

Outside of the now predictable burger and confectionary tie-ins, newspapers and even washing powder are trying to sell more stuff on the back of Monster Inc.

The setting is Monstropolis, the home of a collection of comic, and not so comic, (you guessed it) monsters.

Trained

They're the stuff of nightmares and they're trained at a special factory to enter the bedrooms of little boys and girls sleeping in the human world and suck in their screams.

The children's horrified reactions are then processed into the chief energy source that keeps Monstropolis going.

The economy is dominated by the giant energy corporation Monsters, Inc, which is facing a fiasco of Enron proportions.

The problem is that kids



Workers in blue fur or a marketing scam?

these days are not so easily scared.

They are jaded, at least partly as a result of the ever-more spectacular entertainment (such as Monsters Inc) thrown at them.

They yawn at the nighttime scarers of corporate produced terror; and their flesh is increasingly uncreeped.

So Monstropolis is on the verge of an old-fash-

ioned energy crisis. The goodies are the worker monsters and the baddies are the monster bosses.

The workers stumble on a despicable plot by management and are left standing in the way of "progress".

But never fear - they find a solution, and save the day.

Monstropolis, which steals power from the rest of the world by theft and

the infliction of pain, is actually the United States itself, who with a population of around five per cent of our planet consumes more than 25 per cent of the world's energy.

That you can put lots of computer generated blue hair on this tale and use it to sell washing powder is as disturbing as stealing children's screams.

But at least there are no songs.

film

Too many shades of grey

SET IN occupied France during the Second World War, Charlotte Gray tells the story of a young Scottish woman who is recruited to the British Special Operations Executive.

Charlotte, played by Cate Blanchett, wants to defeat fascism and search for her missing lover. She is sent to work with the French Resistance.

After being parachuted into a small village in southern France, Charlotte experiences life under the Vichy government. The Vichy were

French politicians who collaborated with the Nazi regime. Charlotte is a little taken aback when she is told that the people she is working with are Communists.

However, she realises that although she does not share their beliefs they have a common enemy in the fascists.

Desperate

Charlotte's desperate search to find her lover conflict with her commitment to the Resistance, with tragic consequences.

It becomes apparent that the British government considers the Communists, who are the backbone of the Resistance, as big a threat

as the fascists. The film shows how anti-Semitism takes a hold in the French village, but also how it is challenged.

The villages have to give up a quota of Jews to be sent to concentration camps. One man has to choose whether to surrender his father or two boys whose parents have already been deported.

The bitter reality of Vichy collaboration with the Nazis is brought home in a key scene when a train packed full of Jewish people leaves the local station. Hordes of local people, crying and screaming, force their way past armed German guards to pass on loaves of bread, or simply to hold the hand of a friend, neighbour or a stranger.

Charlotte Gray is essentially a love story set against a backdrop of adventure and breathtaking scenery.

The director, Gillian Anderson, has said that because she is Australian, she can be objective: "I can see both sides and not be judgemental about how the French behaved during the occupation."

There is a fine line between detachment and glossing over the facts. The Vichy regime was responsible for the deaths of thousands of Jews. Hundreds of Communists died fighting in the Resistance. The film is too ambiguous about these events.

Palestine Under occupation

JOAN BEAZLEIGH is a member of the Campaign for Palestinian Rights. She joined an international solidarity delegation to the Palestinian territories. She told Socialist Worker about her experiences.



'EVERYWHERE we went we bumped into a funeral. We went to the town of Salfeet in the West Bank. Many houses had been bulldozed just two days before we'd got there.

They'd built a little hospital. It has four beds and two doctors for 60,000 people. People from Ramallah have to use the hospital as well. There are lots of stillbirths.

Every Palestinian was on a state of alert for the whole two weeks that I was there. You couldn't do the normal things you would do in other cities.

This is an occupation, and the Israelis are behaving like occupiers. The Israelis had invaded Nablus and shot Hosni, a young graduate, just days before we arrived. He had three children.

He went to tell his friend that the Israelis were coming and the soldiers shot him in the head - they said he was a militant! There are checkpoints everywhere.

I always refuse to show my passport because what Israel is doing is against international law. If you wave a Palestinian flag anywhere in the Palestinian areas you will be arrested.

All across Palestine there are roads that join up the Israeli settlements. These are military zones controlled by the Israelis.

Palestinians cannot drive on these roads. Israel puts roadblocks across Palestinian villages so people can't get in and out. We went to the village of Yassouf to remove the roadblocks there.

