

Socialist Worker

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inside

Dunnes workers: Into battle

—centre pages



VICTORY TO THE DUNNES STRIKERS



WORKERS in Dunnes stores have resisted management intimidation and come out on strike.

All over the country, workers were bullied into turning their back on the union—but they refused.

In Clondalkin, workers were told they would be locked out

and new staff taken on if they went on strike. 300 workers turned up on pickets to show their defiance.

In Ennis, a manager took out a flip lid bin and told workers to put

ballots in it voting to ignore their union and accept the companies terms. He was told where to get off.

Objection

In Navan, a union official was physically manhandled off the premises after object-

ing to a company ballot. Customers rushed to his support.

What is happening in Dunnes is a 1913 style battle.

On one side are a set of ruthless millionaires who want a pool of cheap and casual labour to boost their super-profits.

On the other are a mainly young and part-time workforce who refuse to be trampled on.

Dunnes have picked the wrong fight.

Despite media talk of large numbers of scabs, the strike is rock solid.

Only handfuls of cus-

tomers are passing the pickets.

Dunnes can be brought to their knees—provided we do not give up the fight and go to the Labour Court.

Operate

This body does not operate like a referee—

but more like a secret player for the bosses side.

Dunnes shows up the ugly side of Irish capitalism.

The strike is a great blow against them—but we need to go further and fight their rotten system that offers us no future.

Ireland's lousy school report

An OECD report published a number of weeks ago explodes the myth that there is a high quality of education in this country.

Only 55 per cent of 25-34 year olds in Ireland have completed secondary education compared with 81 per cent in the UK, 87 per cent in the US and 89 per cent in Germany.

Similarly a lower proportion of young Irish people enter third-level education than the OECD average.

Unemployed

The report finds that those who leave school without a qualification are five times more likely to be unemployed than those with a third-level diploma.

The disadvantage experienced by Irish students begins as early as primary school. Irish pupils score fourth-lowest of 22 countries in basic reading skills.

The reason often given for this low level of

educational attainment is that the school year is too short. This is another myth.

Irish primary school children receive 93 hours more teaching each year than the OECD average.

The real reason for the poor quality of Irish education is the high pupil-teacher ratio and the appalling lack of funding.

Irish primary schools have the largest classes in Europe. Ireland is bottom of the league for spending per pupil at pre-school, primary and secondary levels.

Scapegoat

The government tries to scapegoat teachers for low levels of education when the real blame lies at its own door for continuously underfunding the education system.

Shell boycott over oil rig



Greenpeace occupy a shell refinery in Luxembourg

Greenpeace activists have called for a boycott of Shell products following the sinking of the *Brent Spar* oil rig 150 miles off the coast of Rockall.

The rig contained up to 130 tonnes of toxic waste which will cause irreversible damage to marine life in the area.

Shell, which recorded profits in excess of £4 billion last year claimed that

it was too costly to take the rig ashore and dismantle it. The sinking is likely to set a precedent for oil companies anxious to get rid of the 50 rigs in the North Sea which are near the end of their working lives.

The issue has provoked great outrage in Germany. Shell has reported a sharp drop in profits due to a nationwide boycott. Shell filling stations in Berlin have predicted a 70% fall in profits by the end of the month unless the boycott is called off. Politicians from all sides have voiced support for the boycott.

In contrast, John Major said, 'I have examined the issue carefully and deep sea burial is the best option.' The Tory party have close links with the oil companies.

Wallowing in oil revenue during the 1980s, the Tories relaxed safety and environmental standards in the oil industry. Today, Britain is responsible for an estimated 86% of hydro-carbon pollution in the North Sea.

Toxic mud is produced when drillers use oil-based mud to lubricate their bits. The mud seriously reduces marine life around the rig for up to seven kilometres.

Banned

Britain is the only country which has not banned the production of toxic mud. Lax safety standards have also been responsible for over five hundred deaths in the oil industry, most notably the Piper Alpha disaster in which 186 oil-workers perished in 1987.

The market, environmental destruction and attacks on workers go hand-in-hand.

lition of defence contracts with France.

Australian trade unions have a long record of environmental protection.

In the 1970's their refusal to allow any building in green-belt sites or the use of asbestos forced the government to introduce legislation at a time when 'green' issues were largely seen as the concern of a few cranks.

UNIONS CHALLENGE NUKE TESTS

The decision by the French government to carry out nuclear tests in the South Pa-

cific has caused outrage in Australia and New Zealand.

Australian unions

have called for a boycott of all French products. Postal workers are refusing to deliver mail to the French Embassy. Airport workers have refused to refuel a number of Air France planes.

Boycott

The government has been forced to back the boycott campaign and has cancelled £30 mil-

Cork waste scandal

It has been revealed that a dozen bags of radioactive dust are sitting in old brick-lined caverns in Rocky Island, near Cobh.

In 1990, industrial components were incinerated at the Irish Steel furnace in Cork.

The fumes were collected as particles of dust and then went through a procedure which made them ready for recycling. A Welsh recycling company discovered levels of radioactivity and the waste was sent back to

Cork.

Irish Steel management offered workers one and a half times the normal rate to put the waste in plastic bags. Some temporary workers, fearful for their jobs, participated in the operation without proper protective clothing.

Warning

This scandal was only revealed when a member of the public chanced upon the site which had radioactive warning signs.

The Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland has now attacked Irish Steel for a serious breach of its guidelines.

inside the system

Living it up in Tuna-Killy

A week after Ruairi Quinn decided to wield the hatchet to the tune of £77m., 25 top civil servants spent two days in the lap of luxury deciding exactly where to put in the knife.

The 'Strategic Management Initiative' conference was held in the exclusive £88 a night Tinakilly Country House Hotel.

Stupendous

Their back breaking work was interrupted by a stupendous meal

consisting of grilled tuna and shrimp on mango and chili salsa, pan fried duck livers and veal filled with poached asparagus.

The total cost is expected to be in the region of £10,000 - which is the yearly income of three long term unemployed people.

A world apart

The North's newest MP Bob McCartney has a lifestyle a world apart from his first home on the Shankill Road.

The top barrister lives in a plush residence on the "gold coast" exclusive belt at Cultra in North Down. Wealthy residents include boxing promoter Barney Eastwood.

And even though he claims not to have lost touch with his working class origins, he obviously has as only 38 per cent of the total electorate turned out to vote for him.

'House of cards'

The bizarre state of Democratic Left in government is shown by recent reports of how weak the party really is.

The *Phoenix* magazine says that the number of countrywide activists is less than 100. The split with the Workers' Party meant that they lost many activists who have not been replaced.

Resigned

Twenty six members resigned over the formation of the government, including Fearghal De Rossa son of Proinsias.

Even the party's internal news sheet *Forum* says that 'party members can see the number of party workers is low and that the party is devoid of a core vote in the working class or any other section of society. The party's structure is a house of cards'.

A slip of the pen?

This month's Newbridge Parish Newsletter claims that women are 'very effective cleaning agents' and are 'highly ornamental especially in sports cars'.

The article went on to claim that though it is 'illegal to possess more than one, several could be maintained at different locations as long as the specimens don't interact'. According to the writer,

women are 'usually covered with a painted film'

Joke

Fr. Joseph McDermott, a member of the editorial board claimed the article had 'inadvertently slipped in' and tried to dismiss the whole thing as a joke. But it showed up the sick attitude that some priests have to women's rights.

Regiment of Death

Two Royal Irish Regiment soldiers are facing charges of colluding with the U.V.F. One soldier is accused of thirty offenses including murder, conspiracy to murder, possessing guns and collecting information on republican

activists. It is alleged that he murdered a Catholic, Francis Brown, on March 11, 1994 by placing a bomb encased in a concrete block under his lorry.

Collusion

The case of Brian Nelson, an ex-British soldier and MI5 agent, active in the UDA as

an intelligence officer, has already shown that the British Army are up to their neck in collusion with loyalist paramilitaries.

Playing around with the structures of the police and the army will do nothing to end sectarianism in the North.

The British Army should leave now.

'Pro-lifers' with murderous links

IN THE middle of June pro-life fanatics sent hoax letter-bombs to the Well Woman Centre and the Irish College of General Practitioners in Dublin.

In May the Irish College of General Practitioners had published information to enable GPs to give accurate information to women who wanted to have abortions in the UK.

The Well Woman Centre has consistently defended abortion rights for women.

A number of GPs who have openly stated that they provide abortion information have recently had their clinics picketed by groups like Youth Defence. Dr Leonard Condron was prevented from leaving his clinic in Ballyfermot to visit a

sick child.

Human Life International had the gall to claim that the hoax bombs were really sent by pro-choice advocates who wanted to "cast a slur" on the pro-life movement.

Prevent

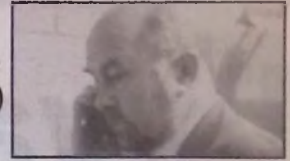
There is no need to fabricate a link between the pro-life movement and intimidation and murder.

Human Life International is linked to Operation Rescue in the US. Operation Rescue physically prevent women from entering abortion clinics and intimidate others by displaying dead foetuses.

In 1993 a member of Operation Rescue shot dead Dr David Gunn who worked in a clinic in Florida.

what we think

Quinn orders more cutbacks



LABOUR Minister for Finance Ruairi Quinn has announced a huge cut-back on public spending.

No new public sector workers are being recruited and £77 million is to be slashed from state spending.

Quinn claims that the cuts are necessary because there has been an overrun on government spending this year.

But the reality is that neither the Labour Party or Democratic Left are willing to tackle the rich in this country.

In the next year the Irish government will be charged with a £100 million fine because of the fraud in the beef industry.

