

Socialist Worker

inside:

HAITI:
ARISTIDE
DEPOSED IN
US BACKED
COUP
PAGE 5

END THE
OCCUPATION OF
IRAQ
PAGES 6&7
IS NADER RIGHT
TO STAND IN US
ELECTION? PAGE 6

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

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY €1.00 / £0.70p

WHAT DOES AHERN TAKE US FOR?



**NO
WELCOME
TO WAR
CRIMINAL
GEORGE W
BUSH**

& get his warplanes out of Shannon now!

All on to the street March 20th-GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION

• Dublin protest 3pm Parnell Square organised by Irish Anti War Movement

Tax dodgers get pension boost

TAX DODGERS have been given a boost from the Revenue Commissioners.

The Revenue Commissioners is presently informing people who stashed millions of euro offshore that they can avail of tax incentives to slash their liabilities for unpaid taxes.

A pensions loophole is signalled in the guidance that the Revenue has prepared for the holders of offshore accounts, giving them until the end of March to declare the hot money.

Discrimination against refugees

FOREIGN nationals in this country encounter "huge problems" finding a decent place to live according to a new study entitled *Housing and Refugees: The Real Picture*. One respondent in the study spoke about the dire conditions in reception hostels.

"There were 12 in a room. When I arrived I was having a problem so I couldn't sleep if there was a noise. We were sharing a shower with more than 30 people.

"There are ladies who are having their babies and they are also using the same shower."

Sister Breege Keenan of the Vincentian Refugee Centre said that 60 per cent of those who came to the centre needed help with accommodation.

O'Reilly creams the profit from Eircom

AFTER the privatisation and then the huge losses made by the thousands of people who bought Eircom shares, it is predictably the very rich who come out laughing in the end.

Part time Press Baron and full time tax exile Tony O'Reilly is expected to earn more than €36 in the eircom floatation.

When the company is floated next week the Independent Press owner is expecting to make a profit of €36 on the investment he made two years ago.

No tax cheats jailed: But Tribunals cost us millions

WHILE none of the owners of Ansbacher Accounts or those politicians found guilty of taking bribes from property dealers have gone to jail, the rest of us are getting screwed by the Tribunals.

Tribunals and inquiries have cost the taxpayer €101 million since 1997, new figures from the Department of Finance reveal.

The vast bulk of the figure is accounted for by payments to lawyers acting for the state, and for witnesses called to the tribunals.

At the Moriarty Tribunal, three barristers—

John Coughlan, Jerry Healy and Jacqueline O'Brien—have been paid an amazing combined total of over €10 million since 1997. In addition, figures compiled by *The Sunday Business Post* show that lawyers acting for the state—for the individual tribunals and the Laffoy/Ryan Commission—were paid €18 million last year.

Senior barristers working full time for the tribunals earn over €500,000 a year. Some earn more than €750,000.

Goodman still rolling in it

REMEMBER Larry Goodman, the man who brought us the Beef Tribunal and got off scot free.

Readers of *Socialist Worker* will be a little disappointed to know that this corrupt supporter of FF was just paid €38 million in dividends by his firm, Irish Food Processors in the two years to March 2002.

In the food sector there is a network of FF supporting business people such as the Goodman group and Hibernia meats.

Irish workers already footed the bill for Goodman's EU fines (caused by the revelations in the Beef Tribunal) two years ago because he is important to the 'National (bosses) interest'.

Keeping it in the family

Contrary to myth, the rich were most often born into rich families.

In Ireland family businesses dominate the Irish marketplace. They account for up to 90 per cent of all companies.

A recent investigation by the *Sunday Business Post* reveals that the top 15 Irish family businesses are sitting on shareholders' funds of almost €1.5 billion.

Four of the country's top business families received dividends totalling €81 million in the two years to the end of 2002.

One family, the O'Flahertys, who own the Irish rights for Mercedes and Volkswagen, account for half this figure. O'Flaherty Holdings, the Dublin firm owned by brothers Nigel and Michael O'Flaherty, had shareholders' funds of €262.4 million at the end of 2002.

The Musgraves from Cork, who own the Super-Valu and Centra brands, received €21.2 million in the two years to the end of 2002, while the Sisk family earned €13.1 million in dividends from their Dublin construction business.

Of the 19 top businesses profiled in the paper's investigation seven are in the first or second generation of the family, five are in the third generation, and seven are in the fourth, fifth or sixth. One business dates back to the 1830s.

Residents face killer asbestos

DUBLIN'S Ballymun flats complex are to be demolished in a multi-billion euro redevelopment organised by Ballymun Regeneration Limited (BRL), a company set up by Dublin City Council.

For years residents have been concerned that the flats contain the deadly asbestos, which if it becomes a dust and is breathed in even in microscopic amounts, causes asbestosis, cancer and other breathing illnesses.

These diseases can appear up to 40 years after exposure to the dust.

The Council and BRL assured residents that there was no danger and planned to begin demolition in the next few weeks.

But last week the Health and Safety Authority ordered BRL to remove the asbestos from the flats before demolition.

The material, Artex, contains 4 per cent asbestos, 20 times the level necessary to adopt special procedures for demolition to avoid the dust becoming airborne.

Immediately BRL boss Ciaran Murray protested, saying the removal would cost €128 million and delay work for four years.

He claimed the HSA was over-reacting and said the regulations ought to allow some "wiggle room".

He was backed up by junior housing minister and local Fianna Fail TD Noel Ahern, brother of the Taoiseach.

Ahern said "people are being a little bit too dogmatic".

BRL and Dublin City Council are desperate to cut costs on the regeneration.

They want to cut corners with safety and hope to panic the HSA into backing down by claiming removing the asbestos would result in long delays.

This is nonsense. If sufficient numbers of specialists were brought in, the asbestos could be safely removed in a



Demolition of towers could contaminate area with asbestos fibres

short time scale.

Priority

But this would cost money that BRL and Dublin City Council do not want to spend on the people of Ballymun.

Local Socialist Workers Party rep Kevin Wingfield said, "The health of the community and of the workers on the sites should be first priority.

"How BRL managed to undertake a

huge project like this without preparing a proper plan to dispose of the asbestos safely beggars belief.

In the face of this monumental negligence, I am surprised that Ciaran Murray doesn't resign rather than try to dodge this important issue.

"Residents and building workers need to demand that BRL take no chances with our long-term health. Professionally remove the asbestos before levelling the blocks!"

Cuts ministers banquet with bosses

MARY Coughlan is Fianna Fail Minister for Social and Family Affairs. Over the past few months she has announced a series of attacks on immigrants and the poor.

Cuts in Rent Allowances, Childcare grants, Back to Education Schemes have been among her recent measures.

Despite labour shortages, she has tightened the screw on immigrants by announcing further restrictions on entitlements to social welfare.

But in the midst of these cutbacks it's nice to know she doesn't have to go without.

At a swanky dinner recently sponsored by the Galway Chamber of Com-



Mary Coughlan and Frank Fahey



merce in the Radisson SAS Hotel Mary Coughlan and Labour Minister Frank Fahey were wined and dined by the business community.

Here are extracts from

the menu in case you couldn't get along:

Fresh Atlantic Lobster with Buluga Caviar Blini, followed by Champagne Sorbet. Next came Char

Grilled Beef Fillet, Sauce Perigourdine and Honey Balsamic Reduction with Fondant potatoes.

After several cheeses, came "Diplomat Pudding" dripping with Baileys Crème Anglaise.

To wash it all down came two fine wines: Sancerre Domaine du Nozay, 2001 and Chateau Potache D'Aux, Medoc, 1998.

Socialist Worker's wine connoisseur tell us they are cheeky, though slightly fruity but with an excellent nose and superlative finish.

Live musical entertainments were provided to stop the spirits flagging while the rich and powerful and Fianna Fail's finest banqueted.

BUS WORKERS' WARNINGS IGNORED THREE YEARS BEFORE ACCIDENT

LAST MONTH's tragic accident in Dublin resulted in the deaths of five people as they queued to board a bus to Lucan and Maynooth.

Immediately residents of these areas pointed out that they had complained of the overcrowded and cramped condition of the bus stop on the quays.

Dublin Bus pointed out that the busy terminus was

a result of having to move bus stops to accommodate LUAS works.

But *Socialist Worker* has learned that three years ago Dublin Bus union representatives had surveyed the area and reported on overcrowding.

A report drawn up by bus drivers point out that the whole area of Westmoreland St and the quays was overcrowded.

The report complained that buses had no room to park while waiting for their departure time and were often sent out early by inspectors anxious to make room for incoming buses.

The report also complained of the overcrowding when passengers tried to board the many different routes bus stops in the area served.

But no action was taken

Some years ago it was proposed to build a spacious terminus for Dublin City buses in the Temple Bar area.

This would have reduced overcrowding and made it easier for passengers to change buses to get across the city.

Under pressure from city developers, Fianna Fail killed the scheme

CRH, Israel, Ireland's rich

AS reported in *Socialist Worker* last month Irish company Cement Roadstone Holdings (CRH) has a 25% (and presently negotiating for another 25%) stake in the Israeli company Mashav.

This is the company which is presently building the wall around the West Bank.

This illegal construction is part of an obvious land grab and attempt to further pen-in the Palestinian people by Ariel Sharon's right wing government.

As a company CRH sits at the very centre of power within the Irish ruling class. It has also had strong links with Fianna Fail.

The company was at the centre of the controversy about the Ansbacher tax scam. The offices of CRH were used as a headquarters for the scam.

Directors

A look at its present and former directors gives a good insight into the Irish ruling class.

They include Tony Barry, from the Barry tea family; Howard Kirov, a Bank of Ireland director; Kieran McGowan, who is also on the board of Enterprise Ireland, Eanáir, An Post, and the National Lottery.

Others include Tony O'Brien, is a director of Cantrell and Cochrane and Anglo Irish Bancorp; David Kennedy, is a former chair of Aer Lingus; and the late Des Traynor, who was the bagman for CJ Haughey.