Remove

If people want to get anywhere they have to come out of town, climb over the two roadblocks, and then get a service taxi from the other side. A journey that should take half an hour could take hours.

The only way Palestinians can get food into villages is to have trucks back to back across the roadblocks. Palestinians cannot remove these roadblocks themselves because the Israelis would shoot them.

This is an everyday story of life in occupied territory. We also went to a village called Marda. There is a settlement built on top of the village. All 250 settlements are built this way.

The settlers go by in their cars with their guns - they're more dangerous than the soldiers. They shoot without provocation. The Israelis have built pipes to carry sewage down to the river, which is the only water the Palestinians have.

To get to Bir Zeit University students have to go through the checkpoint. The Israeli soldiers sometimes keep them waiting for hours.

They take away IDs and do not give them back. Students and people

going to work are just held up at the checkpoint for half a day for no reason. We demolished the checkpoint and formed a human chain that the Palestinians could walk through.

The road was clear for the whole day. People could walk from Ramallah to Bir Zeit. In the afternoon the Israelis sent soldiers and tanks. They started shooting teargas. I was hit with teargas myself. Before I joined the international delegation I stayed with some Palestinian friends who live in Ramallah on the West Bank.

They have two children of school age who hadn't been able to go to school for six months because of the Israeli closure. Their school was destroyed in December as it backs onto a Palestinian police headquarters that Israel blew up. Yet this situation I have described in the West Bank is nowhere near as bad as it is in the Gaza Strip.

One million people live in the Gaza Strip. It is the most overpopulated area in the world. The Israelis wouldn't allow us to go there. They attacked our group and hospitalised some people when we tried to enter Gaza."

Overall there are three and a half million Palestinian refugees. The majority still live in refugee camps.

Nobody has the right to take away their right to return. Yet every Jewish person can go and live in Israel. Everywhere we went we saw soldiers with guns.

An elderly French woman on the international delegation said to an Israeli soldier, "Seeing you here reminds me of when I was young in France and we took in a Jewish family who were fleeing the Nazis. Seeing you behaving like this reminds me of the Germans."

He turned around and said to her, "Does that mean you think we are like the Nazis?" "Yes," she replied. He just went berserk, waving his gun around. It's incredible.

The Israelis are so blinded to what they are doing. The mood of the Palestinians was modified slightly by the fact that we were there.

I couldn't help wondering how awful it is for them when we're not there. In Palestine just getting clean or hot water or going down the road is difficult.

But the more oppressed the Palestinians are, the more defiant they become. The younger people are very angry. The peace process was a fraud from the beginning.

The Israelis were still building settlements and killing Palestinians under previous governments. Sharon is killing more. How many Palestinians have to die? They are the most oppressed people in the world, living in refugee camps. As soon as the peace process collapsed all the media and political leaders blamed Yasser Arafat.

They said Israel had made many concessions - what concessions? The Palestinian Authority would have just 22 percent of land, most of it covered with Israeli settlements and roads. This has been going on for 54 years, and it has been misrepresented for so long."



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.

Accident & Emergency nurses

Taking action to fight for the health service

Across the country nurses are in revolt at the state of the health service. The nursing unions are balloting for industrial action in accident and emergency departments as Socialist Worker went to press.

More than 400 members of the Irish Nurses Organisation and up to 200 SIPTU members are expected to strongly back the industrial action over overcrowding in accident and emergency departments.

Among the main concerns of nurses is management of beds and that consultants are not available when beds might otherwise be filled.

Already INO members in the adult A&E Department of Tallaght Hospital were on a work-to-rule ahead of the ballots.

The INO has outlined a series of two- and three-hour strikes to begin on March 13th.

The government attempted to head off the action by calling for forums across the country to discuss the crisis. But as one Nurse told Socialist Worker, "The government will do anything to stop industrial action except actually doing anything to solve the problem. A government inspired talking shop won't solve the overcrowding and the ridiculous hours people are working."

According to a nurse in Cork University hospital Cork University Hospital, "On any one night, we could have up to 40 patients on trolleys in hospital corridors, with no division for men and women, no respect for privacy or dignity. People come in with broken bones and have to wait days to go into surgery because we can't get a bed for them," she says.

"Every day, I end up moving trolleys and apologising for a situation that I have no control over, instead of giving nursing care. I don't think people realise how bad it is until they have to come to A&E. They're usually stunned at the state of the place."