If they rushed special legislation through the Dail, they could make bosses like Larry Goodman pay for the fiddles his company was engaged in.

That would cover for much of the overspending they are talking about.

They could also start re-imposing hefty taxes on the banks and the big companies.

Profits

But in the last budget they cut the tax bill on bank profits.

Quinn's embargo on recruitment in the public sector will have a devastating effect on our hospital service where nurses have already been on strike against overcrowding of patients. Every time it comes to

workers making demands, this government puts on the poor mouth. But when subsidies are needed for big farmers or industrialists, money is found very quickly.

The Labour Party and

Democratic Left are once again betraying their supporters.

Not only have they joined Fine Gael in coalition—they are now talking the same language of cut-backs on services for working people.

Bigots to blame for sex abuse

FR. DAMIEN CURRAN is a Catholic priest sentenced in mid June to seven years in prison for sexual assault on young boys.

Over a four year period, he abused boys aged between 11 and 13.

He brought them to his family's holiday cottage in Co Down, plied them with alcohol and then tried to abuse them when they fell asleep.

Those who resisted

were beaten.

The horror was only exposed when a young boy ran from the cottage one night, bleeding and shaking violently.

The RUC are investigating more than 20 priests and nuns for child abuse.

Journalists claim that if the events in the Catholic children's homes are revealed, it will be far worse than the Kinora affair.

Kinora was a boy's home in East Belfast run

in the 1970s by William McGrath, an evangelical preacher who was a close associate of Ian Paisley.

Paisley had been warned that McGrath was sexually abusing boys but did nothing.

Danger

Both affairs show the danger of giving power over children's lives to people who preach sexual repression.

Paisley and the Catholic Bishops have little in common—except their regular denunciation of all forms of sex that is not for "procreating children".

Both convey the idea that sex is dirty and should be carried out in secrecy and shame.

Instead of seeing sex as a basic human need, they see it as someone using another.

No wonder some of their associates see child abuse as no worse than other forms of sinful activity.

If children are to be protected from this sort of abuse they need to grow up in a society which is open about sexual matters.

That will mean fighting to end the control of the churches over our schools, hospitals and care homes.

Moate protest was racist

THE PROTESTERS against the housing of a traveller family in Moate claimed they were not racist.

They claimed that they were only angry at the fact they had not been consulted about the housing of the Joyce family.

Excuses

But as one Community Youth Worker who works with the Joyce children told *Socialist Worker*:

"Despite all the excuses, the real agenda here is one of anti-traveller feeling."

One demonstrator told journalists that he did not want "inferior people" in the area. Another asked, "How would you like to live beside them?"

"I object to tax-payers' money going to people who contribute nothing to society"

In reality, travellers in Ireland face horrific discrimination from the State.

It is the Irish rich who contribute nothing to society.

The likes of Tony O'Reilly who build their empires by cutting jobs and conditions are feted by the government and live a life of luxury at the expense of both travellers and working class people.

Bottom of the pile

AT THE end of 1994, there were 3,878 travelling families in the country. 1,200 of these live on the roadside with absolutely no facilities available.

■ Sixty six per cent of all Dublin's 660 travelling families have no electricity.

■ Ninety five per cent of travellers die before the age of fifty five.

■ The infant mortality rate among travellers is three times higher than the national figure.

■ There are no travellers presently doing the Leaving Cert., with only two hundred travellers in second level education.

There are only two travellers in University.

Middle class in revolt

THE IRISH Independent argued recently that the upsurge in anti-traveller feeling is due to the 'socially excluded' in our society refusing to accept travellers.

But the committee in Moate reads like a list of the Irish middle class. It includes a pharmacist, a stud owner, a publican, a supermarket owner and a hotelier.

These people and their political representatives are at the forefront of campaigns against travellers. They are worried about falls in property values and always cover their racism with fake excuses.

Liz O'Donnell of the PD's recently opposed the building of a temporary halting site in Sandford claiming that "South and

South West Dublin are being overburdened with halting sites."

Democratic Left Councillor Christy Gorman of Meath opposed the extension of the only official halting site in the county. He said:

"I am totally opposed to it because of the history of the site - the travellers there were brutal, savage and threatening."

As traveller couple, Nell and Michael McDonagh said:

"Middle class settled people who come out with these things should realise that there are warped people out there only looking for encouragement to lob a petrol bomb on a trailer."

Racist cops go free

FOUR policemen and one immigration official have been acquitted of the racist murder of Joy Gardner in July 1993.

Joy was in Britain on a six month visa and had applied for permission to live there permanently when the law came to deport her back to Jamaica.

The police claim she resisted them. In the struggle that followed she was held on the floor while they bound her with body, leg and side belts and handcuffed her.

They then gagged her using fifteen feet of tape, causing her to suffocate.

Another Kerry baby

WHEN THE body of a new born baby washed up on the strand at Waterville in South Kerry recently, the Gardai immediately issued appeals for the mother to come forward.

The mother hadn't come forward by the time *Socialist Worker* went to press.

It's not difficult to understand why.

Some years ago, when another baby was found washed up on a beach in Kerry, Joanne Hayes was arrested by the police. She was forced to make a confession which subsequent blood tests proved was wrong.

Among her interrogators were police officers such as Detective Sergeant Gerry O'Carroll who had previously been involved in extracting false confessions from the republican Nicky Kelly.



Joanne Hayes: framed

He roared at Joanne that he would have her family farm sold.

When a tribunal was established to investigate how the false confession was made, it was Joanne Hayes who was put on trial and not the Gardai.



The Joyce family: targetted by middle-class racists

Tory cuts bring devastation to...

Loyalism's 'heartland' of poverty



The reward for 'loyalty' on the Shankill is an average income of less than £100 a week.

A NEW survey covering the Shankill Road shows what working class Protestants have got for being loyal to the British state - nothing.

Or more precisely: ill health, little education and pitiful levels of income.

The average income is less than £100 a week, one in twelve children leave school with no qualifications and half the adult population have at least one health problem.

A significant amount of people complain about their lack of decent diet but over 40 per cent said they couldn't afford to change it.

Disadvantage

The report concludes that "the root cause of inequality in health is social and economic disadvantage" and calls for more investment and money to be spent.

The survey was launched by Tory Health Minister Malcolm Moss. What a bloody cheek he has. For 15 years the Tories have not lifted a single finger to alleviate the suffering of the poor and low paid.

What's more, not only do they oppose a minimum wage but through the

Child Support Agency they have made deductions from benefits. 40 per cent of families on the Shankill are single parent ones.

to make ends meet.

The Shankill has always been promoted by Unionist leaders as the heart of loyalism and the perfect model of the "Protestant work ethic".

However, right from its

The two rivers cutting through the Shankill provided mill owners throughout the last century with a much needed water supply.

The slum dwellings that were thrown up existed right through the 1960s and housed some of the most poorly paid workers in the North.

Throughout its history, Orange bigots like Ian Paisley and the UDA have whipped up sectarianism and used the Shankill as a recruiting ground.

Bigot

The new mayor of Belfast Eric Smyth of the DUP comes from the Shankill. But while this bigot denounces the "filth and dirt" of sex on television, he only gives comfort to the Tory plans to scapegoat many of the single parents amongst his constituents.

With the collapse of traditional areas of employment and only the prospect of low paid work being offered after the ceasefire, it's becoming ever clearer that the marching tune of loyalism sounds more and more like the growing pains of poverty.

SHANKILL - THE FACTS

* On average the weekly disposable family income is less than £100. This is half the Northern Ireland average which is itself 20 per cent lower than Britain.

* 78% of households receive Social Security benefits.

* Only one third of people regard their health as good. 60% suffer some form of mental ill-health, mainly depression and stress.

* One in five babies and pre-school children have a chest disease.

* Eight out of every ten leave school with no qualification and only 1% attain a third level education.

Nearly a half of these can thank Moss for cutting their benefits.

As a result most single parents are forced to borrow money mid-week just

beginnings the area has been used by Orange capitalists as a source of cheap labour and to foster ideas of division amongst working class people.

Socialist Worker welcomes

Letters

PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

Vietnam's market turmoil

We recently visited Vietnam and found it in turmoil as it moves to market capitalism.

Multi-nationals are rushing in to exploit the low labour costs and the abundant natural resources such as Vietnam's huge oil and gas fields.

As capitalists invest, peasants are being turned into workers in vast numbers. Given the anger that exists below the surface, we think it won't be too long before strikes occur.

Already there is a hatred towards the police, army and secret service for their corruption.

Recently in North Vietnam a policeman shot dead a smuggler and stole his money. This is not unusual and normally nothing would happen.

But this time after witnesses came forward, the policeman was brought to trial. When the policeman was found 'not guilty' rioting broke out.

The government was forced to order a re-trial and the court was ringed by an 8,000 strong silent demonstration. The policeman got the death sentence, something that never happened before.

If the aging Stalinists leaders make too many mistakes in their balancing act between state and market control, there is a real danger of a military coup.

Vietnam desperately needs an authentic revolutionary party to help organise the struggles that lie ahead.

Stephen Arthur
Clair Coulter

Forced to beg for benefits

I am unemployed but I am continually being harassed by the Department of Social Welfare.

I have done everything possible to follow the government guidelines. I have taken places on government work schemes and only finished the last one three weeks ago. Now I have put my name forward for a new scheme.

I tried in every way I can to get gainful employment but with more people losing their jobs every day, I have not chosen the position I am in.

I feel I should be allowed to claim benefit with dignity and pride and not to feel that I have to beg to keep my benefits secure.

I realise that the officers at the Labour Exchange do not always have a pleasant job but surely they should have sufficient training to know when people are just trying to survive their lives as best they can.