Israel with the help of CRH is constructing a massive wall through the Occupied Territories of the West Bank.

A 144 kilometre section, from Jenin to Qalqiliya is complete and construction is continuing south toward Ramallah.

The complete Israeli plan is for a 650 kilometre wall that would completely enclose the Palestinians in two separate zones.

The Irish ruling class through the actions of CRH are openly collaborating with the oppression of the Palestinian people.

The dangers of E-voting

WITH the FF/PP government ploughing ahead with the introduction of computerised voting, concerns about the computerised system have been raised in the United States.

On July 23, 2003 the Johns Hopkins Information Security Institute reviewed the electronic voting system in Maryland and found that it had security "far below even the most minimal security standards...."

Johns Hopkins computer security experts concluded:

"If we do not change the process of designing our voting systems, we will have no confidence that our election results will reflect the will of the electorate."

While Ahern and Harney have been criticising 'luddites' who are supposedly against progress left wing American Presidential candidate Ralph Nader has

raised concerns about similar computer voting in America.

"Paperless electronic voting on touch screen machines does not provide confidence to ensure votes are counted the way voters intend.

"The software on which votes are counted is protected as a corporate trade secret and the software is so complex that if malicious code was embedded no

analysis could discover it," he said.

"Further, because there is no voter verified paper record, it is not possible to audit the electronic vote for accuracy, nor is it possible to conduct an independent recount.

"This is a grotesquely designed, over-complicated expensive system fraught with the potential for mistakes and undetected fraud."

Socialist Worker

Paper of the Socialist Workers Party

Published fortnightly

For circulation or editorial contact:

Socialist Worker,

PO Box 1648 Dublin 8

Tel: (01) 872 2682 Fax: (01) 872 3838

Email: socialistworker@swp.ie

Web: www.swp.ie

editorial

DEFY AHERN'S CALL FOR NO PROTEST SAY IT LOUD AND SAY IT PROUD

BUSH IS NOT WELCOME HERE!

THE attitude of this FF/PD government towards the Irish people becomes more arrogant by the day.

Not only did Ahern allow the US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to land in Shannon last month on his way to oversee the US bloody occupation of Iraq. He has now invited Rumsfeld's boss.

Ahern has called on people NOT to protest during the visit of the world's number one terrorist George Bush to Ireland in late June.

After supporting the US military during the bombing of Iraq and allowing them to land at Shannon, Bertie now calls on the thousands who took to the streets last year to stay in doors this June.

The Taoiseach last week urged Irish people not to protest against the June visit of President Bush, which, he said, "will be an honour for the Irish people and a chance to put the European view to him on a range of issues."

Ahern said the Irish Presidency of the EU was trying to get the EU-US relationship "back on an even keel and in this light I hope there would not be protests."

He said the US economy was now doing very well and there was a prospect of promoting investment and trade. "This is an opportunity for Ireland," he said.

Ahern is right on one thing, this is a great opportunity for the Irish people.

A great opportunity to show our continued opposition to the war in Iraq and the continued use by the American military of Shannon Airport.

This is also an opportunity for those who took to the streets in their tens of thousands last year against the war, to come out again and show that our opposition to the occupation of Iraq remains firm.

It is also an opportunity to scupper any great publicity that Bush wants to get in the weeks leading up to the US election in November.

Soft focus pictures of Bush drinking a pint of Guinness in a local with Ahern will not be the pictures that will be beamed back to the US.

The pictures will, just like with his last visit to London, be of thousands of protestors showing their anger at the foreign policy of this vicious American regime.

Last year on St. Patrick's Day, Ahern presented a bowl of shamrock to Bush and along with it he handed over Ireland's sham-neutrality.

Ahern supported the warlord Bush at every step of the way by providing flyover and refuelling facilities before, during and ever since.

Richard Boyd Barrett, chairman of the Irish Anti War Movement, said in a statement on the Bush visit "George Bush is war criminal and should not be welcomed by any government that calls itself democratic. Bush was directly responsible for the murder of thousands of innocent Iraqis in an invasion that was based on lies about weapons of mass destruction."

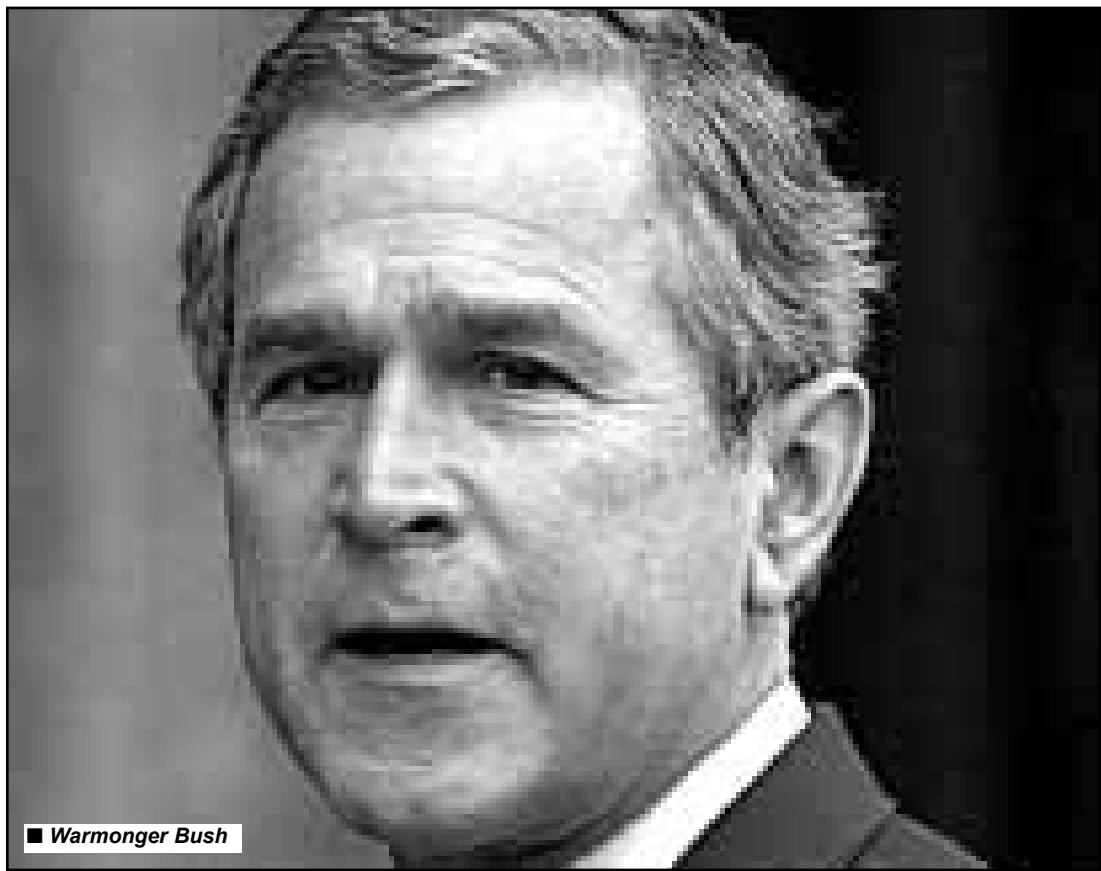
But before the protests in June there is the very important opportunity on Saturday 20, March to take to the streets of Dublin once more to call for the end of the occupation of Iraq.

The call for massive mobilisations and protests of different forms on March 20 has been supported by coalitions, forums and movements the world over.

Preparations are underway in many countries. 55 different countries across the world are set to demonstrate on March 20.

This is a fantastic show of anti imperialist strength and will help build the opposition to Bush's visit here in June.

It is important now for people in their communities, schools and workplaces to try and work as hard as possible for the protest on March 20, Parnell Square Dublin (3pm) and the protests in late June.



■ Warmonger Bush

State bales out Church over clerical abuse

THE rotten nature of the indemnity deal signed between the state and the church two years ago becomes clearer by the month.

The deal provided an indemnity to 18 religious orders in respect of compensation claims from former residents of industrial schools, children's homes and other child residential institutions. In return the Church provided a miserly €128 million for compensation, of which €80 million is in property transfers to State agencies and charities.

The total bill in terms of compensation to abuse victims could go well above €500 million the vast majority of which will have to be paid by ordinary tax-payers rather than the institutions that carried out the abuse.

It was members of the church who abused the children in their care over the years. While pontificating to the rest of society on moral and ethical issues the sexual and mental abuse of children happened behind closed doors.

However because of the deal signed by the FF/PD government the Church will not have to pay more than €128m in compensation, a mere fraction of the probable total. Indeed last week it was

revealed in the Dail that €16m of that amount came from insurance companies rather than Church coffers!

The real reason why the government rolled over in front of the Church was revealed by Mary Hannafin in an off hand remark on the News at One on Friday. She said that FF/PD did not want to "bankrupt" the religious orders that had done so much "good" in the country!

The final bill being faced by the Government is still unknown. On Thursday the

Comptroller and Auditor General, Mr John Purcell, said the potential exposure was likely to cost at least €650 million, with an outer limit of €1 billion, including legal costs, although all of the figures were estimates and should be treated with caution.

The open cheque book from taxpayers to the abusing orders should be cancelled. It was the religious orders that perpetuated the abuse on children in their care and it is they that must compensate their victims.



Capitalism is wrecking the lives of millions and endangering the planet. A new society can only be constructed when the workers take control of the wealth and plan its production and distribution for human need and not profit.

REVOLUTION

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed. The courts, the army and police exist to defend the interests of the wealthy. To destroy capitalism, we need to remove the present state structures and create a workers' state based on much greater political and economic democracy.

AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND WAR

War is a constant feature of capitalism today as the imperialist powers try to dominate the earth. Bush's "War on Terrorism" is a crude device to attack any country which threatens US military, strategic or economic dominance.