A staff nurse in Beaumont Hospital's A&E department for three years, says patients who arrive alert become acutely confused as time goes on. "When they eventually get a bed, they're acutely confused. They



don't know whether it's day or night. Consider how distressing this is for someone who is already sick and may have suffered a stroke. One night we had five patients over 80 on trolleys."

One night recently, there were 47 people on trolleys in Beaumont waiting for beds, some for up to three days, with another 100 in casualty. Because of the overcrowding: "Very shortly someone's going to die. There's no doubt about that," according to one nurse.

And according to another nurse, "We effectively have to run a ward as

well as an A&E department and the situation is getting worse. It's very frustrating and disheartening for staff who are not able to deliver quality care. Not a day has gone by in November or December that I didn't see one or more of my colleagues cry."

A report in the All Ireland Journal of Nursing & Midwifery, suggests up to 13,500 extra nurses are needed to deliver the Government's Health Strategy. The publication also reports that more than 60 percent of nurses leaving the profession are aged between 20 and 29.

STUDENT NURSES at Waterford Regional Hospital staged two protests in pursuit of a meal allowance claim, and are set to escalate the dispute.

The students, members of the Irish Nurses Organisation, protested outside the hospital at lunchtime, because they are not given parity with colleagues elsewhere in the State.

Student nurses normally receive three meals a day during their three years of training. The 160 student nurses at Waterford Regional Hospital are not in a position to access canteen facilities on a regular basis.

They were seeking instead "a reasonable payment" to reflect the cost of their meals.

Abortion referendum pro choice activist groups:

- Bray (Dave 01-2304621)
- Cabra (Helena 0879707911)
- Dublin city centre (Sinead 0872612634)
- Tallanht (Allce 01-4539085)
- UCD (Bernie 0857260748)
- TCD (Aife 0877955013)
- DCU (Marnie 0879889244)
- UCG (Jamie 0863039787)
- Maynooth (Jenny)

MARXISM

Global capitalism



— Global resistance

Friday 8 & Saturday 9 March

Queens University Student Union, University Road, Belfast
www.swp.ie or Phone 07944245374 for details

	Time	Room A	Room B
Friday	5.30 - 6.45	The Private Finance Initiative and the corporate takeover of public services MARK HEWITT, SEAN SMYTH	Argentina - from resistance to revolution JOE CAROLAN
	7.00 - 8.15	FORUM on North Belfast: Why hasn't the peace process ended sectarianism? PETER SHIRLOW, SEAN McVEIGH + Holy Cross parent	Can we stop capitalism destroying the environment? RORY HEARN
	8.30 - 9.30	FORUM: From Genoa to Buenos Aires - what's next for the anti-capitalist movement? BARBARA MULDOON, JUDITH ORR	
Saturday	10.30 - 11.45	Plan Colombia, the debt crisis and US imperialism in Latin America DES BOYLE (Latin American Street Children's Organisation), JENNY BRYCE	Sex, class and socialism - the fight for womens' liberation GORETTI HORGAN
	12.00 - 1.15	After Afghanistan - what next for US imperialism? JUDITH ORR	From Motown to hip-hop - black music and rebellion MARTIN SMITH
	1.15 - 2.00	VIDEO: Another World is Possible - the Genoa protests against the GB with introduction by eyewitnesses	
	2.00 - 3.15	Is the Celtic Tiger a model for the Northern Ireland economy? KIERAN ALLEN	What's behind the rise of Islamic fundamentalism? RYAN MCKINNEY
	3.30 - 4.45	Can the IMF and World Bank be reformed? DAVY CARLIN, JUBILEE 2000 speaker	Republicanism - from armed struggle to government COLM BRYCE
	5.00 - 6.15	The media and war - is truth the first casualty? EAMONN McCANN	Striking against Blairism - Lessons from the winter of discontent MARTIN SMITH, NIAL MORTON
	6.30 - 7.15	FORUM: Thinking globally, acting locally - the struggle for international socialism today CAROLINE VAN OS, MARTIN SMITH, KIERAN ALLEN	

Union elections

Left wins in T&G and NIPSA

WATERFORD Crystal chief shop steward Jimmy Kelly, topped the poll in Ireland in the recent ATGWU Executive Ballot. Jimmy was re-elected to the General Executive Council along with Norman Cairns, shop steward in Shorts, Belfast.

The seat for the public sector workers was won by Dawn Stewart, Belfast. This gives the left of the ATGWU in Ireland a historic three executive council seats.