John O Shea
Kerry

'New' Unionists play into the Tories' hands

The "former" paramilitaries of the Ulster Democratic Party and the Progressive Unionist Party claim to represent the real working class people in Protestant areas, like the Shankill. Sometimes they even claim to be socialist.

They rightly blame the 'fur coat brigade' of Unionism for neglecting the people of the Shankill.

Yet they do not break from these politics because they too put the "defence of the Union" first.

They see themselves in competition with Catholic working class areas to win investment and resources for 'their' communities.

This is why both they and Sinn Fein turn up at the various investment conferences to lobby

for 'their side.' This is not a strategy for overthrowing capitalism - but rather competing to survive within it. And every attempt to promote one working class community over another just plays into the hands of the Tories.

Revolutionary

In the 1930s a small group of revolutionary socialists united the Shankill and the Falls, Catholic and Protestant in the fight against the class system to improve the lot of working class people.

In doing so they isolated the bigots and undermined sectarianism.

That sort of politics which starts from the common suffering of workers and points to our potential strength is what is needed today.

around the world

CHECHENIA:

The bitter fruit of Russian rule

**By a socialist
in Russia**

THE BRUTAL seizure of several thousand hostages by Chechen fighters last week in the southern Russian town of Budyonovsk has drawn attention once again to Russia's six month long war for oil in Chechenia.

President Yeltsin says that the taking of hostages, many of them mothers with tiny babies, justifies the war against Chechen "terrorists".

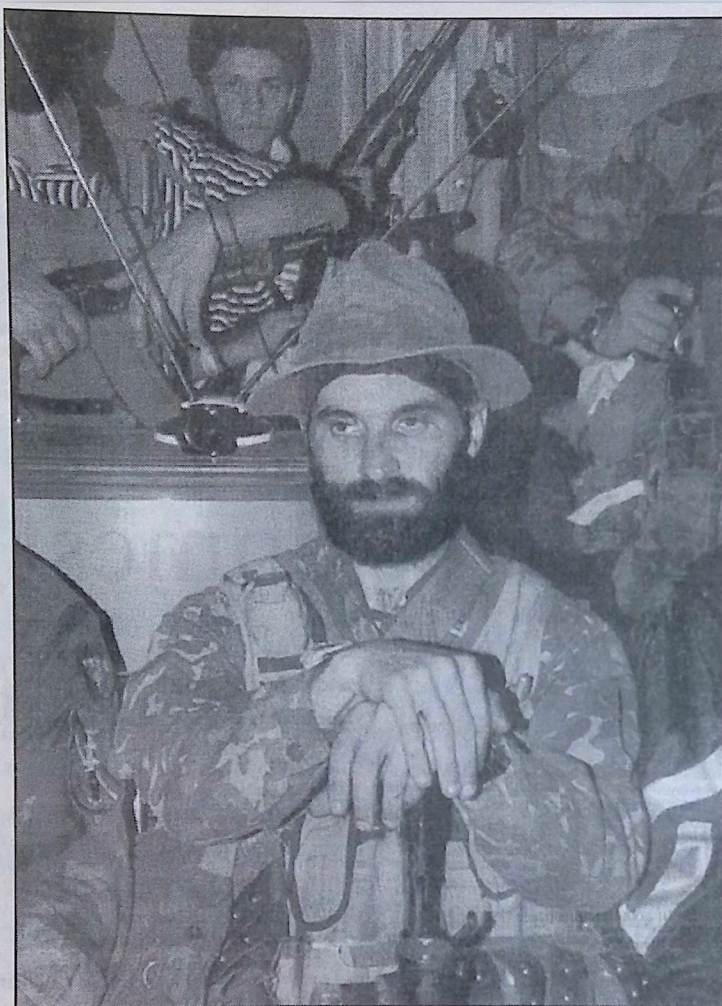
Demanded

But the Chechen fighters, who demanded an end to the war and the start of peace negotiations, were driven to this desperate and appalling tactic by Russia's relentless murder of civilians in Chechenia.

The latest Russian offensive that began in early June has directed massive fire-power against Chechen villages, bombing them mercilessly from the air and shelling them with heavy artillery.

General Rokhlin, one of the top Russian commanders, says that the 10 year war in Afghanistan was a "stroll" in comparison to Chechenia.

A recent motion demanding an end to the war which was signed by 231 Russian deputies cites tens of thousands of Chechen civilians dead. Cholera,

**Shamil Basayev leader of Chechin guerrillas**

due to destruction of water supplies, could kill as many again. Already 400,000 people, a third of the population, are refugees.

Before the VE day celebrations in May, Russian troops resorted to open terror tactics against Chechen civilians to try and halt the

war before the arrival of world leaders in Moscow.

In cold blood they murdered over 100 women and children in the village of

Samashki.

Shamil Basayev, leader of the Chechen fighters in Budyonovsk, himself lost his wife and six children when the Russian offensive began in June.

The hostage tragedy in Budyonovsk pales in comparison with Russian terrorism in Chechenia.

But this cannot justify the Chechens' actions which will not lead to lasting improvements in Chechenia, and have provoked a wave of racist feeling in Russia.

Pandering

In the south, Cossacks promised to take Chechens hostage and kill three for each Russian killed. The press and TV are pandering to the racism and portraying all Chechens as terrorists.

Many Russians, however, are angered by the government handling of the affair. Yeltsin left for the G7 summit on Canada just when the crisis began.

He also ordered the botched attempt to storm the hospital in Budyonovsk where the hostages were being held, during which 30 hostages were killed by Russian bullets and grenades.

The question of who is to blame for all this is threatening to split the government and even bring it down.

To prevent a terrorist campaign elsewhere in Russia, stop a wave of anti Chechen pogroms and undermine the rise of the far right, Russian troops must leave Chechenia now and grant it independence.

ITALY:

Strikers threatened with jail

ITALY'S government invoked draconian anti-strike laws at the weekend to ban threatened action by airline, rail and ferry workers.

It is the first time the laws have been used. Workers can be jailed if they defy the government order banning strikes in the 'public services.'

The action by the government of Prime Minister Lamberto Dini underlines the disastrous mistake Italy's major left wing party, the PDS (former Communist Party), made in backing him.

Resign

Dini came in after former Prime Minister and media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi was forced to resign after a huge wave of strikes and protests last year broke his plan to savage workers' pensions.

The PDS backed Dini as a "neutral" figure. His threat to jail strikes shows what nonsense that was. Dini was in Berlusconi's cabinet, and drew up the plan to attack pensions.

Berlusconi himself hopes to make a comeback after earlier this month beating off, in a referendum, a proposal that he should be forced to get rid of some of his vast media empire.

The failure of the PDS to put up any serious campaign over the referendum allowed Berlusconi to survive.

But despite the left's failings Dini and Berlusconi could find themselves under the hammer in the weeks ahead.

The strike ban against transport workers only lasts until the weekend. And Dini's plan to resurrect Berlusconi's attack on pensions has led to a call by unions for a national protest in Rome this weekend.

FRANCE:

Local elections show Nazi danger

"A Breakthrough for the National Front"—that was the stunned reaction of the French media to the results of Sunday's local council elections as the Nazi National Front won control of a number of major councils for the first time.

The Front's biggest success came in the south eastern naval port of Toulon, France's 13th largest city with 170,000 people where the new mayor is the Nazi Jean Marie Le Chevalier. The National Front also took control of the town halls in Marignane and Orange, also in the south.

In France's fifth biggest city, Nice, just along the coast from Toulon, Jacques Peyrat—a former National Front national organiser—is the new mayor.

Peyrat broke from Nazi leader Jean Marie Le Pen after a bitter personal row, but says his political views have not changed.

The Nazi success in the council elections marks a major step forward for the National Front.

It comes after Le Pen got five million votes, at 15 percent his best ever score, in France's recent presidential election.

Sunday's results showed that vote could be translated into local bases across the country. As well as taking control of sev-

eral town halls the National Front doubled the number of its councillors to over 1,100.

The results underline the urgency of building a movement which can stop Le Pen's Nazis in their tracks before they go any further.

Movement

Other aspects of Sunday's elections show such a movement is possible.

In a number of towns where the Nazis had hoped to take control they failed to do so after local campaigns fuelled a large turn out to ensure they were stopped.

In Vitrolles, near Marseilles, Le Pen's number two Bruno Megret was

beaten in his bid to take over the town hall.

The Nazis had also looked set to win control of the council in Dreux, just west of Paris, and possibly Mulhouse in the east, but were beaten in both.

Sunday's elections were also a blow to France's new President Jacques Chirac.

His governing right wing coalition was beaten by the Socialist (Labour) Party in a string of important towns.

In Paris the Socialist Party won six of the 20 councils, ending what had been a 12 year Tory monopoly on the capital's councils.

The results show that the pool of bitterness which has fuelled the rise

of the National Front does not automatically have to go to the right.

So too does the series of strikes and protests which has rattled the government in recent months.

Tens of thousands of rail and tube workers, gas, electricity, postal and telecom workers and many others have all marched or struck in the last few weeks.

And over the last year and a half the right wing government has repeatedly been forced to retreat by waves of strikes and protests involving groups from airport workers to students.

There have also been significant local protests against the Nazis.

Hundreds of anti-Nazis

successfully stopped a Nazi meeting in the Paris suburb of Colombes recently and there have been protests against Nazi meetings in towns across the country.

Protests

When Le Pen himself went to vote in the council elections in Paris, anti-Nazis confronted him shouting "N for Nazi, F for Fascists, Smash the National Front".

Such protests, as well as the strikes, show the possibility of building a movement which could both stop Le Pen and offer an alternative to those who look to the Nazis in despair at the poverty, rotten housing and unem-

ployment that is wrecking their lives.

There are forces in France which could build such a movement if they wanted.