END RACISM AND OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression and racism. This divides and weakens the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women. We oppose immigration controls which are always racist.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

We stand for workers unity against the Assembly politicians and Blair government. Like great socialist James Connolly, we believe that partition has brought about a 'carnival of reaction' We want to see an Irish workers republic where all workers gain. Our flag is neither green nor orange but red!

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. We call for co-operation between left-wing parties and the formation of a strong socialist bloc. We stand for fighting trade unions and for independent rank and file action.

End the occupation of Iraq!



WORLD DAY OF ACTION AGAINST ALL OCCUPATIONS
1ST ANNIVERSARY OF INVASION OF IRAQ

Saturday, 20 March 2004

3pm, Parnell Square, Dublin

US troops out of Shannon

Irish Anti-War Movement
www.irishantiwar.org
info@irishantiwar.org
087 872 0811

Join the Socialists!

To join the Socialist Workers Party or for more information:
Fill in the form and Send to:
ROI: SWP PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, Phone (01) 872 2682
NI: SWP PO Box 143, Mallusk Road, Mallusk, Phone 0774 2531617
Email membership@swp.ie Web: www.swp.ie

Name.....
Address.....
.....
Phone.....
Email.....
Union/College (if applicable).....



comment

Eamonn McCann

Irony over senior Sinn Féin man's resignation

IT WAS ironic that Sinn Féin's first response to the resignation of John Kelly came at a press conference in Mid Ulster called to promote SF's candidate in the European election in the North, Bairbre de Brun.

Chairing the press conference, South Down Assemblyman Conor Murphy suggested that Kelly had been embittered by his failure to be nominated for Mid Ulster in November's Assembly election.

In fact, Kelly had resigned from the party earlier and hadn't sought nomination. But that's a minor point. What's of interest is that journalists covering the press conference were handed a statement by Gerry Adams commending de Brun to Mid Ulster voters and assuring them that SF believed that "stripping acute services from Tyrone and south Derry is...unacceptable."

But who was Minister for Health at Stormont in 2002 when the plans were published to "strip acute services from Tyrone and south Derry?" The self-same Ms. de Brun, of course. Was she embarrassed at hearing her party leader describe the policy she'd presided over as "unacceptable?" Apparently not.

There's another thing. The Executive Ms. de Brun was a member of rode rough-shod over trade union and community objections to impose Private Finance Initiatives on hospitals and schools.

Hostility

There was some uneasiness about this in the SF rank and file. Who was the one SF member to voice unequivocal hostility to PFI on the floor at Stormont? John Kelly. Here's part of his November 2001 speech.

"The British Medical Journal described PFI as 'perfidious, financial idiocy that could destroy the NHS.' PFI projects...reduce pay, employment and working conditions. PFI represents an unacceptable increase in the privatisation of economic and social life. Critically, PFI involves the determination of such public services as health and education, using unaccountable, commercial criteria rather than those based on social need. In a nutshell, PFI represents profit before people.

"No party which calls itself a social democratic party or, like Sinn Féin, a Socialist Republican party, indeed, no party with a social conscience...can give way to the concept of PFI..."

But SF went ahead and privatised hand over fist.

It was that contradiction as much as any other which pushed Kelly and the party he had helped to found apart. Media coverage of his departure concentrated on his "flabbergasted" reaction to Gerry Adams denying any involvement in the IRA. But his stance on PFI is more directly relevant to current argument. Anyone in the South tempted to take the anti-privatisation declarations at the recent ardfeis seriously should ponder Kelly's experience.

On-message SFers have a stock response to these observations. The North's different, they say. The fact that we compromised on privatisation (and much else) at Stormont doesn't mean we'll back down on the same issues at Leinster House. The Executive wasn't a normal coalition. Our long-oppressed electorate would have been left unrepresented if we hadn't joined. So we had no choice.

This is nonsense. Working-class voters—whether they gave Sinn Féin first preference or not—would, clearly, have been better represented had the party opted for opposition and boosted the fight against PFI. The excuse given for joining the Executive is just a cover-story for a policy of "Labour must wait."

Every party in history which ever ditched progressive policies in order to get into government has explained that this was in the wider interests of their electorate. To have stayed out would have left their disadvantaged voters at the mercy of unrestrained reactionaries. Labour in southern Ireland, the Greens in Germany, etc. have all spun the same line.

Nobody ever says, We did it because we wanted our backsides on ministerial seats. They all say what Sinn Féin is saying. There is no reason to believe that what they did in the North they won't do in the South, if the post-election arithmetic allows it.

It was because John Kelly couldn't bring himself to continue down that road that he and Sinn Féin parted company.

SEA demands 'Upgrade the Derry-Belfast line'

AT LEAST 60 jobs are at risk in Translink as the workers concerned fear the Belfast to Derry rail link is being run down with a view to closing it in a few years.

Meanwhile, the "core network"—covering Belfast, Lisburn, Ballymena, Bangor and the Dublin line to Newry—is set to take delivery of 23 new trains at a cost of £80 million.

These will run on modern, continuously-welded track at speeds of 90mph.

It will seem odd to most people that Translink's "core network" doesn't include the line between the North's two largest centres of population.

As well as the threat to jobs, the environmental impact of this position is massive.

The Derry-Ballymena line runs on old jointed track, which rail workers say is not well-maintained.

But NIO Minister John Spellar has said there are no plans to improve the line.

Derry's rail station is little better than a shed, with a single line running into it—more like a spur line to a tiny village than between the two main cities in the region.

All the signs are that management has written the station off in their minds.

They justify neglect by saying that passenger numbers are falling. But it's



■ **Translink: On track to a run-down line**

their neglect which is causing the fall-off.

While the train journey to Belfast from Derry takes two and a half hours and trains leave only every three to four hours, the bus journey takes about two hours.

Commute

Buses leave every quarter of an hour early in the morning to take the many workers who commute to Belfast on a daily basis.

By 8 o'clock, the road between Derry and Belfast is bumper to bumper with the many workers who do not take the bus.

A high-speed rail link would take many, if not most, of these drivers off the road and onto the trains.

It should be possible to travel the 75 miles to Belfast in an hour and 10 minutes with a modern

track.

If the present track was repaired, it could be done in an hour and a half. This would cut the number of road deaths and reduce pollution.

This is an important

transport issue for the long-term. Iarnród Eireann plan a high-speed rail link between Sligo and Cork, via Galway and Limerick.

If there was a decent line between Belfast and Derry, then a link between Derry and Sligo would mean the entire island could be linked by rail.

At the urging of Translink workers, the Socialist Environmental Alliance has started a campaign to keep and upgrade the line between Belfast and Derry.

Anyone interested in helping, should contact the SEA at seaderry@hotmail.com.

Support a Left Candidate in June's European Elections
End the Sectarian Carve-up!
A Radical Vision for Europe
Public Meeting
Tues. 16th March, 7.00pm
Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre,
Donegall St. (next to the John Hewitt)
Main speaker: Eamonn McCann
(Socialist Environmental Alliance's proposed candidate)

The scandal of illegal waste dumping

THE North's Department of the Environment are finding two illegal landfill dumps every week.

Criminals, using the border network of roads used in the past by smugglers and paramilitaries, are ferrying waste from the South to be dumped on farms along the border.

Overall each week, tens of thousands of tonnes of waste are being dumped illegally all over Ireland since waste collection in the South has been privatised and bin charges introduced.

It's easy to see why waste is being brought North for dumping, since two of these illegal dumps will make a corrupt waste contractor a millionaire in weeks.

There is a one million tonne shortfall in landfill capacity in the South.

In the Republic a waste contractor is paid about £2,500 per twenty tonne load.

The contractor pays the land owner £100 per load, the driver £100 to £200.

This leaves a £2,200 profit on just one load.

The situation is set to get



■ **Sacks of waste: bags of money**

much worse, as large councils both North and South admit to sending 'their' waste to other areas.

Dumping in the North's council owned sites is carried out by drivers using false Northern number plates and forged documents, the fines are no deterrent compared to the massive profits.

Council workers have been intimidated and beaten when trying to stop illegal dumping.

Very little is being done

to combat this issue.

One dodgy dump in Garvagh, County Derry had its license revoked only after seven years of official neglect.

Hazards

The health hazards are all too clear.

Children born within 1.8 miles of a landfill site have 33% more chance of birth defects.

Also 33% of sites contaminate surface or ground water.

Those who have raised the issue publicly are more likely to be harassed than congratulated.

Just recently Anton McCabe, a socialist journalist in Omagh, was harassed by P.S.N.I. after discovering confidential government documents from Dublin at an illegal site in the North.

This is also a global issue with respect to the trans-

portation of waste from one country to another.

Last November two reporters from the *Sunday Times* posing as chemical company representatives approached waste-broker firm Redell Development who offered to get rid of any hazardous waste for \$800 a tonne.

He revealed that he would dump this toxic waste, falsely labelled as liquid fertiliser, in illegal sites in Liberia.

This privatisation and deregulation is encouraged by the World Trade Organisation which wants to see the privatisation of all public services.

It is a disgrace that the Southern government has accepted this view of waste management.

What is happening in these illegal dumps is a lesson to politicians in the North who have not ruled out bin charges in the future.

Privatisation and bin charges are not the way to solve the problems with waste.

Facilities to encourage businesses, as well as households, to reduce, reuse and recycle waste is the only way forward.

HAITI:

ARISTIDE DEPOSED AS U.S. BACKS COUP

by KEVIN WINGFIELD

FOLLOWING weeks of turmoil in which US-backed rebels rampaged across the country, Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide was overthrown as the rebels closed on the capital Port au Prince. US marines were flown into the country to take up strategic positions.

Aristide—the first democratically elected president in the country's history—boarded a US chartered plane and arrived in the Central African Republic.

Immediately US President George W Bush stepped onto the White House lawn and announced to the world that Aristide had resigned. But Aristide aides claim he was kidnapped at gunpoint, bundled on a plane and was being held without access to the outside world.