Victory

The outcome is a significant victory for the opposition to the right wing drift of the ATGWU and comes just before the Executive Council of the Transport & General Workers Union are to announce the outcome of a

so-called investigation into the conduct of Regional Secretary Michael O'Reilly. O'Reilly and another official, Eugene McGlone were suspended on spurious charges of irregularities in the Belfast office last Summer.

The election campaign conducted by Jimmy Kelly focused on the undemocratic activities at the top of the union. Jimmy called for the re-instatement of the officials and for a rejection of the centralised control of the union as did Dawn Stewart in Belfast.

Campaign

In every region of Ireland shop stewards and branch committee members campaigned vigorously for a vote for Jimmy Kelly.

Richie Brown, chief shop steward in Team FLS said, "This is a great victory for rank and file of the union. The campaign for Jimmy was against the tide of the leadership of the union.

"They want to turn their

backs on our stand against so-called social partnership, our support for the train drivers in the ILDA and most importantly they don't want rank and file control of the union. That is what we now have to set out to achieve."

Sean, a shop steward in Belfast Citybus told *Socialist Worker*, "This is about telling the union leaders that they have to listen to the rank and file. Jimmy Kelly and Norman Cairns were the candidates of the rank and file - not the "yes" men that Bill Morris wants to surround himself with."

Jimmy Kelly's ballot paper clearly stated that a vote for him would register rejection of the members of the suspensions of the two officials and a desire to bring the ATGWU back into real democratic control of the membership.

As Jimmy told *Socialist Worker*, "This is the first time the members had any say on the suspensions.

"It is a clear rejection of the centralised control of the union and a fear on the part of our members that our leaders are not listening to

us - the people on the bottom.

"The fight is on for the very soul of the ATGWU. Some union leaders seem to forget that our union's anti-partnership stance was decided by a ballot of our members and can only be changed by the membership."

"We need a fighting vibrant union to defend our members against the bosses attacks and a union which will be capable of unionising the thousands of unorganised workers throughout Ireland.

"This election is the first step in that process."

Jimmy Kelly says a big "Thank You" to all who helped and supported him in the election campaign and to all who voted for him.

Teachers

Battle for supervision pay starts in earnest

THE BAN ON SUPERVISION AND SUBSTITUTION BY ASTI teachers is due to come into place on March 4.

The government claims that there has been a phenomenal response to the advertisements for these posts and an army of untrained, inadequately vetted supervisors are due to enter schools on this date.

members) held a meeting of every member and rejected all 3 pay offers unanimously.

This year TFC must ensure that every branch holds pay meetings if it is to fight for real pay rises.

Information

It is because of these conditions and poor flow of information to ordinary members that *The Not So Civil Servant* was launched this week. This newsletter has been written by rank and file workers and will request contributions from around Northern Ireland.

The mood for change in NIPSA is clear a rank and file strategy gives opportunity to build resistance.

Indicated

The ASTI was given a boost when the TUI, the other secondary teachers union, indicated that they would not do supervisory work with unqualified people. The government's contingency measures actually highlight the problem of low pay in teaching that ASTI members have been campaigning on for so long. The hourly rate of €34 that the unqualified supervi-

Postal Workers

Strike set for March 6

A NATIONAL postal strike could begin on 6 March, union leaders announced last week. Talks are still continuing, but the union says that if there is no agreement then strike dates have been "pencilled in".

However, Communication Workers Union (CWU) members will have to press hard to make sure their union leaders do not fudge together a bad deal before then or call only token action.

The immediate cause of the dispute is pay. Royal Mail has offered just 2 percent.

The union's modest claim is 5 percent. Workers voted two to one to stage

strike action to get better wages. At the moment Royal Mail are offering workers 2%, against the unions modest claim of 5%. Most postal workers are on a basic wage of around £250 a week before tax. Around 60 percent of delivery workers are on a six-day week, and 20,000 postal workers regularly work more than 48 hours a week.

Workers are already fighting the union leadership to make sure that they do not sell the workers out.

Action

Already the CWU leadership are trying to avert the action with only some token actions by a few workers in select areas. But the anger of the postal workers is showing with the amount of walkouts and wildcat strikes across the UK by workers who are fed up with the current regime.

In south-east England workers walked out for two hours after some workers were sacked by management.

Following the murder of Daniel McCollgan postal workers in the North are

feeling more confident about their strength.

One reason for this is due to the amount of solidarity that has developed between workers at Royal Mail. In Scotland workers stopped for two hours in support of striking postal workers here following the murder of Daniel McCollgan.