In the French elections, 1.6 million people voted for the revolutionary socialist candidate from Lutte Ouvriere (Workers' Struggle).

The tragedy is that they don't see Le Pen as a serious threat.

Some on the left argue that what is needed is electoral pacts with right wing parties to stop the Nazis. But these same parties also make deals with the Nazis.

Exposing the National Front as Nazis and confronting them at every turn is more urgent than ever.

LESBIANS AND GAYS:

Out and proud



ONE YEAR after homosexuality has been made legal in Ireland, there is new evidence that lesbians and gays still experience discrimination.

A recent survey sponsored by the Combat Poverty Agency has shown that nearly two thirds of gay people have experienced "isolation and bullying".

One quarter of those surveyed had been subjected to physical assault.

Dublin's only gay pub, The George, has seen an increasing number of attacks on its customers.

Hatred of lesbians and gays is whipped up at the highest levels of Irish society.

Dr O'Connell, the Bishop of Dublin, has for example, denounced homosexuality as a "corrupt behaviour that can seriously undermine the common good".

The Church hierarchy has covered up for child abuse for years—but still thinks it can pontificate about what is "normal sex".

Their grip on our schools means that they exclude any mention of homosexuality from sex education programmes.

A report on Relationships and Sexuality in Schools prepared by the Department of Education does not mention the word "homosexuality" once.

Nor has legalisation of homosexuality changed the attitude of some of the TDs

who voted for it.

Take the Fine Gael TD, PJ Sheehan, for example.

He thinks the change in law was right but still feels that "these people need treatment more than anything else".

Despite this, there is a growing confidence among lesbians and gays to organise and fight for their rights.

Shift

150 people turned up to an enthusiastic Lesbians Organise Together Conference in UCD in March.

But alongside the new confidence, there has been a shift rightwards among sections of gay organisations.

Today the annual Gay Pride march is billed very much as a fun event and increasingly the radical, angry message is played down.

Key figures in the gay movement believe that a type of 'partnership' can be formed with Labour Party Ministers like Mervyn Taylor to bring in a Bill outlawing discrimination based on sexual orientation.

This is the same Minister who is demanding that separated couples wait five years before getting a divorce.

Whatever Bill he in-

troduces will not stop parish priests firing gay teachers or hospital matrons sacking lesbian nurses.

The failure of legislation to bring change is shown by the Equal Pay Act. This was passed in 1973—but today women are still earning only two thirds of men's.

Anti-gay prejudice has deep roots in capitalist society which promotes the private nuclear family as the norm for human relationships. Masculinity and femininity are defined to fit in with those family roles.

Women are constantly bombarded with images of themselves as nurturing and caring while men are told to behave like macho 'lads' and then become responsible providers.

The system gains because childcare is removed from the public domain where it might be a cost—and pushed onto private individuals.

Although more and more people live outside the family, the right wing still hold it up as a model. It is supposed to offer a haven from the troubles of the world.

Scapegoats

Right wing politicians can always blame crime or drug use on the 'break-down of the family'.

They will also use this propaganda to target gay people as scapegoats for the failing of their own system.

Labour Party politicians can never be trusted to oppose these type of attacks. In Britain in the 1980s, there was a major reaction against gay rights.

A key Labour Party advisor, Patricia Hewitt, argued that the party had to stop talking about gays 'lest they upset the pensioners'.

Like every other grouping gay people are divided on class lines. Working class gays have fewer chances of changing their jobs or their lifestyle to escape from the prejudices.

They have every interest in fighting the whole system that produces the prejudice.

Today that means linking the struggle for gay liberation to the cause of workers in Dunnes or Irish Press.

Tomorrow it means fighting for a revolution.

DUNNES STORES:

INTO

THE STRIKE at Dunnes Stores is the most important battle this country has seen in recent years.

By a huge margin of 86%, Dunnes workers voted to take action because they know their whole future is at stake.

The strike centres on three key issues.

Sunday Trading:

TWENTY one stores now open on a Sunday throughout the country.

Management forces newly recruited staff to work these hours on a flat rate. There is huge anger about this.

As one part-time worker told *Socialist Worker*, "I am not prepared to work on Sundays unless I get proper rates for it. Sunday is everyone's day off. It's the only day really when all the family is around. It should be my choice whether or not I give all that up. I am not going to be pushed around".

Dunnes are trying to get a ready made pool of cheap labour so they can outdo their competitors. But if Dunnes get away with paying flat rate on Sunday, other stores will soon follow suit.

Casualisation:

THE vast majority of jobs in Dunnes are part-time.

In Clondalkin, for example, there are only 16 full time workers out of a staff of 300. Less than 10% of the staff in the whole country have full time jobs.

Most part timers are employed

under a "zero hour contracts" scheme.

This means that you have to be available for work at any time but aren't guaranteed any hours at all.

Hours

According to a Dunnes worker in Dublin, "This means in reality you cannot plan anything."

"You never know what hours you will be working. Coming up to Xmas, we got a lot of hours but when things went quiet again, it went right down to 4-5 hours."

"This is really hard on me because I'm trying to build up my stamps."

"But with as few hours as that I'm not entitled to any".

Union Rights:

Dunnes bosses are refusing to negotiate with Mandate, the shop workers union. A shop steward told *Socialist Worker*, "It's like banging your head off a brick wall."

"They keep on telling us that Margaret Heffernan deals with workers on an individual basis."

"They asked me what right I had to speak on behalf of everyone else."

With its anti-union tradition managers are encouraged to act like bullies.

They shout at staff and try to humiliate them.

The company think that because they have so much money, they can trample on people.

But in this strike, they are going to get a lesson they will never forget.

What you can do

EVERY trade unionist in the country should be backing this dispute.

■ Start collections immediately for the Dunnes strikers.

Take in leaflets from the strikers and ask your shop steward to get a Dunnes workers to speak to your fellow workers.

■ Once you get one collection going, try for a regular levy.

■ Put up the **BOYCOTT DUNNES** posters in your job and in your area.

■ Organise local socials for the Dunnes workers.

Management lies

DUNNES are pretending that the workers are divided.

But only one of the 64 stores voted not to take part in the strike—and this store was organised by SIPTU and not Mandate.

In Clondalkin workers who

decided to scab got huge publicity in RTE and the press.

Intimidation

The manager Mary Byrne said there had been no intimidation.

But one worker told *Socialist Worker*, "I call it intimidation."

tion when young packers are called in and told they will be sacked because they are on probation. They said we would be locked out and that new staff would be hired".

The media refused to carry the ad from the union Mandate about why they were going on strike for several days.

Support Meetings

Socialist Worker is running a series of meetings on 1913-1995: Dunnes Stores: The Fight for Workers' Rights.

Dublin: Tuesday 27th North Star Hotel
Waterford: Thursday 29th ATGWU Hall
Cork: Thursday 29th Connolly Hall
Athlone: Tuesday 27th, see posters for details
Letterkenny: Wednesday 28th, see posters for details
Galway: Thursday 29th, Currans Hotel, Eyre Square

1913-1995

When Dunnes held their 50th birthday party recently in the Gaiety, they put on a pageant commemorating Irish history.

One of the scenes depicted the 1913 lock-out. Everything went well until Margaret Heffernan turned up to the last dress rehearsal.

She freaked out and demanded the scene be removed.

Maybe she recognised herself too closely in the figure of William Martin Murphy.



The Dunnes strike boy management never forget.

'I'm Dunnes

LEADING figures of Irish entertainment industry are giving their backing to the Dunnes workers.

They include Chr Moore, Boyzone and Black. In an open letter to Dunnes management, say that:

"We are saddened disappointed by Dunnes continual refusal to meet MANDATE and other unions representing your country's workforce."

A syl

DUNNES Stores is a symbol of modern Ireland

It grew in the 1960s by selling cheap food and clothing to working class people. Today half of whole grocery trade in the Republic is controlled by Dunnes.

But the family which runs are fantastically wealthy and have a deep contempt for working people.

When one of the Dunnes daughters, Elizabeth died recently she left her jewelry to her daughter, Sharon. It was worth a quarter of a million pounds. When the apartment of

BATTLE!



The Dunnes strike can give the bully-boy management a lesson they will never forget.

'I'm backing Dunnes workers'

LEADING figures of the Irish entertainment industry are backing the Dunnes workers. They include Christy Moore, Boyzone and Mary Black. In a common letter to the Dunnes management, they say that: "We are saddened and disappointed that the continual refusal of MANDATE to represent our company's workers."

"6,000 of your workers will be out on strike and thousands of others will be badly affected because you won't talk"

The letter calls on management to address "the central issues of compulsory Sunday working and zero hour contracts."

The letter is signed by: Eleanor McEvoy, Mick Lally and Robert Carrickford from Glenroe, Christy Moore, Mary Black, Jim Bartley and Charlie Roberts from Fair City and Boyzone

Part-time, proud and union

THE MANDATE union has shown how a mass campaign can be launched to unionise part time workers.

Since last April, the MANDATE membership in Dunnes has doubled to 5,000 after the union organised an energetic recruitment drive.

In Dublin alone 1,000 part time workers joined the union.

Workers have been recruited because they saw the union actively fighting their case.

Mass meetings called to discuss conditions in Dunnes were packed with workers, many who had never been union members before.

Shop stewards were the key to recruitment and have been signing up members at a growing pace in recent months.

It shows that all the talk that it is difficult to organise the new 'flexible' and mainly female workforce is rubbish.

Strikes win!

IT HAS been a big step for many Dunnes workers to face up to management intimidation and come out on strike.

They should feel confident that they have every chance of winning. Over the last year other strikes have won.

■ **Bloom's Hotel:** Workers here struck for three weeks.

