

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

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COMMUNITY ACTIVIST SLAMS NEW DRUG LAWS

'Locking up kids will make it worse'

PADDY COLLINS is frustrated and angry with the Government.

He is a well-known community activist who has spent his life running and organising the Lady of Victories Youth Club in Dublin's inner city.

He spoke to *Socialist Worker* about Justice Minister Nora Owen's plans to legislate against drugs.

"During the 1980s we met Garret Fitzgerald's government and told them of the worries we had about drug abuse in the inner city.

Resources

"We had carried out surveys to show them that more resources and money were needed. But nothing was done.

"I know of at least 27



Nora Owen's new laws will do nothing to stem the drug problem

young men and women who were in the Youth Club and are now dead from drug abuse. In one case a whole family has been wiped out.

"We are losing a whole

generation. "But successive Governments are doing nothing. "These new laws will do nothing either. Nora Owen is only bringing them in to

stay in power.

"This crowd will do anything to stay in bed together.

"Locking up kids and junkies for seven days will just make it worse.

"If you bang up people who are on heavy gear they won't survive. They'll kill themselves.

"Young fellas coming off drugs nearly have to be bolted to the ground.

Screaming

"They just can't cope and there are no doctors in our police stations.

"These new laws will make no difference to the drugs problem."

It is right wing politicians and the police who are screaming for more police powers.

Working class people should fight every attempt by government to introduce more repression and instead demand jobs and resources in their communities.

Enough powers already

THE GARDAÍ want more power and Nora Owen wants to give it to them. But some of their victims have good reason to think that they have enough already.

Rita from Blanchardstown was ordering chips in Abrahambabara when an argument broke out in the queue.

The Guardians of the Peace arrived and decided that Rita, having ordered a highly illegal bag of chips, was the cause of all the trou-

ble. As she was being dragged away to the police car, her sister asked the Gardaí what was wrong and another man offered to be her witness.

The Gardaí decided that all three of them should be locked up and they were held in

custody until they were bailed out.

Rita was understandably angry at this and complained about the treatment they were given.

Lesson

This was a bad move as the police then decided to let the other two free and take her back to the Bridewell to teach her a lesson.

On the way, one cop

threatened to foster off her four kids.

Another Garda decided that she was too cheeky for her own good, and hit her to the ground.

She was eventually released, bruised and crying, charged with being drunk and disorderly.

Under Nora Owen's new laws, Rita's ordeal could have lasted for up to seven days.

World protests at nuke testing

RIGHT ACROSS the world people have taken to the streets to show their anger and disgust at nuclear testing.

Forty thousand people marched in Australia on Bastille Day, while 3,000 protested in the Fijian capital of Suva.

The trade union movement in Australia and New Zealand have taken action against the tests.

The Maritime Union of Australia has implemented a rolling ban on French ships promising to leave them outside the ports "until the sea freezes over."

Already the ban is costing ships between \$30,000 and \$40,000 a day.

One MUA worker recalled, "We

put the Dutch ships that used to go to South Africa off the run with exactly the same tactics".

Example

Australian transport workers are refusing to refuel and service French planes while postal workers are refusing to deliver mail to the French Embassy.

Trade Unionists in New Zealand are planning to follow the Australian example.

This type of action is much more effective than looking to our Governments to fight nuclear testing.

It is the power of ordinary people and workers that can force the abandonment of the tests and give a clear signal to the our rulers the world over that we won't tolerate this nuclear madness.

Union recruits scheme workers



CEP workers on the march this year

QUARRY DEATHS IN FERMANAGH

'A murderous rush for profits'

THE SEAN Quinn Group is a cement factory, quarry and hotels and pubs group based in Derrylin, Co. Fermanagh.

The firm has a turnover of £50 million and an annual profit of £5 million.

However the firm is viciously anti-union and all its workers are nominally self-employed. Even the bar in the Slieve Russell hotel is contracted out.

The drivers for the cement business and the workers in the quarry are the victims of a murderous rush for profit. Four have died over the last year.

In July of last year a worker, O'Brien was killed by a faulty boom on a stone crushing machine.

The owner, Quinn, said O'Brien had not properly maintained the machine.

This year three have died. One was Freddie Parkinson from Brookeborough who

was killed unloading concrete slabs in Dublin.