In April 2002, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez was kidnapped in a US-backed coup in that country. The White House claimed Chavez had "resigned". Embarrassingly, massive protests in Venezuela forced Chavez's reinstatement after two days and the US administration's lie was exposed.

Rebel leader Guy Philippe announced, "The country is in my hands." He claimed he would oversee the reformation of the Haitian military—disbanded by Aristide after the 1991-94 coup which the army had led.

As the *New York Times* noted Haiti "seemed to be falling into the clutches of a self-appointed armed junta." Haiti's former dictator, Jean-Claude Duvalier, better known as Baby Doc, in exile on the French Riviera, then announced that he would return to Haiti.

Former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark commented, "This is as clear a demonstration of U.S. regime change, and by armed aggression, as you'll find."

Speaking to the alternative US television channel, DemocracyNow! Ramsey Clark said, "How do you think the same elements, the old military FRAPH, gangs, got into Haiti with M-16's and M-60's from the Dominican Republic, with which President Bush personally has a close relationship and presence there, except the United States?"

The *Miami Herald* reported that the Bush administration blocked a last minute attempt to bolster Aristide's bodyguards, provided by a private American company.

Asylum

The US State Department stated that South Africa had refused Aristide asylum, a claim South Africa's foreign minister denies.

This is the second time Aristide was ousted. In 1991 to 1994 an army coup deposed him and he was exiled in the US. The officers who led that coup were on the payroll of the CIA.

After agreeing to a number of US-imposed conditions he was returned to power in 1994.



■ Pro-Aristide protestor confronts US Marines in Port-au-Prince

The United States sent 20,000 troops to end the bloody military dictatorship, restore Aristide and halt an exodus of refugees to Florida.

The price of his reinstatement included acceptance of IMF-World Bank austerity measures and, despite his reluctance,



■ Aristide and Clinton

tance, a programme of privatisation. The effects were dramatic. From being more or less self-sufficient in rice, the country was swamped with cheap, subsidised US imports, destroying domestic production.

The US also demanded he make concessions to the powerful rich in Haiti.

The compromises disappointed the mass of poor, who had looked to him for real change. Aristide—a former liberation theology priest—changed from a life of austerity to a more luxurious lifestyle.

In 2000 he was returned in an election winning 90 percent of the votes—as the opposition boycotted the poll. Opposition figures then complained of vote rigging.

Following the election the US led an international blockade of humanitarian aid to Haiti—the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. The IMF, World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank cut off \$650 million in credit to the country at Washington's behest. The EU supported the embargo.

The effects of these sanctions are enormous when it is remembered that the total Haitian budget is a mere £300 million per year.

The human rights group MADRE points out that the US

froze transfers designed to "pay for safe drinking water, literacy programmes and health services."

Paul Farmer, an American doctor who has worked in Haiti for many years wrote last year that the "embargo has targeted the northern hemisphere's most vulnerable population, the poorest people with the most fragile economy, ecology and society".

"There are only 1.2 doctors, 1.3 nurses and 0.4 dentists for every 10,000 Haitians ... 40 percent of people have no access to any primary healthcare while HIV and tuberculosis rates are by far the highest in Latin America."

From deep poverty and endemic economic crisis, the country was plunged into economic chaos as a result.

As the economic noose tightened and disillusionment spread among many of his for-

mer supporters, the US government encouraged the political opposition.

Aristide lost much of the support he once enjoyed. Some of his former allies in government broke with him. The Communist and Social Democratic Parties which had been part of the government moved into opposition.

But the political opposition was dominated by the country's rich. Andre Apaid, a textile industrialist holding US nationality, became leader of the opposition Group of 184 alliance.

Aristide increasingly came to hang on to power with the aid of Haiti's 5,000 police officers and armed supporters, the Chimera, recruited from the poorest neighbourhoods where he still enjoyed substantial support.

The thugs and murderers who worked for the previous dictatorial regimes began entering from the Dominican Republic and exploiting splits in the Chimera, attacked and seized

key towns.

The US did not at first want to commit troops to Haiti when its priority was trying to crush resistance in Iraq. Rather it supported the opposition and pressured Aristide into accepting a compromise with which would further weaken him and prepare the way for a more reliable pro US figure to sweep to power in the next elections.

However, when the insurgents were posed to seize Port au Prince and French government threatening to intervene from the French colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe last week, the US decided it had no choice. If it did not get rid of Aristide, forces it could not control might do so.

But things could still go wrong for the US. Despite everything some of the poor remain loyal to Aristide. And huge numbers will be unhappy at the return of the death squads. Most of all the mass of Haitians want an end to the policies of mass impoverishment.

Who are the rebels?

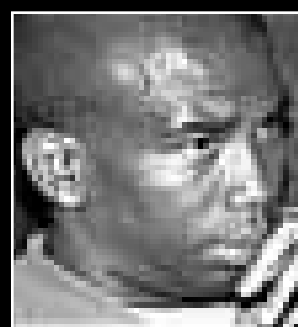
THE rebels that lead the assault on the Haitian government had been mounting armed actions across Haiti for the previous weeks.

They had arrived from the Dominican Republic where they had trained, carrying M-16 supplied by the US.

Guy Philippe, the man who claimed leadership of the military action, is a former police chief who fled to the Dominican Republic after being accused by the Haitian government of fomenting a coup in 2002.

He arrived in Gonaives a few weeks ago to take charge of the rebels as they prepared for the assault on the government. Guy Philippe, was trained by US Special Forces in Ecuador in the early 1990s.

Human Rights Watch reported that during Philippe's term as police



■ Guy Philippe

chief of the Port-au-Prince suburb of Delmas from 1997 to 1999, international monitors "learned that dozens of suspected gang members were summarily executed, mainly by police under the command of Inspector Berthony Bazile, Philippe's deputy."

Guy Philippe told the *Miami Herald* a few weeks ago that the man he most admires is former Chilean

dictator General Augusto Pinochet. "Pinochet made Chile what it is," he said.

Louis-Jodel Chamblain, a former Haitian soldier once headed army death squads a militia known as the Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti, or FRAPH.

The FRAPH murdered at least 3,000 of Aristide's supporters during the three year military dictatorship of 1991-94.

Another, Jodel Chamblain, was convicted of the killing of the former Justice Minister, Guy Mallory, during the coup of 1991 to 1994, among other crimes.

Jean Tatoune played a role in the first coup in 1994. FRAPH veteran Tatoune was convicted of gross violations of human rights and murder in the massacre in the pro-democracy region of Raboteau.

What's at stake as France heads for elections?

SOCIALIST WORKER spoke to Nick Barrett, a member of the LCR far left organisation in France, about the regional council elections due on 21 and 28 March.

'THESE elections are assuming a national character. They are the first since the right wing UMP government won a landslide victory one and a half years ago.

This came after the shock of the National Front's Le Pen getting into the run-off in the presidential election, and the huge protests that followed.

Then last year we had the mass strikes over pensions, the biggest since 1968.

There is deep anger against the government on issues like pensions and the wave of redundancies and factory closures. Many of the firms shutting up got grants from regional councils.

The main opposition Socialist Party does not pose any real alternative. Its allies when it was in government, the Communist Party and the Greens, are not doing well in opinion polls.

In the Communist Party there is a split between the majority of the leadership, who want to tie themselves to the Socialist Party, and much of the rank and file who look more to the radical left.

The National Front is doing well in opinion polls. Le Pen has been banned from running in the elections on a legal technicality, but is doing meetings around the country and his daughter heads the party's campaign in the Paris region.

They combine racist demagoguery with an economic programme that, if it is not challenged, can seem like a radical alternative.

The radical left is making an impact in the election.

The two main far left organisations, the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) and Workers' Struggle (LO) are running a joint campaign, and in the latest opinion polls are on around 7 percent.

Demand

Our election meetings get a good response.

In Tours in the west we had 1,100 people, 600 in Montpellier in the south, and 800 in Amiens in the north.

Issues in our campaign include the demand to outlaw all redundancies in firms making a profit, the right for immigrants to vote, repeal of the pension counter-reform, and free public transport for the unemployed.

The government's new law trying to ban the Islamic headscarf in schools is an issue.

The Socialist Party has been terrible on the question.

And the far left has been mixed. LO has been awful. And the LCR is having a real debate over the question.

The far left will have to react better to a law which is clearly racist.'



THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION 1979

by CONOR KOSTICK

Iran today is a deeply repressive society, one in which a conservative form of Islamic doctrine is used to justify human rights abuses on a wide scale, including a most oppressive shackling of women's lives. It is also a country shattered by war and beleaguered by pressure from the US.

Yet twenty-five years ago Iran was in the throes of an immensely popular and liberating revolution. On January 16 1979 the Shah fled the country, and for the next six months the people of Iran experienced the greatest degree of freedom in the world.

Newspapers and other publications flourished uncensored; great estates were seized and redistributed to give land to the poor farmers; national minorities, such as the people of Kurdistan, were unrestricted in the use of their language and culture; committees of workers, *shoras*, ran the factories and local *komitehs* the streets.

The Shah of Iran had been one of the wealthiest and most powerful men in the world. In 1971 for example, in an extraordinary display of contempt for the opinion of the poor of his country, he spent \$300m on a party.

The dark underside of the glittering lifestyle of the Pahlavi dynasty was a police state that the Shah had built up as he converted the country's new found oil wealth into arms.

The special police, SAVAK, were the subject of constant criticism from human rights organisations for their practice of torture and murder on hundreds of the regime's opponents.

The Shah wanted the most up to date military technology as well as the latest fashion, and after a visit by Nixon and Kissinger in 1972 he got it. Iran's military spending rapidly increased from \$500m a year in 1970, to \$11bn in 1976.

Two hundred F14 and F15 fighter planes were purchased, along with 500 military helicopters. SAVAK was expanded so that no workplace or street was free from the presence of an informer. By 1979 Iran had more police per head of population than any regime in the world.

This force certainly made the Shah feel secure. "No one can overthrow me." He said in an interview. "I have over 700,000 troops."