Most were young, part-time and had never been on a picket before. They organised themselves brilliantly and won.

■ **Bar Staff:** Struck last summer during the World Cup to demand pay for cleaning up time.

They won because only a tiny number of people passed their pickets.

■ **Knightingales:** Came out on strike over a sacked

colleague.

They lost a fortune when customers refused to pass the pickets.

The worker was taken back and their union, Mandate, was recognised

Dunnes Stores have never been weaker. Their family is feuding with each other. On many shopping centres they face competition from Crazy Prices.

Their share of the retail trade is declining.

Very quickly Dunnes will feel the pinch and will be desperate that if it does not settle its long term future will be dismal.

A symbol of Irish capitalism

DUNNES Stores is the symbol of Irish capitalism in the Republic. It grew in the 1960s by selling cheap food to the working class people of the Republic. But the Dunnes empire is controlled by a few wealthy and powerful families. The Dunnes family died recently and the company is now controlled by a few wealthy and powerful families.

other sister, Theresa, was robbed one night, £100,000 of jewellery went missing.

The new supremo of the Dunnes empire is Margaret Heffernan. She owns a 300 acre stud farm in Athboy. She takes her Christmas holidays in Badruth's Palace Hotel in St Moritz where according to the *Irish Times*, "no member of staff is allowed to move while a guest is moving".

She is now involved in a major legal battle with her brother, Ben. The Irish media portray him as a talented entrepreneur who has built up the company by

his sheer energy and brains. But the reality is that he is an arrogant bully who was born with a silver spoon in his mouth.

Flash

Two years ago he was caught with cocaine when he was about to jump out of a 17 storey high apartment after hiring a young woman from "Escort with Flash". "I thought I could fly" was his explanation.

The Dunnes empire has been built on the gross exploitation of workers. Ever since the mid-1980s it has operated a ruthless

policy of casualising its staff. Far from the company paying above the going rate, it has managed to reduce its labour costs below its rivals by this policy of casualisation.

Today labour costs account for 4% of its turnover compared to 12% in Superquinn.

Managers are encouraged to intimidate and bully their staff. Shop stewards like Karen Gearon, who led the 1984 strike against the use of South African produce were sacked for 'poor performance'.

Others have been framed for 'irregularities in the cash regis-

ter'. The Employment Appeals Tribunal has found against Dunnes for dismissing staff who got pregnant.

Margaret Heffernan was personally fined £400 for not giving proper redundancy notices to staff in Newbridge.

This is the brutal side of the Irish capitalist success story. The battle being waged against these tyrants is the modern day equivalent of a 1913 style fight.

If the workers win, it will give hope to everyone who is sick to death of casualisation and poverty wages.

what do socialists say? by JOHN MOLYNEUX

Can we get rid of bosses?

IN IRELAND today the number of people who hold real political power is small.

I am thinking not just of government ministers and TDs but of top civil servants, top judges, heads of the armed forces and police and the bosses of industry and the banks.

Put all these together and you still have a very tiny elite-no more than a few hundred people.

Of course, they are surrounded by hundreds of thousands of people who have some degree of authority over a limited area of activity.

But the people with real power over major decisions affecting society as a whole are few.

This is not a peculiarity of Ireland. The same picture applies to every country in the world today and has applied to all European and many non-European societies for several thousand years.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the division of society into a small minority of rulers and a large majority of ruled, is widely accepted as the natural order of things.

This state of affairs is continually reinforced by ruling class propaganda which always treats politics as an affair of the elite and suggests the majority of people are incapable of governing themselves.

Rulers, we are told, are necessary and inevitable. However, the moment we shift focus from general statements about the world to concrete situations we know, and actual rulers we can observe, the picture changes.

Start with your workplace or a workplace you know. Are workers incapable of organising production by themselves?

Underestimate

On the contrary. Workers who actually do the work almost always know far more about it than the boss or senior managers.

Workers often underestimate their capacities because there may be special scientific or technical knowledge necessary for production which they lack.

But remember the bosses usually don't have this knowledge either. What they do have is the capital to employ specialists to work for them.

If workers ran industry they too would be able to employ the necessary scientists and technologists.

It is always worth asking one very simple question: What happens when the boss goes on holiday?

Almost invariably work goes on as normal. But if even a small section of the workforce go on strike—the shop workers at Dunnes for example—the effects are immediate and often devastating.

The same question also exposes the myth of power in society as a whole.

The Dáil goes on holiday for months at a time without any visible consequences.

Even when it is in session most TDs are too busy in the bars to be there.

If nurses, teachers, train drivers and ESB workers showed a similar rate of absenteeism the nation would be plunged into crisis.

Moreover, the moment one looks at actual flesh and blood rulers, any idea of their inherent superiority fades rapidly.

John Bruton or John Major are obvious examples, but by no means an exception. Think of Reagan bumbling in the White House or Yeltsin drunk in the Kremlin.

The rulers of the past were no different. In Britain, George III was mad and George I could not even speak English. De Valera thought it was enough to 'look into his heart' to know what Irish people felt.

Historically it is the rulers of genuine ability who are the exceptions.

South Africa: First year of ANC government

How much has changed?

'THINGS are different in South Africa', or so the ads for the Rugby World Cup claimed.

Fourteen months after Nelson Mandela was elected President of the Republic of South Africa, John Serge looks at just what is different in the free South Africa.

The African National Congress swept to power on a wave of popular enthusiasm in April 1994. It won 63% of the vote nationally and in areas like the Northern Transvaal and Eastern Cape the ANC won over 90% of the vote.

Kader Asmal, a minister in the new government and a former chairperson of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement claimed that his government would "transform and renew South Africa, to create a non-racial, non-sexist democratic society, a society in which people can live free from fear, in which everyone has the ability and the opportunity to earn a decent living for themselves."

By any standards the task before the ANC was gigantic. It had to provide decent housing, health care, education, water and electricity for the 17 million blacks - nearly half the population - who live below the poverty line.

Expect

Johannesburg shop assistant Greg Johns spoke for most South Africans just after the elections when he said, "you can't expect too many changes yet, but things will get better."

However, according to Ethel Cokile, an ANC activist from Durban many people have now become disillusioned: "the government has not done anything for us, why should we bother voting again?"

The reason for the disillusionment is not hard to find. Education minister Sibusiso Bhengu has announced that all six year old children will be guaranteed a place at school next year.

But no new classrooms or schools have been built and no additional teachers have been employed in a country where tens of thousands of children

have traditionally been turned away from schools for lack of places.

Despite the much publicised programme to build 1 million houses in five years, only 500 houses were built by February. But in the centre of Johannesburg they are building an Olympic Stadium.

The ANC made huge concessions to the white minority when it came to power.

The International Monetary Fund was promised that government spending would be reduced rather than increased.

There was no purge of the Afrikaaner civil service, even though 50 years of Apartheid means that it is effectively controlled by the Broederbond, a secret mafia-like society hostile to the new government.

Former white local councils were given powers to block plans to merge white cities and black townships, a policy essential for improving housing and services for the black majority.

Threat

The security services were left in the hands of the old racist murderers; destabilisation remains a constant threat.

To add insult to injury, the first ANC budget was drafted by the old civil service rather than the democratically elected government.

It is these concessions which are now ensuring that the mass of black workers remain trapped in poverty in the new South Africa.



'Gimme hope Mandela'—Nelson Mandela addressing a UN summit on poverty in Copenhagen last March

THE APARTHEID OF WEALTH

THERE IS more than enough wealth in South Africa to give everyone a decent standard of living.

But there are two economies.

One is rich and white, the other black and poor. While unemployment among blacks is currently running at around 50%, the white economy is doing very well, with growth expected to be between 3.5% and 3.8%.

The big multi-nationals that made profits from

apartheid continue to make fantastic money. Anglo-American Corporation which is responsible for the death of several miners announced profits of \$581 million. General Motors made \$400 million.

Stock Market

Nearly £1 billion flowed into South Africa in the last year.

However, it was largely not the 'nuts and bolts' investment in infrastructure

and jobs which the country needs but stock market speculation.

The markets want to be able to remove their investments at the first sign of trouble.

The markets are also holding the threat of a capital strike over Mandela's head.

The bosses' confederation has even argued that wages are too high and must be brought down in line with "Indian wage rates".

An Indian textile worker earns on average fifteen

times less than his or her South African counterpart.

Unfortunately, Mandela's government gives no indication that it will stand up to the South African establishment. The ANC opposed apartheid—but not the economic system which gave it birth.

It is forced to borrow \$200 million from the World Bank because it does not place high taxes on profits. Nationalisation has been ruled out. Everything is done to maintain the 'confidence of the investors'.

Building for revolutionary socialism

THE GROWTH of class anger in South Africa has opened the way for the formation of a revolutionary socialist party.

The Socialist Worker Organisation has grown very quickly since last April's elections. From a small propaganda group of 30 people, it has now over 500 members and is producing a fortnightly paper.

Grown

Kaizer Mohau explains how they have grown. "The first time I sold the paper Socialist Worker door to door was in the squatter camp called Kanana in Potchefstroom. I was really nervous because it was the first time. But I found out quickly that many people are interested in socialist ideas. That day we sold 60 papers and 10 people joined the organisation".

The SWO is active in trying to build solidarity and linking struggles. It has opposed the attacks of the ANC government on the right to strike.

Very many of its members are unemployed youth who live in the squatter camps. It is a 99% black organisation with even its working members only earning about 13% of white wages.

Claire Ceruti told us their situation. "We desperately need money. We do not have any books or pamphlets because we cannot afford them."

■ Donations to help build a socialist party in South Africa are now desperately needed.

Send them to the South Africa Socialist Appeal, PO Box 1648 Dublin 8.