Another forklift driver John Monahan, was killed in an accident on 22nd June, 1995 when the machine tumbled over on him.

The latest to die was John Carey from Maguiresbridge who drove a cement truck.

Apparently the truck was overloaded with 52 tons of cement powder when it went off the road a short distance from Ballyconnell.

The accident happened on 12th July, a bank holiday in the North.

The driver had a safe driving record of 800,000 miles on his previous truck and was driving a new truck

which had shown a faulty hydraulic mechanism the previous day.

Only quick action by the victim prevented it overturning.

The drivers refused to de-

liver an ounce of cement between the accident and the day of the funeral in a remarkable show of solidarity with the bereaved.

These drivers are all self-employed and if they do not

QUINN'S FAIRYTALE RISE

Sean Quinn's brother Peter is an accountant and the "brains" behind the group. Peter Quinn was one-time President of the Ulster's GAA council.

During the building of the Slieve Russell hotel an apprentice electrician fell through the roof and was crippled in the back.

Now he can only walk with the aid of crutches. He settled for £12,500 compensation out of Court after Quinn contested

the claim.

Quinn owns the Cat & Cage in Drumcondra, the Big Tree in Dorset Street and the Kilmore Hotel outside Cavan town.

The estimated total value of the Sean Quinn group is £130 million and all shares are owned by himself and his wife.

The Fermanagh Herald marvels at his "fairy tale rise" and describes him as a "legend".

THE Amalgamated Transport & General Workers Union has launched a new branch of the union to recruit and organise scheme workers.

There are 40,000 Community Employment workers in the Irish workforce.

The government introduced the Social Employment Schemes in 1985 to reduce the long-term unemployment figures.

But these workers have been discriminated against and used as cheap labour.

They are low paid, part-time workers who don't enjoy normal worker protection and benefits. Scheme workers can't even apply for the Family Income Supplement, a small benefit available to other part-timers.

In one week alone over 500 workers were recruited to the ATGWU.

The union's General Secretary, Mick O'Reilly told *Socialist Worker*. "Trade unions have ne-

glected these workers for too long. We need to encourage their self-activity and focus in their needs."

Forced

Earlier this year lively street demonstrations of hundreds of these workers forced the Government to retreat on threats of cut-backs in the schemes.

This is the kind of self-activity that is needed to demand that these workers are given full benefits and paid decent living wages.

■ **Scheme workers can join the union by contacting the ATGWU in Dublin, Telephone: (01) 873 4577.**

what we think

The brutal face of the RUC

Ban the bomb!

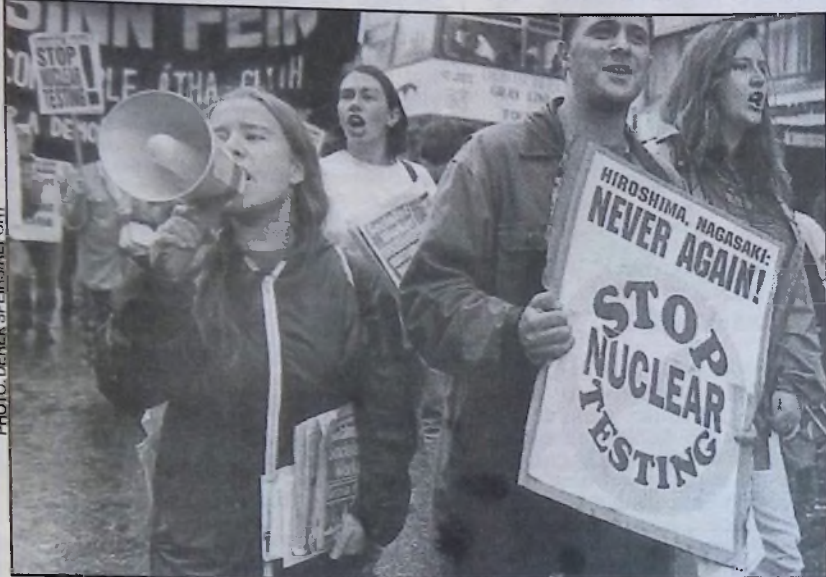


PHOTO: DEREK SPEIR/REPORT

Five hundred people marched in Dublin on August 12th against France's resumption of nuclear testing. Solidarity messages were read out from Australian and New Zealand trade unions

THE RUC brutally attacked a protest in Belfast on 12th August, seriously injuring one man with a plastic bullet.