Yet these troops failed to protect the Shah from his people. Throughout 1978 protests began to grow on a massive scale, and what gave the demonstrations real power was that they were accompanied by strikes.

In particular the oil workers of Iran proved that they held the regime by the throat. Tanks and planes were held immobile for lack of oil and the Shah found himself having to search for oil imports in order to move his army—despite Iran being one of the greatest oil producers in the world.

By November 1978 the confidence of the demonstrators and the unprecedented numbers involved in strikes was leading to panic in the regime. The rich began to move their money out of the country, and

the army leaders anxiously urged a clampdown. The Shah was torn and sought advice from the US and the UK. It was the classic dilemma that ruling classes always face when on the brink of extinction. Do you attempt to offer reform to try to head off the movement? Or do you crush it?

All successful revolutions approach this moment with such irresistible momentum that neither strategy can work.

Conceding reforms simply raises the confidence of the masses, while attempts at repression trig-

gers a crises in the armed forces that can quickly bring about the end.

The US itself was divided and gave

into strike action for the removal of the Shah. Media workers blocked the regime's TV and radio propaganda. Rail

workers refused to transport the army or police. Just about every industry was shut down and those that continued, such as gas and electricity workers, only did so to make sure the public still had their basic needs being met. Similarly dockers only offloaded food, medicine and paper needed by the blossoming of sales of revolutionary newspapers and pamphlets.

Every day brought new sections of workers

The Shah's supporters bundled him out of the country in the hope that this might appease the strikers and allow him back at a later date. But the news triggered a massive celebration that was accompanied by the collapse of the old regime as police chiefs, generals and politicians loyal to the Shah were arrested.

One British diplomat recorded a phone conversation that night to the home of one of the richest businessmen in the country:

"Is he in?"
 "No, he's in prison."
 "In Prison? Why?"
 "Because he sent 150 million dollars out of the country."
 "Who are you?"
 "One of his servants."



■ The Shah: spend \$300 million on a party

But what would replace the Shah?

The Shah was gone. His hated secret police were smashed. But what was to replace them? The state of the opposition was extremely weak; the secular liberals had no real organisation.

The left was represented by two organisations with a similar outlook, the Fedayeen and the slightly more conservative Mojahedin. Both were inspired by the example of the Cuban revolution and they had thought that change in Iran would be the result of an armed struggle based on support in the countryside.

As a result neither of them had any real influence over the revolution which was driven by the cities and in particular by the *shorahs* and *komitehs*.

But there was one national organisation with a great deal of credibility and that was based on Ayatollah Khomeini's links with mosques, seminaries and leaders of the *bazaar*—the network of stallholders, artisans, merchants and financiers that existed in every town.

Khomeini was a popular figure in Iran, for having implacably opposed the Pahlavis for decades.

Not only that, but while the liberal opposition to the Shah had prevaricated, Khomeini, from exile in France, had issued a call to his supporters not to compromise but to keep up the struggle: "no gradualism, no waiting. We must not lose a minute. The people demand an



■ Students battle troops in Tehran University 1978

immediate revolution."

That the clerics had a conservative social base and the beliefs to go with it was not immediately apparent.

During the revolutionary months Khomeini downplayed the full extent of his Islamic agenda. As a result the clerics stepped into the power vacuum and were allowed a decisive role in the formation of a provisional government.

Little by little the new government moved to try and take the heat out of the revolution. They called for an end to strikes and they mobilised their sup-

porters to try to capture the *shorahs* and *komitehs*. More ominously their thugs began turning up to stone the women's marches that were taking place on a weekly basis.

The national organisation of factory committees did not wish to surrender any power to the new government and on March 1 issued a series of demands, with the preface:

We, the workers of Iran, through our strikes, sit-ins and demonstrations, overthrew the Shah. During these months of strike, we tolerated unemployment, poverty and even hunger. Many of us were killed in the struggle. We did all this in order

to create an Iran free from repression, free of exploitation. We made the revolution in order to end unemployment and homelessness, to replace the SAVAK-oriented Syndicates with independent worker's Shoras, formed by the workers of each factory for their own economic and political needs.

This network of factory committees was potentially the basis for a workers' government, equivalent to the soviet government of October 1917.

Instead of freedoms being rolled back, they could have been taken to a new, higher,

level by a further, socialist, direction to the revolution.

But the left in Iran were shackled by their years of guerrilla struggle and a theory that said the struggle against the Shah was one of two stages. In this view a national government of all classes had to be formed as the first step, and therefore Khomeini and the clerics were to be supported as a progressive force.

The new regime undermined the mass movement section by section. Women were intimidated and demoralised by attacks, especially that on the huge International Women's Day march.

The national minorities came next; one by one having their new found freedoms taken off them.

Finally the regime felt strong enough to take on the workers' movement and despite the fact that the May Day demonstration of 1979 in Tehran was 1.5 million strong, unleashed their thugs against it.

Utilising anti-imperialist sentiment and taking advantage of an economic recession the cleric's outmanoeuvred the left and broke the spirit of the revolution. They could then therefore more openly impose their own agenda of a strict Islamic regime.

The power of the clerics in Iran today is no mystery. It is the result of the failure of the left to give a lead to a risen working class.

film

An Academy Award for bigotry?



American author and socialist MIKE DAVIS reviews Mel Gibson's controversial new film *The Passion of Christ*

THE most evil film ever made was probably *Jud Sues*, commissioned by Goebbels in 1940 to fan hatred of the Jews on the eve of the Final Solution.

A thousand years of European anti semitism were condensed in the image of the cowering rapist Sues, with his dirty beard, hook nose, and whining voice. The audience was instigated to rejoice in the lynching of this subhuman monster at the film's end.

To anyone who has ever seen *Jud Sues* (as I did in college), the most startling thing about Mel Gibson's *Passion of the Christ*—even more than its relentless, shockingly eroticised cruelty—is its fidelity to the anti-semitic conventions of Hitlerian cinema.

Indeed, the high priest Caiaphas and his colleagues are such exact, blatant replicas of the Sues that I suspect they must be direct borrowings. Moreover, *Passion* is one of the most manipulative films ever made, and, after two hours of watching mobs howling in delight at Christ's suffering, it is no wonder that many devout American viewers, like their German predecessors, have left theatres muttering, "I hate the Jews."

Romans, on the other hand, are shown as noble imperialists. In contrast to the vile Caiaphas, Pontius Pilate is depicted by Gibson as a sympathetic, even saintly figure, tragically trapped between orders from Rome (no more uprisings) and the implacable machinations of the high priests.

As in *Sues*, moreover, there is a constant contrasting of somatic stereotypes. Mediterranean types—the two Marys, Pilate and his wife, and so on—are rendered with softened features and sensitive spirits, while the Semites—Caiaphas, sybaritic king Herod, and so on—are depicted as coarse and repulsively sensual. (In a contemporary American context, such heavy-handed visual anti-semitism, of course, instantly recruits anti-Arab connotations as well.)

Gibson's insistence on original languages—Aramaic and Latin—have impressed naive viewers that *Passion* represents some new benchmark in historical accuracy. In fact, history (the little actually recorded of these events, apart from posthumous theology of the gospels) is bizarrely inverted.

Jesus, of course, is an utterly enigmatic figure. The only 'facts' in his life—as attested by both Roman and Jewish historians—is that he existed and was executed by the Romans. Pilate, on the other hand, has left a slightly larger record.

Unlike Gibson's kindly fiction, the historical Pilate was an ordinary imperial procurator in a third-class province who kept his legions busy with brutal executions of Jewish and Samaritan rebels. Palestine, then as today, lived under an iron heel, and the *Passion's* confusion of oppressor and oppressed is morally obnoxious.

Some American critics, however, have tried to defend the *Passion* by pointing out that Gibson's real bete noir is the Vatican, not the Jews.

Indeed Gibson explicitly made the film to promote the religious vision of the rabid Catholic traditionalist splinter group in which he grew up. (*Passion's* tormented Jesus, Seattle actor James Caviezel, is also a fundamentalist Catholic, claiming personal visitations from the Virgin.)

But the 'tradition' he so zealously defends is precisely the anti-semitic Catholic fascism of General Franco and Pope Pius XII. And, like Franco ideologues and their Croatian fascist counterparts, Gibson has the same morbid vengeful obsession with pain, mutilation, bodily corruption, and the ever-present temptation of Satan (who constantly prowls the perimeter of his film).

In short, *Passion* is the medieval vision of a pogromist, amplified by Hollywood special effects and the cachet of celebrity. It is protected by a formidable wall of enthusiastic endorsements from the American religious right as well as by the tolerance of ordinary Gibson fans who just can't believe that their goofy, handsome hero is really such a grotesque reactionary.

video

Official history that backs our rulers

by DAVID LYNCH

ALWAYS one for a good sound bite Napoleon Bonaparte once said that "history is but a fable agreed upon". A new DVD brought out by RTE is definitely a fable agreed upon by the Irish ruling elite.

Seven Ages, is the TV series that was commissioned by RTE chronicling the history of the Irish state. It has just come out on DVD after been released on video in 2000.

Seven Ages is very much the 'official history' of the Irish state and the video has been purchased by hundreds of national and secondary schools across the country as the definitive story of the nation.

However despite a pleasant soundtrack and some rare footage this is a deeply conservative production that reflects many of the prejudices and beliefs of the Irish ruling class.

This should come as no surprise. *Seven Ages* was produced in association with the O'Reilly Foundation established by the right wing press baron 'Sir' Anthony O'Reilly as a charitable foundation in 1998.

From the very beginning the 'line' taken by the programme is in defence of the ruling elite. The coverage of the Civil War is a disgrace. Almost all the voices are from the pro-treaty side, hardly any context is given for the actions of those who opposed the agreement with imperialist Britain.

It goes without saying that the actions of the trade-union movement and the militant stand taken by the organised working class during the War of Independence is completely overlooked.

Indeed the almost complete lack of left wing or working class perspective within the series is criminal.