Fights are set to continue inside the post office.

Privatisation is on the horizon after the postal regulator in London announced the de-regulation of the post office. As well as this the post office are set to sack 30,000 workers in the next 18 months.

CWU activists must demand that all these issues are taken up in the strike campaign.

A narrow focus on a single issue will not be enough.

The CWU has to mount a political challenge to the government's priorities of privatisation and running down public services.

Students

ON 19TH Feb., over 500 students from across Northern Ireland converged on Stormont to show their anger about student poverty and tuition fees.

The protests coincided with the release of a national report suggesting that students would be better off on the dole than in university. Chris from Jordanstown spoke to *Socialist Worker*, "I came here today to show the Stormont executive that we are not taking any more crap. We have a simple message for them: we want free education now, not excuses. I don't want to leave university at the end of the year with a £10,000 debt over my head, those guys in there didn't have to - so why should we."

The rally was addressed

by Carmel Hanna, the Minister responsible for the student fees, but her speech was drowned out by chants and heckles from the crowd.

One student told *Socialist Worker*, "I'm extremely angry and bitter, the people standing on that stage today aren't going to do anything about our poverty except to breathe hot air and try and win some of the student vote."

Already, across Britain, non-payment campaigns have started up and have proved successful; occupations have stopped Universities from victimising students that have refused to pay fees they cannot afford.

Northern campuses need to step their protests up a gear against the tuition fees and student poverty.

'Time for Change'

THE recent General Council elections to the governing body of Nipsa resulted in 13 of the 25 places going to Time for Change candidates. This means that the broad left now have a majority on General Council.

The TFC group stood on the platform of fighting for a strong democratic union controlled by the members.

There is a need for a rank and file movement within the civil service. Many members in more isolated branches but also from large (300+) workplaces complain of a lack of involvement in decision-making within the union. Many branches are more

or less dormant.

Conservative right-wing branch secretaries are against change in the union and can exclude members from attending Conference if they fail to advertise the AGM.

Last year a motion at conference called for all members to be consulted on what pay rise the union should be pushing for. Despite bitter opposition from the leadership of Nipsa, the motion tabled by Branch 8 (Child Support Agency) was passed. However many large branches did not hold pay; meetings thus failing to give all members a chance to decide their pay, this resulted in Nipsa accepting a derisory pay increase. Branch 8 (the largest in Nipsa with 1000

Refuse Charges

Campaign organises against Corpo threats

LARGE MEETINGS have taken place in nearly every corner of the Dublin City Council area in response to threats of legal action against householders who have refused to pay the bin charges.

In Finglas over 200 attended a public meeting. In East Wall over 150 locals turned out. In Ballyfermot 160 people turned up to join the campaign and to discuss how to organise against this unjust form of double taxation. Large meetings have also taken place in Cabra, Donnycarney, Crumlin, Drimnagh and Inchicore. More are

planned for the weeks ahead.

Letters sent to thousands of households notified householders that they will be pursued through the Courts for costs and for payment of the Bin Tax.

Issued

Before the legal threats were sent out over 70 percent of householders had refused to pay this new waste management charge which is now 120.43 euros for the year 2001. Bills for 2002 have yet to be issued.

Brid Smith,

spokesperson for the Campaign Against the Bin Tax has said "The response to the threatening letters has been a double edged sword. A minority of people have been panicked into paying the tax.

But many many more households have signed up to the campaign to oppose the tax. And this follows a trend in many parts of the country where people are beginning to organise against the waste management policy of their local councils."

According to Brid Smith "The Campaign Against the Bin Tax is inundated with requests

from residents all around Dublin to join the campaign and to get organised in their communities. This is yet another sign of how the politicians are completely out of touch with working class people.

Disgusted

"We are utterly disgusted with a system which demands that we pay twice for normal services. Workers are already taxed to the hilt while tax amnesties are given out regularly to those who fail to pay their share. Instead of pursuing those who pay most taxes through the Courts, our justice system would

will mount major demonstrations outside any

Court cases which may take place.



Sligo council have privatised their refuse service. In what is becoming a theme Noel Dempsey threatened to abolish the council and the councillors then voted to privatise.

Yet again the introduction of service charges has led to privatisation.

But residents of one of the estates in the town have voted to keep the refuse service under the control of the local authority.

In a plebiscite in Rathedmond estate, a total of 104 out of 105 opposed privatisation and have handed in a letter of protest to the Ombudsman and the town clerk.