One protester said the officer who fired the bullet had shouted, "You are all Fenian bastards", before smashing the man's cheekbone from close range.

The attack gave the lie to any notion that the RUC is a 'community' police force.

They are still nakedly sectarian and their role is to prop up a rotten state that divides Catholic from Protestant.

They protected the Ap-

prentice Boys who marched triumphantly through the Belfast's Lower Ormeau and past Derry's Bogside to remind Catholics that they are still second class citizens in the North.

Unfortunately Republicans are playing into the bigots' hands by confronting these small and unrepresentative sectarian marches.

Clashes

The recent clashes only help to raise the sectarian temperature.

The speech by Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams at the Belfast Rally on 13th August offered no way forward either.

He called for 'saner voices' to lead unionism.

This attitude accepts the myth that Protestant workers are inevitably tied to 'their' community and will only look for leadership from middle class politicians claiming to 'represent' that community.

Adam's words were an insult to the many Protestant workers who hate bigots like Ian Paisley and David Trimble and are prepared to unite with Catholic workers against the Tory government.

The sort of leadership that is really needed is one that rises above communal politics and organises workers in a fight for a socialist Ireland.

Bishops split, but Coalition dithers

THE SPLIT over celibacy between Bishop Comiskey and Cardinal Daly shows that a section of the Catholic hierarchy is desperate to escape from the web of scandal surrounding the Brendan Smyth and Father Cleary cases.

The Church's loss of authority was shown when a recent European Commission poll found that Irish people were turning away from faith in God at a higher rate than anywhere else in the European Union.

Of the Irish people polled, 11 per cent said God was 'not important' in their lives—this is more than double the 5 per cent who gave that answer in 1985. And 24 per cent said they did not see themselves as religious.

In an Irish Times/MRBI poll 87 per cent believed there should be a debate in the Catholic Church about celibacy while 75 per cent said the marriage ban for priests should be lifted. Two-thirds of those polled thought divorce should be allowed.

Defensive

With the bishops on the defensive the time is ripe to push through decisively with the removal of the ban on divorce.

But amazingly the government has announced that its advertising campaign in advance of the referendum will not advocate a 'Yes' vote.

Even more amazing are reports that the Left is push-

ing for this 'even-handed' approach, with Proinsias De Rossa of Democratic Left proposing that some 'non-financial' assistance be given to anti-divorce groups.

Tragically it was the Green Party MEP, Patricia McKenna, who took the High Court case against funds being given to the 'Yes' campaign only.

But the government has not been 'even-handed' in destroying jobs in ESB and Telecom or imposing water charges. They used the media to create a completely one-sided argument in favour of extra Garda powers to lock up suspected drug dealers.

Labour and Democratic Left believe that by being 'fairminded' and moderat-

ing their demands they can gently persuade people to accept divorce. That is why they are still insisting on a three to five year 'cooling-off period' before couples can look for a divorce.

The Left in the Dail are not prepared to challenge the idea that there should be some shame attached to marriage breakdown.

But even the head of Family Solidarity, Joe McCarroll, admits that he has been separated from his wife for five years!

The danger now is that the bigots and the hierarchy will exploit the Left's defensiveness and swing a 'No' result as they did in 1986. We need a strong campaign for divorce on demand to make sure they do not succeed.

Campaign wins clinic

THE CAMPAIGN by women in Blanchardstown to win the right to contraception resulted in a great victory.

The Eastern Health Board had to pay for a family planning clinic for the area.

The problem arose when Dr Janina Lyons, a spokesperson for "Doctors for Life" refused to give the pill to the local women. Doctors for Life was set up as a respectable face for the bigots of the pro-life movement.

This group deserves no respect as it tries to justify thugs like Youth Defence and its spokesperson believes women should be kept pregnant and in the home.

Margaret, who set up the Corduff Contraception Campaign knew Lyons' agenda. "Lyons thought that she could stop women having control of their own bodies by terrorising them".