ANC condemns workers' fightback

MILLIONS of South African workers struck last week in the biggest mobilisation since the end of apartheid.

It was supposed to last only a half day but virtually everywhere it lasted the whole day.

The strike was to demand that the new Labour Relations Bill (LRB) includes the

right to strike without dismissal, abandon bosses' lockouts of workers and the outlawing of scab labour.

Expelled

The general stoppage followed a wave of strikes for wage increases and against racial discrimination in the workplace over the last year.

At NH Diecasting in the East

Rand, workers expelled a racist manager and occupied the lockouts of workers and the outlawing of scab labour.

Mandela condemned the strikers for "frightening away foreign investors".

Students and workers at the University of Witwatersrand protested in March against the financial and academic barriers which ensure that the universities remain bastions of the rich whites.

They were condemned by Cheryl Carolinus deputy general secretary of the ANC.

Restricts

When thousands of squatters occupied open ground near Johannesburg they were evicted with the co-operation of the late Joe Slovo, South African Communist Party chairman and housing minister.

Increasingly, the ANC is divided with the more conservative MP's accepting the arguments against the re-distribution of wealth.

The new MP's are among the top 1 per cent of South African income earners.

A black middle class is emerging in wealthy cities such as Johannesburg.

In the fashionable suburb of Melville the local patisserie has a sophisticated black clientele served by white staff.

Yet radical social programmes are what black workers expect and demand. Jobs for all, free and equal education and health care remain rallying cries among those whose blood sweat and tears brought Apartheid to its knees.

COMMENT

Castlerea jail - a lonely prison wall

By all accounts Nora Owen was splitting blood when she arrived back from some ministerial junket or other a couple of weeks ago to discover that Ruairi Quinn had postponed her plan to put even more innocent people in prison.

Finance Minister Quinn had been told by officials in his department that there'd have to be cut-backs in government spending, otherwise they'd all be in the international bankers' bad books.

This was too terrible a prospect for Quinn to contemplate, so he cast around for a few spending projects to cancel - and came up with the proposed new prison in Castlerea.

Orders went out for workers converting the old Castlerea mental hospital to be pulled off the site. Naturally enough, Ms. Owen was outraged at this.

After all, she's the Minister for Justice in the multi-coloured coalition, and it's Justice, not Finance, which presides over prisons.

"How dare that fat Labour gargoyle stick his nose into my territory!" Owen ranted at Taoiseach John Bruton. Or words to that effect.

Broker

And Bruton, no doubt drawing on his experience of the "peace process", had to broker a deal whereby Quinn agreed that the minute he gets the go-ahead from the bankers to spend an extra bit of dosh, the Castlerea prison will be the first of the postponed projects to be given the green light.

It wasn't just jealousy about Quinn intruding into her area which had angered Owen. It was also that her plans for changing the rules on bail - through a constitutional referendum if necessary - had been put at risk.

Owen has been under pressure from PD leader Mary Harney and right-wing crazies like Brendan McGahon on her own Fine Gael benches to Crack Down on Crime.

They don't mean slinging the beef-baron fraudsters and property-development thieves who have been ripping off the country for ages

into the slammer and throwing the key away.

What they want is to lock up every young working-class person who gets out of line in the hope of cowing the rest into conformity.

They are particularly keen to be able to lock people up without the formality of having them found guilty first. Hence the push to change the bail rules.

But there's a problem. Even if they managed to hype up the hysteria about a "crime wave" sufficiently to force the change through, they don't have enough space for all the people they'd be able to put away.

Psychoses

Mountjoy is western Europe's nearest equivalent to the black hole of Calcutta, with added drug addiction, AIDS and psychoses. Limerick Jail is little better.

And while some extra space will be freed up in Portlaoise with the release of Republican prisoners as part of the "peace process", it couldn't handle anything like the numbers the lock-'em-up brigade want disposed of. The conversion of the Castlerea hospital was seen as the solution.

Viewed in this context, there's a neat contradiction. The right-wing economics which Labour and Democratic Left are going along with are at the root of the social deprivation and despair which are the main causes of crime in southern Irish society.

The Leinster House parties can't and won't change these policies. That would mean telling capitalist institutions to sod off and mobilising the working class to resist retaliation.

Fine Gael, Labour and DL are as likely to do that as the pope is to lead a gay rights rampage through downtown Rome. So what they do is turn to repression - give the cops more power, prepare more prison places and so on.

In this instance, however, the government's cost-cutting measures undermined the strategy for dealing with the results of... the government's cost-cutting measures.

It's like we've been saying for yonks. The capitalist system is riven by contradictions which are ultimately unavoidable and can be resolved only by revolution.

One day the likes of Ruairi Quinn and Nora Owen will be given adjacent cells so that they can discuss these matters at adequate length.

— EAMONN McCANN

RORY GALLAGHER

The bluesman who shunned stardom

by MICHAEL SMITH

RORY Gallagher died of liver cancer on Wednesday 14th June. Aged only 47, he was a victim of the lifestyle that led him to be acclaimed as the greatest guitarist that ever lived.

Incessant touring over the last 25 years, and the problems that caused led him to a sad and lonely death that robbed us of a great talent.

The way he will be remembered though, his eyes tightly shut against the glare, battered guitar slung low, mop of hair above the checkered shirt, is one of the most enduring images of rock history.

Rory played with an honesty and a love of music that was obvious to all who

heard him.

He never got the exposure he so deserved, owing to his refusal to adopt a marketable image or play radio friendly music.

Legend

Stardom was not what he wanted, although every musical legend from Bob Dylan to Muddy Waters hailed him.

His music reflected ordinary concerns like poverty and unemployment. Hearing him play *Bourgeois*



town would set your heart on fire.

Although he never changed anyone's life, he

could certainly lighten the load. Let's all go home and scratch the paint off our guitars.

PLAY

Angels living in hell

ANGELS in America at the Abbey Theatre starts out as a brilliant and exciting play. Set in America in 1985, its background is the holowness of Reagan's rhetoric about a return to family values and patriotism.

Two couples become the focus in this fast moving, witty and almost cinematic production.

Sickness

A Mormon couple discover that their life is based on a lie as the wife survives on pills, "emotional problems" and fantasies.

In the other, a gay man cannot handle the sick-



ness of his lover who is dying of AIDS.

Hovering over them is the Reaganite career politician who speaks and

thinks like a Mafia crime boss.

But after the second act, the play begins to disintegrate into bleakness

which gives us little hope of change in America.

In one scene, the white middle class, gay left winger intellectualises about democracy and race in the US and does not know whether he is a racist or not.

All the time his dying partner remains silently on stage with a hospital drip coming from his mouth.

The playwright's vision is one of America returning to the darkness of mediaval Europe.

The characters are left with no more than a sense of irony to survive the emotional barrenness of their lives.

A brilliant production—but look elsewhere for solutions.

□ KIERAN ALLEN

The return of the Brady Bunch

by JASON McELLIGOTT

ANYONE younger than 25 cannot possibly hope to understand the post-traumatic stress disorder, complete with flashbacks of Donny and Marie, The Bay City Rollers and check flares, which this film inspires.

The plot (if you can call it that) is simple. Mr and Mrs Brady need to raise \$20,000 to save their home from repossession.

The children club together and, after several false starts, win

(wouldn't you just know it?) \$20,000 in a talent contest.

The Bradys were out of date even in the 1970s, but when set against the backdrop of the noisy, dirty crime-ridden Los Angeles of 1995 their wide-eyed "jolly hockey-sticks" attitude is hilarious.

Today, Hollywood is the scene of an ideological battle similar to the McCarthyite era of the 1950s.

Crusade

The *Brady Bunch* was released in Ireland just as the Republican Party in the US embarked on a crusade

against Hollywood's "culture of violence".

They have condemned movies like *Natural Born Killers*, *Pulp Fiction* and *Priest* as "anti-family".

They want a return to the 1950s when directors only dared to show chaste kisses between married couples who slept in separate beds.

Sensing a change in the political atmosphere, film-makers have of late begun to produce a host of mindless "feel-good" movies with an insidious political message such as *Forrest Gump*, *Dumb and Dumber*, and *The Flintstones*.

The *Brady Bunch* could very easily have degenerated into a homily to family values.

It is to the director's credit that he avoided the temptation, and made the family the butt of the joke.

The film is sure to annoy the right because it portrays a lesbian relationship between Marsha Brady's best friend and a classmate very sympathetically.

It also portrays a happy gay couple showing affection.

We might yet hear the right wing calling for the "anti-family" *Brady Bunch* to be banned!

Keeping Us in the Dark

IN THE last ten years, two private fee-paying schools in Cork got substantial state funding at a time when schools in the non-fee-paying sector were having to survive in pre-fabs.

The criteria for these grants was never explained.

Former senator Brendan Ryan has tried over the years to get to the truth of the matter.

His *Keeping Us in the Dark* is an impassioned plea, but consists mainly of questions, more questions, and not too many answers.

It is full of contradictions—mainly because he wants to see institutional reform and freedom of information within the current system.

Seventy five per cent of the top 500 Irish companies don't disclose profits and loss. And the privacy of the rich and powerful has always been accepted by governments.

A proper Freedom of Information Act should be enacted but because of the links of government to big business, the rich will be allowed to get round "little inconveniences" such as this Act.

It's not just in the Dail that secrecy pervades ("transparency" measure!).

The Church, the Garda, the Environmental Protection Agency and accountants all systematically try to hide information.

The recent, pathetic, Abortion "Information" Act shows that if we are to win real information and real reforms, it will be done on the streets—not in the Dail.

Brendan Ryan has a good record in pointing the finger at the Irish establishment but he wants reform "to ensure that the market economy works as the theoreticians say it should".