"Residents expressed indignation and anger that the council proceeded to collude with local private companies to create a cartel, which will mean that residents are being locked into a business relationship with a monopoly", said residents' association spokesman, Jim O'Sullivan. "This will lead to overcharging."

Socialist Worker

(01) 8722682 <http://www.clubi.ie/swp> swp@clubi.ie

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

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● Abortion referendum

12 years jail for an abortion?

What if it was HIS problem?



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★ Shut down Sellafield

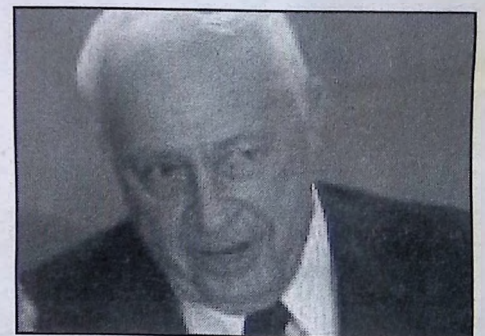
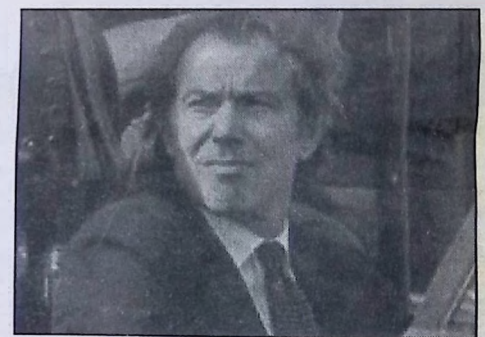
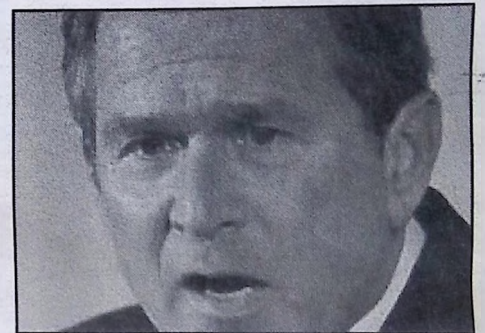
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US threatens war on Iraq

Bush's Axis of evil



GEORGE BUSH has lit the fuse for war on Iraq, a war that will kill thousands of innocent people.

The bombing of Afghanistan has been horrific, killing more civilians than died in the World Trade Centre. War against Iraq will be far worse.

"Saddam Hussein needs to understand I'm serious," said Bush last week.

Bush's Secretary of State, Colin Powell, the supposed restraint on him, wants a "regime change" in Iraq.

US and British planes have stepped up their bombing of Iraqi air defences. Thousands of marines and other combat-ready troops are moving into the region.

The commander of marine forces for the US central command has moved his head quarters from Florida to Bahrain, within striking range of Iraq. Commanders for the army, navy and air force are already there.

Over 1,000 military command and control personnel are in locations in the Persian Gulf, where they would be in position to coordinate larger forces of combat troops.

The US government will soon demand that nuclear inspectors are allowed back into Iraq.

If Saddam Hussein refuses the humiliating terms on offer then Bush will demand war.

The US also wants harsher economic sanctions, more inhumane than the ones which have already killed 500,000 Iraqi children.

Bush is touring Japan, South Korea and China to win their support for the new firestorm.

His vice-president, Dick Cheney, is off soon to the Middle East on the same mission.

Bush and his supporters are involved in a bloody conspiracy to kill in the interests of US power and the profits of big business.

As Bush put it in his own special way recently, "We need to be able to send our troops to the battlefields and

places that many of us never thought there'd be a battlefield."

That is why he has increased his military budget to a staggering \$396 billion.

What Bush has done to Afghanistan is supposed to be a success. Yet it is in such turmoil that last week the new tourism minister, Abdul Rahman, was pulled from a plane and beaten to death by Northern Alliance security personnel.

British Paratroopers opened fire on a car carrying a pregnant woman to hospital last weekend, injuring her and killing her brother in law. They started shooting at 1.45am from a range of 1,000 metres.

The soldiers are from the regiment that murdered people on Bloody Sunday 30 years ago in Ireland.

There is no shining new dawn for Afghanistan. Instead there is malnutrition, chaos, and a man's guts shot away for driving a woman to hospital.

Henry Kissinger — page 6

Palestine — page 4