The women in Blanchardstown have shown when people fight back the government can be forced to give in and the bigots marginalised.

We should build on this victory and make sure that Lyons and her pro-life cohorts are replaced by doctors who will allow and assist women to control their own bodies.

Demo planned over Dublin incinerator

A SERIES of protests have taken place in Ringsend, Dublin in opposition to the planned incinerator which will be used to burn hazardous medical waste from Hospitals throughout the Leinster area.

Local people are concerned about the emission of dioxins that will result from the burning of medical waste. Dioxins are among the most hazardous chemicals known.

Exposure to dioxins can damage the immune system, liver and kidneys and can be passed from mother to baby

during pregnancy causing neurological defects in the development of the foetus.

Protester and Ringsend resident Mary Mc Donald explained her concerns: "I don't want the incinerator. It may not kill me but it could kill my grandchildren."

Incineration also produces large quantities of

toxic ash which are to be dumped in landfill sites causing further environmental problems.

Protest

As Geraldine Murphy, a spokesperson for the Dublin Bay Action for Health Group said: "There is no point in getting rid of one environmental problem only to create another one."

At a protest on Sandymount Strand Murphy also pointed out that the incinerator was

not just a local issue but would effect people throughout Dublin.

As a result of earlier protests Dublin Corporation has refused the company "Waste to Energy" planning permission for the incinerator. But the company has appealed to An Bord Pleanala who will make their decision known by the end of September.

Further action is planned in the run-up to Bord Pleanala's announcement, including a demonstration at the

GPO on September 2nd. The campaign are also lobbying politicians and have employed a legal team to present their case to Bord Pleanala in an oral hearing.

However the campaign should be careful not to put their faith in politicians or the courts.

Building the biggest possible demonstration on September the 2nd will be the key to forcing Bord Pleanala to refuse planning permission for this dangerous incinerator.

inside the system

Same old dirty tricks

SINCE the ceasefire the US Embassy in London has waived the rule denying visas to those convicted of serious offences connected to the Troubles. This allows former paramilitaries the right to visit America.

But the rule has not been waived for Colin Wallace who was thrown out of his job as Army Information Officer in the North because he refused to co-operate with MI5 in their dirty tricks campaign against the British Labour Party.

Damages

Wallace eventually won £30,000 damages.

But in 1981 he was convicted of the manslaughter of his friend Jonathan Lewis, a charge Wallace has always denied and which he says is linked to the Secret Service's vendetta against him.

His visa to the States has now been refused again—a sign that the US Embassy has succumbed to yet more dirty tricks from MI5 who want to keep Wallace from telling his story to the US Congress.

LIGHT INTERVENTION

BRUSSELS bureaucrats have been engaged in a spot of 'light intervention'—that's the new politically correct term for destroying piles of food while the Third World starves.

The EU paid farmers in Europe £439 million to pulp 2.5 million tons of apples, satsumas, cauliflower and other fresh produce.

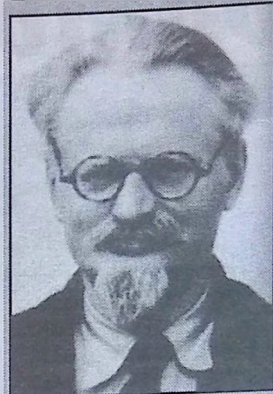
Figures published in Britain show that in 1993 the amount of food destroyed was double the previous year's level. And the reason?

To keep up food prices as workers hit by the recession bought less fresh food and vegetables.

After all we can't have food multinationals going out of business now, can we?

Isn't the free market wonderful?

TROTSKY KEPT OUT



WHILE Neil Jordan and Liam Neeson bring the revolutionary exploits of Michael Collins to the silver screen new light has been shed on how the Big Fellow's successors treated the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky.

Trotsky led the fight to defend real socialism against Joseph Stalin's attempts to crush workers' power.

In August 1930 Trotsky sought refuge in Ireland after being exiled from Russia.

William O'Brien the Secretary of the Irish Transport union went to the Taoiseach William T. Cosgrave to ask him to allow the exiled Bolshevik into Ireland.

But Cosgrave refused saying that Russia had not repaid money lent by the Irish Republican government a decade earlier.