The market, and its defenders in the Dail parties, can and will never deliver. It's up to ordinary people to do that.

Keeping Us in the Dark, by Brendan Ryan, Gill and Macmillan, £7.99

□ DAMIEN McLOUGHLIN

where we stand

Workers create all the wealth in capitalist society. A new society can only be constructed when they collectively seize control of that wealth and plan its production and distribution.

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be reformed out of existence. Parliament cannot be used to end the system.

The courts army and police are there to defend the interests of the capitalist class not to run society in a neutral fashion.

To destroy capitalism, workers need to smash the state and create a workers' state based on workers' councils.

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST:

The SWP welcomed the break-up of the USSR and the end of the East European dictatorships. These states were not socialist but were run by a state-capitalist class. We are against the domination of the globe by imperialist powers and we oppose their wars. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression which divide and weaken the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women.

We stand for: free contraception and free, legalised abortion and the right to divorce; the complete separation of church and state, an end to church control over schools and hospitals; an end to discrimination against gays and lesbians; an end to racism and anti-traveller bigotry.

We argue for working class unity in the fight against oppression.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH:

Northern Ireland is a sectarian state, propped up by the British Army. Catholic workers are systematically discriminated against by the state. The division between Catholic and Protestant workers weakens the whole working class. Workers' unity can only be won and maintained in a fight to smash both the Northern and Southern states. We stand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. Violence will only end when workers unite in the fight for a workers' republic.

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT:

Trade unions exist to defend workers' interests. But the union leaders role is to negotiate with capitalism - not to end it. We support the leaders when they fight but oppose them when they betray workers. We stand for independent rank and file action.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY:

To win socialism socialists need to organise in a revolutionary party. This party needs to argue against right-wing ideas and for overthrowing the system. The SWP aims to build such a party in Ireland.

news & reports—politics; the unions—

ESB bosses plan massive jobs axe

THE BOSSES in the ESB with the support of the government are planning to axe a massive 2,895 jobs—a third of the workforce.

As if this isn't bad enough the Minister for Energy Michael Lowry has recently said the cuts have to be pushed through in two years rather than the five years originally proposed.

This threat follows the government's decision to remove the ESB's monopoly by 1998.

According to one union rep in Moneypoint, "The number of general workers will drop from 97 to 11 in my station. It will destroy training and employment opportunities in the West Clare area. Yet in reality we are undermanned at the moment."

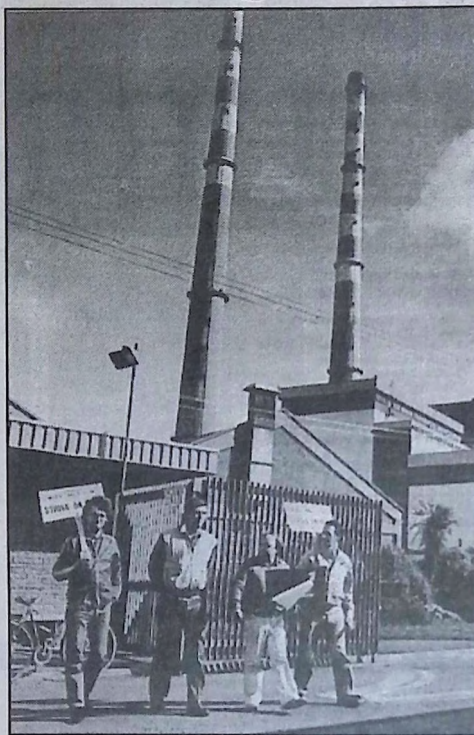
Published

A previous Joint Industrial Council report, for example, claimed that seven more general workers were needed in Moneypoint. That was before the McKinsey plan was published.

Management hope to get away with these cuts by having craft workers do the jobs of general workers in the power stations.

A worker in Poolbeg told *Socialist Worker* that "The number of manual workers is set to fall from 60 to 10. It is just not on."

The ESB management and government say these attacks are needed to face



ESB workers' strike terrified government

the challenge of foreign competition in 1998.

But electricity prices in Ireland are nearly the cheapest in Europe.

Under the new plan prices for domestic users are to go up by between 11 and 15% while prices for big business are due to fall.

In Britain, the introduction of the market led to huge price increases—and

big salaries for the bosses of the new privatised industries.

Powergen's profits were so big that recently they had to employ a special consultant company to make recommendations about what to do with them.

In reality, the real aim of the new plan is to break the power of ESB workers who terrified them in the strike

of 1992. Unfortunately the ESB management have pulled the unions into a Cost and Competitiveness Review (CCR) before there are any proposals put to the workers.

Cutbacks

They have dragged out the discussions as a way of conditioning the workers into believing that major cutbacks are necessary.

Workers are also encouraged to watch propaganda videos about 'progressive change' with images of the Berlin Wall coming down and even the Irish soccer team to get the message over that 'change is inevitable'.

"The threats have been going on for four or five years," one worker told *Socialist Worker*.

They are trying to wear us down. I would like to see our union leaders tell ESB management where to get off."

The government is also aiming to divide the workers. Lowry has claimed that if the cuts do not go through, the peat burning stations will be shut down by foreign competition. This is blackmail to get a vote for acceptance of the cuts.

There is now growing opposition among rank and file ESB workers.

But the key is to overcome the divisions between craft and general workers' unions.

A united ESB workforce have the power to fight this rotten government.

Irish Press workers fight on

Irish Press journalists have kept up a tremendous fight for their jobs.

Every day they produce the *Xpress*, a sheet to sell on the streets—despite the management's efforts to gag the journalists by taking court action against the *Xpress*.

The campaign room at Liberty Hall is a vibrant centre of activity, keeping everyone involved in the production and sale of the *Xpress*.

"I have never seen more united or spirited a chapel. We intend to keep the whole 600 jobs," says NUJ member Chris Dooley.

Focus

The situation is difficult for the journalists. Since leaving their occupation of the *Press* buildings they have had to try to keep a focus for their campaign until a buyer for the *Press* titles emerges.

Two dangers face all print workers as a result of the *Press* closure. One is that a new investor will buy out the papers, taking advantage of the lock-out to try to destroy union organisation.

The current management have used terms like "phased restart" and "selective hiring" to indicate their desire to pick and choose which staff to restart.

The other danger is that Tony O'Reilly may either directly or indirectly (through protracted legal action) use his influence in the Irish media industry to knock out

the *Evening Press* for good—leaving his *Herald* the sole evening paper in Dublin.

The journalists are determined not to let this happen and are aware of the implications for the whole of the print industry if the unions are beaten at the *Press*. Chris Dooley said:

"With one chapel gone, in a major paper, then other managements will come after the other chapels."

Ken Whelan noted that "if O'Reilly disinvests in such a way as to fold the *Press* then we would be looking at an Irish Wapping."

The £10 levy of NUJ members in RTE, the *Irish Times* and the *Irish Independent* is a very important act of solidarity which needs to be built on.

The campaign now needs to move beyond selling the *Xpress* and attracting celebrity support.

Solidarity action from all print workers is going to be vital in ensuring the dispute ends on the worker's terms.

Campaign activists should be addressing meetings in RTE and all the major papers to prepare for a day of action by all print workers in solidarity with *Irish Press*.

Journalists should also start a campaign for the company to be taken into public ownership.

This is the only way to save jobs and conditions—and to stop O'Reilly or any other press baron grabbing more control.

SWP branch meetings—all welcome

BELFAST CENTRAL
Meets every Wednesday at 8pm in Penny Farthing Bar, Upper North Street

BELFAST SOUTH
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in Queens Students Union.

CORK
Meets every Thursday at

8pm in the Anchor Inn, Georges Quay.

DERRY
Meets every Tuesday in Badgers Bar at 8pm.

DUBLIN BLANCHARDSTOWN
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in the Blakestown Community Centre.

DUBLIN COOLOCK
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in the Artane/Beaumont Family Recreation Centre, Kilmore Rd.

DUBLIN CLONDALKIN
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in the Loch and Quay, Clondalkin.

DUBLIN DRIMNAGH
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in the Bentley Pub, Drimnagh Road

DUBLIN FINGLAS
Meets every Thursday at 7.30pm in Rosehill Community Centre.

DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL
Meets every Wednesday at 8pm in Conways, Parnell St.

DUBLIN RATHMINES
Meets every Wednesday at 8pm in O'Connells Pub, Richmond Street.

DUBLIN RINGSEND
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in Ringsend Community Centre

DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in the Trinity Inn, Pearse St.

DUBLIN TALLAGHT
Contact 8722682 for details of meetings

DUN LAOGHAIRE
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in Smyths Pub.

GALWAY
Meets every second Thursday at 8.00pm in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square—contact national

address for details.

NEWRY
Meets every Wednesday at 8pm—contact national address for venue.

WATERFORD
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in ATGWU Hall, Waterford.

JOIN THE SOCIALISTS

If you want to join *Socialist Worker*, fill in this form and send it to: PO Box 1648, Dublin 8, Tel: (01) 872 2682

Name

Address.....

Phone.....

There are *Socialist Worker* members in:

ENNISKILLEN; COLERAINE; LURGAN; CAVAN; DONEGAL; NAAS; LIMERICK; KILKENNY; DUNDALK; BRAY; ATHLONE; DROGHEDA. MAYNOOTH.

If you would like to get in touch, contact our national office at (01) 872 2682, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

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Support grows for Co. Wexford firefighters

NORTH PAY REVOLT

A LIVELY demonstration of 350 firefighters and their families took place in Wexford town on Saturday 17th June. Firefighters came from Belfast, Derry, Sligo, Mayo, Kerry, Dundalk, Dublin and other counties around Ireland.