The history of the Irish trade union movement is hardly men-



Free State troops in the Civil War

tioned at all, until the final episode when the trade union bureaucracy is praised for supporting partnership!

Any sense of class struggle in Ireland plays no role in the narrative. According to the promotional blurb this is the history of Ireland "told from the inside".

Painful

This is painfully true as the only people who get the voice their opinions are mainly former Taoiseach and leading politicians. The story of the ordinary worker or citizen on the street does not get a mention.

But it is not until the final

episode and the 'story' of the Celtic Tiger that the video exposes its own complete bias. Reflecting the perspective of O'Reilly and others in the Irish Ruling Class, *Seven Ages* puts the origins of the economic boom in Ireland down to a combination of partnership, the brilliance of Dessie O'Malley and the PDs(!), and a number of 'sensible' Ministers such as Ray McSharry.

The social liberalisation of Ireland in the 1990s is given absolutely no context.

The X case and the huge social mobilisation that happened when people took to the streets when it seemed teenage girls were going to be made prisoners in Ireland, is not

mentioned once.

A combination of 'Saint' Dessie O'Malley and Mary Robinson are seen as the main pillars on which the liberal agenda in Ireland was built.

The predictable reactionary narrative of a poor peasant country finding wealth only after it accepts the neo-liberal agenda of the free market is what is central to *Seven Ages*.

It is a partial, conservative, and politically biased account of the history of the Irish state and although some of the old footage is illuminating *Seven Ages* should be avoided by all those who care about Irish history.

pamphlet

Love and rebellion in Paris

by DAVE LORDAN

BERNARDO Bertolucci is one of cinema's most accomplished directors. Films like *The Spider Stratagem*, *Last Tango in Paris*, and the much loved socialist epic *1900* have offended censors, titillated critics and gained millions of devotees.

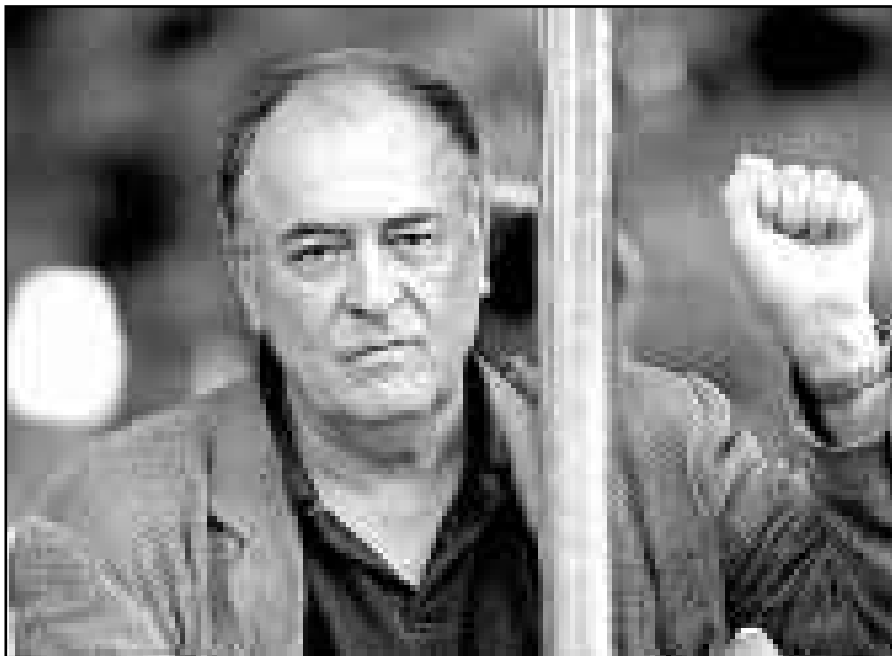
The Dreamers is a challenging tale of a love triangle set in Paris during the May 68 uprising.

Interestingly, Bertolucci claims to have been inspired to return to political themes by the great Genoa demonstration of July 2001.

Matthew, a somewhat naïve American student, hooks up at a demo with urbane French twins Isabelle and Theo. Gradually Matthew is sucked into the twins claustrophobic and incestuous world.

The trio debate Maoism and movies, get stoned in the bath, and engage in sophisticated versions of spin the bottle.

Meanwhile, outside in reality, students and work-



Bertolucci: Exhilaration of a mass demonstration

ers are uniting to launch a revolutionary challenge to the French State.

While the trio sip vintage wines and read quotations from Mao's little red book the cobblestones are being ripped up from the Parisian street and rained down on

the familiar looking rows of beetle-like riot police.

Interrupt

The over obvious use of Freudian imagery and the incessant references to haute couture films and

books interrupt the movies narrative flow and threaten to make it into a mere game of semiotic trivial pursuit for minor academics.

Gradually, however, we begin to understand that this overloading of meaning contains an implicit con-

demnation of the audience contained.

If you are knowing enough to spot every piece of cultural history flaunted in *The Dreamers* then you must put a lot of effort into ignoring the catastrophes unfolding outside your window.

The use of long range and aerial shots and b/w footage imply that we are watching events through the distancing lens of history, cleverly drawing the audience into sniggering at the absurdity of the characters dated revolutionary chic.

In the final sequence Bertolucci, with a sudden and supremely effective change of pace, hurls this condescending laughter right back at us.

Indeed *The Dreamers* is saved by its ending when, to paraphrase Isabelle 'the street comes flying into the room' and the libidinal unleashing so strikingly absent from the trios sexual antics is finally granted with the electrifying depiction of the unmatched exhilaration of a mass demonstration.

■The Dreamers—directed by Bernardo Bertolucci

Rory Hearne for President, USI

RORY Hearne, a member of the Socialist Workers Party is standing in the upcoming election for President of the Union of Students of Ireland, USI.

The election takes place at USI congress on 22nd March. I am running because I believe the students in this country need a voice and a union that stands up to the government.

The rising costs of attending college (increase in registration fees, books rents, photocopying) and the lack of government financial support mean that most students are now forced to work part-time in order to get by. This means it is much more difficult to fulfil your potential at third level.

Noel Dempsey's recent decision to impose an effective 10% cut in day-to-day college spending has meant deteriorating conditions at third level with courses cancelled, overcrowded lectures, cutbacks in student services and rising costs.

The introduction of top up fees in the North has been yet another attack on education.

Access to third level remains the preserve of the middle and upper classes.

If we think this is bad, what the HEA, the government in the South and the OECD are proposing will make things even worse.

They are proposing the return of fees, further cutbacks (nicely put as 'streamlining') across the sector, privatisation of third level institutions and inter-institutional competition for funding.

Hibernia teacher training college represents the government's vision of education—courses run by private companies at a profit and charging huge fees.

We now see the effects of the cut backs in the 80s in the health sector, what education system will be left in ten years after these cutbacks?

There is huge problems with USI as it currently operates, colleges are planning to dis-affiliate, there is widespread disillusionment with the lack of democracy in the union and students are very angry with the lack of action. USI is also suffering financial difficulty.

However there are ways to solve the financial problems other than taking part of the registration fee which would tie us to the government and accept fees on principle. USI and its officers have become detached from their membership. Stu-

dents are raging over the affect of cutbacks and proposals to increase registration charge and introduce fees yet USI does nothing with this energy.

I believe USI needs to launch a campaign that has at its centre the following aims; Defend Public education—no privatisation, Stop the cut-backs, abolish top-up fees, increase the grant to social welfare levels and extend the threshold, no dis-

crimination of students.

The time for talking with the government is over! Neither sweet words nor lobbying alone will stop the avalanche of cut-backs and issues that face students today.

The only way forward, which is the way I propose to lead, is undertaking a mass campaign that includes lobbying and taking our message to the streets and campuses through marches,

walk outs and sit-ins.

USI has potentially huge force when it unites all students and unions across the third level sector. This strength was shown when mass mobilisations defeated the governments plans to re-introduce fees.

We need to have a strong USI which makes sure students have a say in how their education is run. We need to make use of our international links to the fight the cor-

porate take-over of education at an international level.

For a National Union based on activity not apathy—another education system is possible! Vote Rory Hearne for President USI.

To find out more about the campaign, contact your student union and pressure them to support a candidate that will take on the government.

■ **Contact 086 1523542 for more info**

Trinity students vote to boycott Coke

TRINITY Students voted 1,800 in favour and 1,600 against in a referendum calling for:

- a) the removal of Coca-Cola products from Student Union shops and
- b) to prevent the SU from entering into any sponsorship agreement with the Coca Cola company in the future because of the current situation in Colombia.

The campaign to have products of the Coca Cola corporation removed from Student Union shops in Trinity was organised by students (comprising individuals, members of Socialist Worker Society, Sinn Fein and Labour) in the college.

They spent the last few months organising information meetings, collecting signatures for the referendum and distributing leaflets calling for Coca Cola to be boycotted.

This was despite threats to be sued from Coca Cola and College Authorities making it difficult to run the campaign.

Rory Hearne from the Trinity Boycott Coke campaign said "This is a big victory for members of the SINALTRAINAL Colombian Trade Union who have called for an international boycott of Coca Cola products.

The SINALTRAINAL union has called for the boycott of Coca Cola because they claim that Coca Cola hired paramilitaries to terrorise workers in its Colombian bottling plants.

The result of the referendum sends a strong message to Coca Cola that it must improve the situation of their workers in the bottling plants of Colombia. Since 1986, eight trade union affiliated employees in Coca-

Cola bottling plants have been murdered, some inside the gates of their factories.

The result shows that people are fed up of large corporations putting profit before the lives of people and we are going to continue our campaign to boycott coke until workers can organise free from fear of intimidation and death threats. WE call on all other colleges and indeed everybody to boycott killer coke!"

Mary Fitzgerald from the campaign said "This boycott is sending a message to big multinationals that mistreatment of their employees in poorer parts of the world will not go unnoticed"

Danielle McCormack from the campaign said "This is a strong show of international solidarity



Council use crane to remove anti war banner from Ballymun tenant

DUBLIN City Council took extraordinary action last week in an attempt to silence the anti war message.