But maybe Cosgrave was worried that his Blueshirt pal Eoin O'Duffy might be upset if Trotsky carried his fight against fascism into Ireland.

Sick and twisted

THE SICK logic of the death penalty was shown in the case of Robert Brecheen who was put to death in the American state of Oklahoma recently.

Brecheen was sentenced to death by lethal injection for kill-

ing a woman in an attempted robbery in 1983.

Overdose

Three hours before his scheduled execution Brecheen was found unconscious from a suspected drug overdose. In order to meet

their deadline the prison guards brought him to hospital where he was revived in time to return to jail for his execution.

The guards wanted to do things by the book and were anxious that their prisoner should be 'lucid' before being put to death.

God's gift to women

THOSE dastardly women's rights campaigners have been slipping tabs in the Pope's wine again! John Paul has just announced that it is time to end the oppression of women.

He has also apologised for the Catholic Church's role in treating women as second class citizens.

In a 19 page letter the Pontiff proclaimed that: "As far as personal rights are con-

cerned, there is an urgent need to achieve real equality in every area."

Of course this does not extend to women becoming priests. On that score JP is adamant that the gospel forbids women administering the Word of God.

Watch this space for news of the Pope's upcoming tour of Ireland to campaign for a Yes vote in the divorce referendum—not!



Pope: Oppression

letters

Thanks for your support, Socialist Worker

IRISH PRESS WORKERS

WE, THE journalists from the Irish Press group of newspapers, are writing to express our gratitude to you for your kindness and help during the current lock-out.

As you know this dispute began on 25th May and led to the lock-out of all the journalistic staff and the lay-off of all the other staff. Since then the 210 journalists who work on the Irish Press, Evening Press, and Sunday Press,

have continued to write for the XPress, produced here in Liberty Hall.

Sustain

The XPress is one of a number of fund-raisers and it is vital in publicising other major events which to date have included the fashion show, golf classics, table quizzes, the Gate gala, various other gigs and film screenings.

Such activities would never have been possible without your generous support and en-

couragement. Not only do they sustain us financially, they are crucial to maintaining our morale and united determination in these difficult times.

We warmly appreciate all your help and we would like you to know that your support has been recorded in a roll of honour which is being kept since those very first days in May.

AOIFE MAC EOIN, SUPPORT CO-ORDINATOR, IRISH PRESS JOURNALISTS FUND.

DUNNES WORKERS

ON BEHALF of my colleagues on the picket line at Dunnes Stores Kilnamanagh, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all very much for your wonderful support during our strike and to let you know how grateful we are to you for your very generous donation to our strike fund.

As I am sure most of you will know when you stand on a picket line for the first time you are not always sure if you have done the right thing in coming out on strike in the first place.

But with your daily visits to us and your words of encouragement and support and particularly when you gave us the feedback from the public and the great support we were getting, we (and especially the young girls) were left in no doubt that we had taken the right course of action.

DUNNES WORKER, KILNAMANAGH, DUBLIN.

The real victims of Chicago heat wave



MORE THAN 500 people died as a result of a heat wave that swept into Chicago in mid-July.

Bodies pile up in the morgue

The tragedy has been described as a natural disaster.

But these deaths were anything but natural—and many could easily have been avoided.

Most of the more than 500 victims of the heat wave were poor and elderly—and they died because they lived in housing without air-conditioning and because city officials did nothing to respond to the crisis.

Yet rather than admit that the city had failed to take measures that could have saved lives, officials actually tried to shift blame onto the victims themselves.

Some of the victims were found in sweltering rooms where the temperature was hotter than outside—120 degrees in one case.

In at least some cases, officials said that victims died specifically because of the heat, after their body temperatures rose above 105 or 106 degrees.

In other cases, elderly and bedridden people died of dehydration—and people with heart trouble suffered attacks because of stress brought on by the heat.

The common thread in the deaths, according to Cook County Medical Examiner Edmund Donoghue, "was air-conditioning, or lack of it"

Affluent

In fact, not a single person died of heat-related causes in neighbouring DuPage County where temperatures reached even higher—for the simple reason that almost all new homes in that more affluent area are built with central air-conditioning.

As *Socialist Worker* went to press, the media were reporting that a database of the victims of the heat wave, concealed by city officials, showed that, nearly all came from Chicago's poorest neighbourhoods.