This display of solidarity was to show the 52 Co. Wexford firefighters, on strike for the last four weeks, that they are not alone.

Wexford County Council recently launched attacks on the conditions and pay of the retainer firefighters service.

These dedicated workers make themselves available to the community 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to save lives and property.

The Army have been brought into the five locations where pickets have been placed.

The scabs have been put up in local b & b accommo-



Wexford firefighters picket council meeting.

Whittling down the service over the past few years.

Bernard from New Ross told *Socialist Worker*, "Four years ago they took us off calls for flooding and spillages. "Then they increased our PRSI contributions to the top level. "They even went as far as to remove a signalling system which was in our homes and a siren which signalled the local area". Patricia is married to a firefighter who has given his services for the past 21 years.

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Worried

She pointed out the effects of the cuts on the families.

"We used to have a bell in our homes which would let us know if my husband was on call.

Now that's gone and you are left worried sick that he may be out, not knowing where or for how long."

The pressures and stresses of the job are not even considered by the

council. Patricia's husband was involved in rescuing the mangled bodies of three children from an accident last year.

"There is no acknowledgement of the suffering the firefighters go through. My man gets so silent and inward after something like that. There should be a counselling service for them."

Most firefighters from around the country are aware that the strike in Wexford will set the pace for the rest of the retainer service. The Wexford fight may start the ball rolling in opposition to council cuts.

Speakers at the rally in Wexford town made scathing attacks on politicians. Terry Potts of the Dublin Fire Brigade said "We saw all the politicians with tears in their eyes after the Stardust tragedy fourteen years ago.

"But since then manning levels in Dublin Fire Brigade have actually dropped. The bottom line with these people is the cash and the purse strings."

The Wexford demonstration showed a magnificent sense of solidarity between firefighters from Belfast to Kerry.

Belfast firefighters presented a cheque to the Wexford strikers and Dublin firefighters have pledged "a tidy cheque each week to the strikers for as long as it takes". Solidarity messages were read out from firefighters in London and New York.

Army

As one speaker put it "If this action spread there would be no army that would be able to do the job of the firefighters.

"I may be old fashioned in my trade union beliefs but our strength lies in our unity.

"Compromise and going to the table is all very well but at the end of the day the only resource we have to get a better deal is to withdraw our labour".

With this kind of solidarity and commitment the Wexford firefighters could be set for a victory.

WORKERS IN Northern Ireland are voting against the miserable pay offers they are getting from their bosses.

■ In Ulster Bus workers voted against a 1.75% pay offer. Management had even demanded productivity increases for this miserable offer.

The vote against acceptance was a whopping 7 to 1 rejection.

■ In Mackies workers turned down a 3% offer. Members of the TGWU and the AEEU had been urged to accept by their stewards but they were completely out of touch with the feeling on the shop floor.

■ In Shorts the saga of the 2-3% offer has been dragging on. Workers there previously sent around petitions protesting at the offer and the fact that their stewards had recommended acceptance.

Management replied with a letter to every worker telling them that they are the best paid in Northern Ireland and urging them to vote for the offer again.

They even had the gall to claim that they were not particularly well paid. The Chief Executive at the plant, Roy McNulty earns a staggering £395,000 a year, after giving himself a 100% pay rise.

In response to management's sob story workers organised another petition and a 2p a head collection to help out the poor bosses!

Gains for An Post workers

WORKERS at An Post have voted by 300 to 50 to accept an ICTU package to end their dispute.

Management had suspended over 170 workers who were on a work to rule in the course of the dispute.

Some important gains were made.

Backdate

An Post have been forced to pay a PESP increase and to backdate it for six months.

They have also suspended changes in working hours and changes in the flexitime scheme.

The result shows just how wrong CPSU leaders were to recommend an earlier package which would have given less.

But the issues are not fully resolved and far more could have been won if the dispute had escalated.

The issue of changes in working hours is now going to the Labour Relations Commission.

The experience of other workplaces shows that this body is taking a pro-boss position on most issues.

Citibus strike overturns sacking

CITIBUS busworkers brought Belfast to a halt for a half day last Thursday.

Management sacked a bus driver who had been accused of assaulting a schoolchild.

But workers reacted angrily at the decision of Citibus bosses who had

not even bothered to investigate the accusation. The busdriver was innocent of any assault.

Mass Meeting

The schoolkid was injured as a result of horseplay on the bus.

Over 400 busworkers took immediate unofficial action in support of

their sacked colleague.

At a mass meeting of over 300 workers the same night, union officials announced that the busdriver was to be reinstated immediately and ordered everybody back to work.

Union leaders later apologised in the media for the stoppage.

Blow to bigots

LESBIAN and gay activists in Derry have shown just how marginalised the anti-sex bigots are in the North.

DUP councillor Willy Hay campaigned to stop the Lesbian and Gay Pride Festival from using any city council property.

Protest

But Festival organisers stood up for their rights and got great support from the

working class of Derry.

The Paisleyite bigots called a protest for the first night of the Festival.

About forty of them turned up to sing hymns and bash bibles.

They were outnumbered by four to one by those who turned up to the opening.

An event which in previous years was attended by thirty or forty gay rights activists and socialists has grown to vastly outnumber the bigots.

TALLAGHT SUPERVALU FIGHT FOR JOBS

TWENTY-three workers at Supervalu, Tallaght village are on official strike fighting for their jobs.

The workers, members of Mandate, struck after six of their number were sacked with only statutory redundancy.

The store is managed by Musgraves, which also operates cash and carry stores in Cork and Dublin.

One worker told *Socialist Worker*:

"Musgraves told us there was not enough work so six would be let go."

"But they were made redundant without regard for first-in-last-out. Musgraves also expected other workers to take on more work to cover for them."

The company then closed the store and sent all the workers redundancy notices and money through the post.

"What they want to do is beat us and re-open paying £2 an hour", one of the workers said.

If the workers are to win they will need to get support from Musgrave's other outlets in Ballymun, Ballymount and Cork.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

inside:

Loyalism's
heartland of
poverty

—page four

LOW PAY SCANDAL

"I WAS employed as a skivvy, cleaning bedrooms and peeling potatoes for £2 an hour.

"The hours get longer and longer and I had to fill in for the receptionist and kitchen staff.

"I had to work up to 14 hours per day"

Helen is one of the thousands of women workers in Northern Ireland who are on poverty wages. Nearly one in five women workers earn less than £50 a week.

When the Irish millionaire Tony O'Reilly called on the Tories to cut the tax on profits to bring them into line with the South, he was told by Patrick Mayhew that the North offered "plenty of other advantages" to multi-nationals. The main one is low pay.

Northern Ireland is the poverty pay region of the UK. Workers here earn 23% less than workers in England.

Multinational sharks

POLITICIANS from Sinn Fein to the Democratic Unionist Party are lobbying multi-nationals to invest in the North.

US investors are certainly licking their lips at the prospect of a low pay paradise on the edge of Europe.

Damage

They are not interested in helping out the 'old sod' or repairing the damage done by the twenty five years of conflict.

They want to build on the sectarianism to make super-profits from what they hope will be a weakly organised workforce.

The huge pools of unemployment and the divisions between workers have kept wages down to rock bottom levels.

Conditions

Youth unemployment, for example, is the highest in Europe, at 27% of the workforce.

Most of these US multi-nationals operate a non-union policy.

Since 1982, the North's largest union, the ATGWU, has been unable to organise in any new factory in the North.

Other multi-nationals like the South Korean firm Daewoo in Antrim insist on 'beauty contests' where moderate union compete to sign 'no strike' sweetheart deals before being let organise in the factory.

Instead of lobbying them, we should be working to unionise their plants and pushing up the pay rates for Northern workers.

Many teenagers are now being forced to accept terrible conditions where they are humiliated daily.

"Last week when we got our wages, I found I was paid £6 short," said Paul who works at a Kentucky Fried Chicken just outside Belfast.

"When I asked the supervisor, she said that the area managers discovered that some chicken was missing and there had to be deductions.

"When I showed her an article saying that it was against the law to deduct money from wages, she said it was against the rules to bring

A wealthy elite

THE North's poverty is not shared by all. It has an extremely wealthy class of bosses and politicians.

The recent bye-election won by Rob McCartney, took place in an area described as 'a natural Tory constituency'.

Yachting or visiting trendy restaurants are the principal pastimes for the yuppies from the North's gold coast.

BMW has sold more expensive cars per head of the population in Northern Ireland than anywhere else in Europe.

And while employers lecture workers about be-

ing 'competitive' they pay themselves 'super-salaries'. Roy McNulty of Shorts who sacked 2,000 workers awarded himself a 100 per cent pay rise and now earns £395,000 a year.

Jim Doran of Belfast International Airport is doing well out of privatisation.

He got a 38% rise while his workers settled for as little as 1.5%.

Far from there being a peace dividend for workers, the reality is that class has become the main division in the North.

All the talk of 'different identities' makes little sense to thousands of workers who share the same bullying bosses and poverty wages.

these things into work. If I did it again, I would be fired."

Re-build

These cases show why we need to re-build strong union organisation that can stand up to these bullying employers.

But we also need socialist politics that puts workers unity at the top of its agenda.

All workers have lost out from the sectarian divisions. We need to start fighting together against low pay to break them down.

THE LIST OF SHAME

Leaf Electronics, Enniskillen:

Skilled men and women work on electronic assembly for £80 a week.

They are expected to refer to their bosses as "Ma'am" in Victorian style.

GPT, Ballynahinch:

Skilled Telecom workers are paid £121.60 a week. This is £100 a week less than GPT's plant in Liverpool. In 1994, GPT made a profit of £129 million.

Daewoo, Antrim:

Hit the headlines when it was revealed that women workers there earned less than those in the police state of South Korea.