This follows recent changes in the litter acts designed to clamp down on the public display of notices advertising meetings and protests.

Outside of election times, the attaching of notices to public property, including lamp-posts, is now forbidden without the permission of the authorities.

This reflects the desire of the government to prevent mass opposition in the run-up to Bush's visit to Ireland next June.

A year ago anti war activist Chris Chenneau placed a banner in the balcony of his

Ballymun tower block with the slogan "No War".

Two weeks ago council officials called and demanded he remove the banner.

Then the council brought in a giant crane to remove the banner from his balcony on the twelfth floor of Connolly Tower.

Ballymun Against War have called a protest on the Civic Offices in Ballymun on Thursday 11th March at 8.00am. They are organising defiance of this clampdown. Supporters of the anti war movement in the area are placing peace flags in the balconies in defiance of this ban.

Chris Chenneau told Socialist Worker, "This is my flat. I pay my rent but the



■ **Kevin Wingfield**

council after a year decided they wanted the anti war message removed. I will replace the banner and continue to defy the council."

Kevin Wingfield, a co-

ordinator of Ballymun Against War said, "Tenants face enormous delays in having necessary repairs seen to, but the council can spend money getting in a monster crane to remove a banner from someone's private balcony.

"The council would be better off organising the safe removal of deadly asbestos from the Ballymun flats rather than harassing anti war activists.

"We are calling on other tenants in flats to join us in defying this action by putting posters and banners in their windows and balconies."

■ **Protest at 8.00am Thursday 11th March Civic Offices, Main St Ballymun**

Dates for your diary

March 10 Public Meeting, End the Occupations of Iraq and Palestine, Build for 20 March demonstration, Ballyfermot Civic Centre, 8 pm, organised by Ballyfermot Anti-War Group

March 10, Blanchardstown & Castleknock anti war meeting Wednesday, March 10th @ 8pm in Myos Castleknock; speaker Richard Boyd Barrett.

March 11, Protest at 8.00 am Outside Civic Offices in Ballymun To protest at the Council's taking a giant crane to remove an anti war banner from a tenant's balcony in Connolly Tower. All welcome ,

March 12, Protest against Anti-War activists arrests, 4pm Laganside Court-house, Oxford Street (opp Waterfront Hall), Email: bawm@ntlworld.com

March 12, Public Meeting, Why the war on Iraq was wrong, 7.30pm Grosvenor House (Glengall St next to Europa Hotel), Special Guest speaker Ex-Labour MP (now RESPECT coalition) George Galloway, Panel includes, Eamonn McCann - Journalist - Carmel Gates - President NIPSA - Jamal Iweida - Belfast Islamic Centre, Anti-Racism Network speaker, Email: bawm@ntlworld.com

March 13, George Galloway speaks out, against Bush, Blair & Ahern's lies on Iraq, with , Mary Kelly (Peace activist charged with disabling US war-plane), Mick O'Reilly (ATGWU), Richard Boyd Barrett (Chairperson IAWM), Iraqi Speaker, , 2 pm, Saturday, 13 March 2004, ATGWU Hall, Middle Abbey Street, Dublin, Jointly organised by, Fairview Anti-War Group and Irish Anti War Movemnt, Web: <http://www.irishantiwar.org> , Email: info@irishantiwar.org ,

March 14, Public Meeting, George Galloway will be speaking in Galway organised by the Galway Alliance Against War, Menlo Park Hotel, Sunday March the 14th.

9 March - 16 March, Ballyfermot Anti-War Group is hosting an exhibition of anti-war photographs by , Augustine O'Donoghue and others, in the , Reception Area, Ballyfermot Civic Centre

March 16, No to Bertie's sham-neutrality!, No shamrock for the warlord Bush! , Protest at Bertie Ahern's Clinic, St. Luke's, 161 Lwr. Drumcondra Road, Dublin 9 , 6 - 7 pm, Organised by Phibsborough and Drumcondra Anti-War Groups,

March 16, Public Meeting, Support a Left Candidate in June's European Elections, *End the Sectarian Carve-up! A Radical Vision for Europe*, Tues. 16th March, 7.00pm, Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre, Donegall St. (next to the John Hewitt) Main speaker: Eamonn McCann (Socialist Environmental Alliance's proposed candidate)

March 19 Artane SWP is holding election meeting and social in the Beaumont Artane Family Recreation Centre, Friday 19th March 8.00pm **March 20** , Buses From Galway to Dublin Demonstration, The Irish Anti-War Movement :Phone Orla at 091-584990 or John at 086-8343667.

Irish Anti War Movement Urgent Message

There are only a few days remaining until March 20. We need to step up the mobilisation campaign. You can download and print out the 2 flyers, and pass them around to your friends and family. , Volunteers are required to put up posters in their area. If you need posters please send an email to info@irishantiwar.org and arrangements can be made for you to get posters.

Rathmines Against War

Meets every Thursday at 9pm in Madisons Pub Rathmines
Dun Laoghaire Against War,
Meets every Wednesday, 8pm Farrells pub Dun Laoghaire Shopping Centre. All welcome. 012304621 for details

MARXIST FORUMS

(Political discussions hosted by the SWP)

Blanchardstown: Racism and Immigration Laws, Wednesday 24th Laurel Lodge Community centre 8.30 p.m.

Bray: Advertising the Body—Why Sexism sells, Speaker: Melisa Halpin, Thursday March 11 8pm, Lenehan's Pub, Main St, Bray; Killer Coke, Wednesday March 24, 8pm, Lenehan's Pub, Main St, Bray
Dublin South East/Ringsend: Globalisation and Women's Liberation Today, Thursday 11th March, 8pm, Donovan's Pub (upstairs) Townsend St

Dundrum: Che Guevara, Monday, March 15, 8pm Dundrum Family Recreation Centre

Waterford: International Women's Day, Women's Liberation: Has it Been Won? Thursday March 11 8pm Olde Rogue, Michael Street All welcome.

Make sure you get Socialist Worker every fortnight

I want to subscribe to Socialist Worker

Name _____
Address _____

I enclose _____ 13 euro (£9 stg) for six months (13 issues) or 26 euro (£18stg) for a year (26 issues) Make cheques/POs payable to Socialist Worker

Return to Socialist Worker subscriptions, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, Tel (01) 872 2682, swcirculation@swp.ie www.swp.ie



For the best coverage of anti-war and anti-capitalist activity, workers struggles and clear socialist argument and analysis be sure to read *Socialist Worker* every fortnight.

Get your copy promptly every fortnight by taking out a subscription and receive it post free.

Fill in the coupon today.

BIN TAX CAMPAIGN

Fight preparations for 'pay-by-weight'

THE campaign of non-payment of the Bin Tax continues to have strong backing.

Dublin City Council is now planning to introduce a pay-by-weight scheme in January 2005.

This will only alter the form of the double tax, and the Dublin City Bin Tax campaign is preparing opposition.

Survey

The Council is undertaking a massive survey

to prepare for the introduction of this scheme.

They are issuing householders with stickers with a bar code so that each bin can be identified.

The council is telling householders to place the sticker on their bin. We should not make life easy for them.

The Anti Bin Tax Campaign is urging people not to co-operate with this scheme. Instead keep the sticker but don't put it on the bin.

Court cases

The Anti Bin Tax campaign is facing a number court cases over the following few weeks.

Legal fees and other costs have to be met, therefore the campaign is asking all supporters to renew their membership by paying their €6 for 2004.

Clondalkin locals in mass rubbish dump

■ Clondalkin anti bin tax campaign organised a lively march to the South County Council offices in the area for a mass dumping of rubbish.

Gino Kenny, co-ordinator of the anti bin tax campaign in the area, and Socialist Workers Party candidate in the local elections, said, "We're not going to sit back and watch the council walk all over us. This sort of action will be repeated to show the Council we mean business and do not intend to pay the bin tax."



■ Gino Kenny

Public Transport

Action call on Brennan's CIE plans

LAST month industrial action by workers in CIE over the break-up of the company and the contracting out of bus routes was suspended.

Action was called off while their unions enter talks with management.

But although there have been up to six meetings, the workers have been kept in the dark over progress.

At mass meetings previously, Dublin Bus drivers demanded their unions walk out of talks unless the privatisation agenda is taken of the table.

But bus workers are clear they want no concessions to Brennan's agenda.

The Busworkers Action Group has called a protest for 10.30 am on 18th March assembling

outside the talks venue at the Department of Transport.

As one bus worker told *Socialist Worker*, "It perfectly plain that the government in general and Seamus Brennan in particular is still determined to press ahead with their plans for breaking up CIE and moving to contract out Dublin Bus and Bus Eireann services."

"The only way we can stop this is by united action. The unions need to get behind this fight in defence of jobs, conditions and services and step up the action."

**Protest
18th March
10.30am
Department of
Transport
Called by
Busworkers Action
Group**

Ballyfermot for Brid Smith



■ **THREE** hundred locals attended a meeting in Ballyfermot recently and voted to endorse Brid Smith as the Anti Bin Tax candidate in the local election for the area. In Inchicore 80 locals similarly backed Brid.

Airfield House

OVER 200 people attended a meeting in Dundrum to oppose the sale of part of Airfield lands for private development.

Airfield Trust consists of a house and farm that was owned by the Overend sisters, who on their death left it to the people of Dublin to enjoy.

It has been run by a Trust but this trust now wants to sell part of the land to private developers for housing development.

The Trust claims that they need to raise finance in order to improve educational facilities on the farm. Local people packed the meeting to express their dismay.

Rose Mary Logue one of the leading campaigners questioned the claims that Airfield was in financial danger as implied by the trustees.

"Since we brought to public attention the fact that they have €12 million in investments and cash, they have... confirmed these figures. It is agreed that the estate is generating around €400,000 annually in investment income. Now that the stock market is improving it is expected that the Trust will make large capital gains, which (given the charitable status) will be tax-free. In addition the Trust will also benefit from CPO money to come from the land for the Wyckham Bypass Extension."

All local residents are opposed to the sale of any Airfield land and are unhappy with the conduct of the Board of trustees. There were calls for local people to be invited onto the board as well as demands for the state to take an active role in

financing all educational activities in Airfield.

The campaign to protect the farm lands at Airfield will continue. Already petitions and objections to the development plan have garnered support on a scale that is unprecedented in the area.

Munster Wholefoods

Recognition fight in Farranfore

THE majority of the staff of Munster Wholefoods, in Farranfore County Kerry, recently joined SIPTU.

This was as a direct consequence of the bullying tactics of the management.

Munster Wholefoods have so far refused to recognise SIPTU, a supervisor told a member of the staff that "the place would shut down rather than unionise".

At a SIPTU meeting in Killarney, and the SIPTU official addressed the workforce.

He said the only course of action

open to the workers may be to go on strike as SIPTU have no legal powers to make Munster Wholefoods recognise the union.

Workers are angry as the majority of the workforce joined SIPTU, and SIPTU have written to Munster Wholefoods.

The staff were then told, that the maximum weight that a female could be told to lift, used to be 16kg.

But under the present employment laws this has been abolished altogether.

As one employee put it "what's the use of being in the union if we let them walk down on us".

T&GWU

Union's Irish rep elected new chair

WATERFORD Crystal's Chief Shop Steward Jimmy Kelly having won the Ballot vote in Ireland for a seat on the Transport and General Workers Union General Executive Council has gone on to win the highest lay position in the Union.

At the first meeting of the new Executive's electoral term of 2004/2005 he was elected by the Executive as Chairman of the Union and Chairman of the General Executive Council.

This is the first time that the Chair of the Union has been held by a representative from Ireland.

Ireland is entitled to one seat on the Executive, which represents over 800,000 members across Ireland England Scotland and Wales.

He has stood out in support of his Union's members traditional Anti Partnership position and is committed to challenging every injustice in the workplace.

"Standing up for our members today is the surest way to win the members of tomorrow - to attract the thousands of unorganised workers in Ireland - into the ATGWU."

Jimmy Kelly speaking

after being elected Chairman of the Union said "Our Union will be back in the workplaces where the Employer does not want us."

"We will build specialist organising teams in the Regions to put our Union on the doorstep and in the face of every anti-union employer in the country."

Jimmy Kelly has been a long standing member of the

Socialist Workers Party, is a supporter of the Irish Anti War Movement and a campaigner for the rights of immigrant workers.

Jimmy has always seen the Trade Union Movement, which brings all workers in the North together in the workplace to fight the bosses, as being the best organization to unite against sectarianism.

Educate Together, Monkstown

The Educate Together National School in Monkstown has been stuck in temporary accommodation since it opened in 1997. The school has grown to 243 pupils and 23 teachers in this time. The are now in dire straits for accommodation and are getting increasingly desperate as the lease on their land is up in the next two years.

Educate Together are in this situation because of the atrocious underfunding of education under the FF/PD government.

Their class sizes are now at its maximum and yet the classrooms are 10 - 20% smaller than average. The children have only got a small piece of concrete to play on. Despite their cramped conditions they are still expected to implement the new curriculum, which demands more space as it includes subjects such as drama.

The local CBS is selling some land. As this land has

a restriction on it which means it must be used for educational purposes it would cost less than any other land in the area. The department of education should immediately buy this land for the Educate Together school.

The Christian Brothers, not satisfied with netting this huge profit, are now looking to Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Co Council to lift the restrictive covenant so they can sell the land to the highest bidder.

"This is typical of what is happening to public amenities and public spaces in the Dun Laoghaire area" said Richard Boyd Barrett, the Dun Laoghaire representative of Socialist Workers Party, "Land that should be used to provide services for the public is being handed over to developers to make vast profits. This has to stop. If the council allow this to happen it would be absolutely outrageous."

Ballyfermot Anti War Exhibition

THE Ballyfermot Anti-War group have organised an exhibition on the Iraq war and the anti-war movement.

The exhibition includes contributions from over twenty artists in video, photography, visual art and literature.

The Exhibition will take place in the Ballyfermot Civic Centre, starting on Tuesday March 9th and running until Saturday march 13th.

The official opening of the Exhibition will take place on Wednesday March 10th at 6pm and will followed by a public meeting at 8pm, 9 March, Ballyfermot,



(Office hours), Reception Area, Ballyfermot Civic Centre, 10 March, Official opening of Ballyfermot Exhibition, 18:00, Ballyfermot Civic Centre

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY €1.00 / £0.70p

inside:

UPGRADE
THE
DERRY-
BELFAST
RAIL LINK
PAGE 4

END THE
OCCUPATION OF
IRAQ
PAGES 6&7
IS NADER RIGHT TO
STAND IN US
ELECTION? PAGE 6

As civil servants battle management bullying...

Support strikes against low pay

CIVIL servants in various parts of the civil service continue to take selective strike action across the North, despite management attempts to intimidate them into ending the action.

Dozens of civil servants have now been suspended for taking part in legal industrial action which has cleared all the hurdles of the Tory anti-union laws.

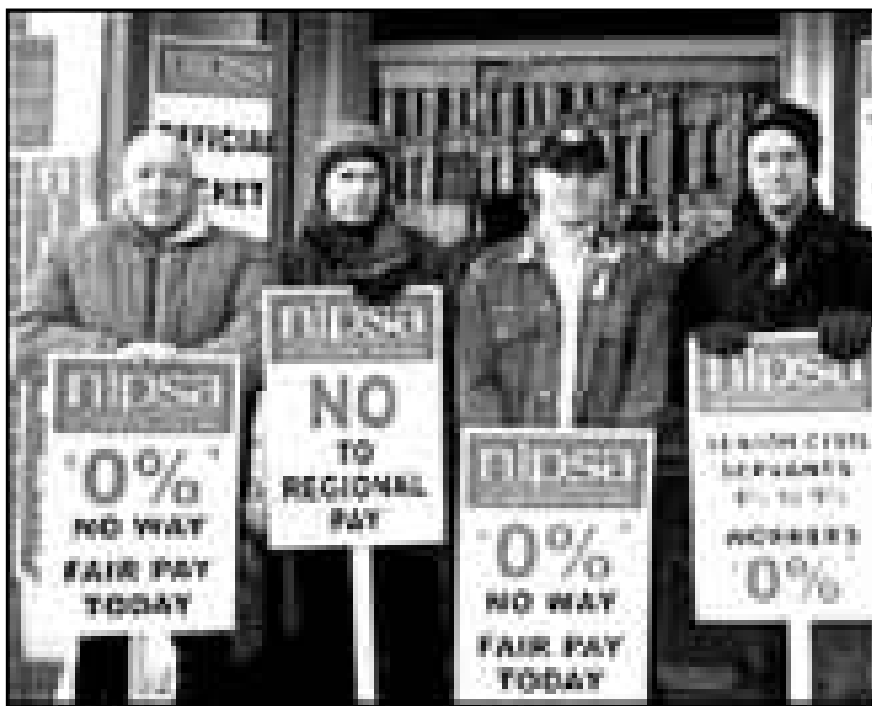
These workers were all suspended simply for working to rule.

Management has suggested the work-to-rule is illegal, which is clear nonsense.

In the old days, the response to anyone being suspended in this situation would have been to down tools and demand reinstatement.

Activists in the various workplaces have been willing to walk out when a colleague is suspended, but the majority of union members want the unequivocal backing of the Union before doing so.

Unfortunately, the union leadership's response to management



intimidation is to give in to this bullying. This surrender by the union has been interpreted by members and management alike as a sign of weakness.

It is now clear that the NIPSA executive is determined not to call any all-out action.

When the executive met at the end of Febru-

ary to discuss the next phase of the campaign, it was lobbied by about 40 members calling for a week-long strike across the entire civil service.

Gesture

At the meeting the executive decided not to call any civil service wide strike action as a 'good-

will' gesture to management which had contacted the union, hinting at a 'willingness to negotiate'.

An indication of the seriousness of this offer is the fact management offered only a middle-ranking manager, with no direct line to the Minister, to lead their 'negotiating' team.

The Executive did call a whole range of further selective action, including week-long strikes in the Pensions Branch and in Newry, Lurgan and Derry dole offices.

The employers, the Dept. for Social Development, condemned the pensions' centre (which deals with the pension credit) action as 'shameful' and accused the union of targeting the most vulnerable sections of society for their own gain.

In response, NIPSA executive member Brian Forbes told *Socialist Worker* "it is not us who are putting pressure on pensioners.

"Successive governments have paid them a pittance and that is why their situation is so desperate, it has nothing to do with our action.

"Pension credit has been an unmitigated disaster as we warned it would be."

The week-long strike in Derry's Asylum Road and Lisnagelvin doles start on Monday 15th March.

Brian Forbes says "we did not take the decision to shut down the benefits system for a whole city

lightly and we are aware that it will cause difficulties for the public but we have been left with no option.

Pressure

"Our intention is not to put pressure on vulnerable people, we are putting pressure on the employers. We cannot continue living on poverty wages and have no option but to fight for a decent wage.

"Based on the support we have from the public, people understand that and support us."

NIO Minister Ian

Pearson states repeatedly that there is no money for a decent pay rise.

They can find billions to pay for the ongoing occupation of Iraq. Why not to pay end poverty pay?

The PCS civil service union in Britain is also involved in industrial action for better pay.

There are so far no plans for civil servants to strike right across the UK but it is clear that this is needed to put more pressure on the government to come up with the money to fund this pay claim.

**Support a Left Candidate in
June's European Elections**
End the Sectarian Carve-up!
A Radical Vision for Europe

Public Meeting

Tues. 16th March, 7.00pm
Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre,
Donegall St. (next to the John Hewitt)

Main speaker: **Eamonn McCann**
(Socialist Environmental Alliance's proposed candidate)