Few of the victims, according to reports, were from areas of the city which suffered a power blackout—city officials like Chicago Mayor Richard Daley had blamed the blackout, not poor housing, as the cause of most of the deaths.

At the height of the heat wave, temperatures reached 106 degrees—and a heat index reading, which takes into account the effect of humidity and wind, that reached 119 degrees.

City officials were supposed to implement a heat emergency plan when forecasts predicted a heat index of 105 degrees.

Yet the heat index topped 110 on both July 13 and 14—and city officials did nothing.

In fact, Mayor Daley responded by urging people not to blow the hot weather "out of proportion".

"It's hot, it's very hot," Daley stammered to reporters. "We all have our little problems. It's like cold weather."

"We go to extremes in Chicago... that's why people

like Chicago."

The only warning Daley issued in the early days of the heat wave was for people not to open fire hydrants to cool off—a number of children were issued citations by police for doing so.

Daley finally declared a heat emergency on July 15—after medical examiners ran out of room in the morgue and had to store corpses in refrigerated trucks outside the building.

The one-and-a-half-page-long "heat emergency plan" proved totally inadequate even after it was implemented.

Access

City officials set up a paltry 11 "cooling centres" and provided little or no access to them—they assigned only eight vans to pick up people who needed transportation to the centres.

Only 60 city workers were assigned to answer calls at the Department of Human Services, which received more than 3,000 phone calls on one afternoon alone.

To make matters worse, over 41,000 North Side residents were left without power for long periods between July 14 and July 16. The city's power company, Commonwealth Edison—which charges some of the highest utility rates in the nation—blamed the blackout on over extended equipment.

Yet power was returned at North Side businesses almost immediately, while residents sweated it out. As Jim Flanagan, a 77-year-old resident in the Wrigleyville neighbourhood, who was without power from Friday morning to Sunday evening, put it:

"The restaurants in the area have lights, Wrigley Field baseball stadium has lights—it doesn't make sense that people who live here don't have lights."

The impact of the power blackout was worst in apartments where private landlords or city housing officials had permanently sealed windows.

For instance, in the Flannery Elderly housing project, most of the 126 units were not air-conditioned, despite pleas from residents after previous hot spells.

As if their foot-dragging wasn't enough, city officials tried to blame the victims themselves.

"We are talking about people who die because they neglect themselves," said Human Services Commissioner Daniel Alvarez.

But the truth is the people who died in Chicago's heat wave were victims of city government neglect.

They were not the wealthy—they were society's most vulnerable.

DAVID HIGHSMITH

AS BALKAN WAR INTENSIFIES...

US 'peace plan' favours ethnic cleansing

THE MASS exodus of hundreds of thousands of Krajina Serbs as their homes and land were occupied by Croatian forces, and the triumphalism of the Western media, showed once and for all the hollowness of Western claims to want a "peaceful settlement" to the war in Yugoslavia.

For months, the United States had been steadily building up the forces of the Croatian army in readiness for this onslaught.

While they have denied any official support, it is widely acknowledged that US-based military advisors have been working with the Bosnian and Croatian militaries. Clearly, the Croatians got the go-ahead from the US for the latest escalation of the fighting.

The result has been described by aid officials as "one of the worst humanitarian disasters of the war". Up to 180,000 refugees have fled from Krajina.

There are now fears of an even greater upheaval should the Croatians press

forward into Eastern Slavonia on the Serbian borders.

But aid workers insist that the UN could have prevented the mass exodus of Krajina Serbs, most of whom have lived in the area for generations.

Instead of guaranteeing the safety of the Serbs and persuading them to stay put, the UN followed the dictates of the Croatian army and began to channel the Serbs out.

Effort

As one aid worker put it, "If the UN had spent a tenth of the effort it put in helping them to leave into helping them live peacefully, this would almost certainly not be happening."

In fact, many Krajina Serb families said they would have stayed if they'd been given safety guarantees by the Croatian authorities.

But the UN and the Croatian police stood by while gangs of Croatian vigilantes attacked and beat up the refugees. Claims of UN peacekeepers' neutrality lie in tatters as the Croatians press forward unhindered.

In the United States, Bill Clinton insists that the Croatian onslaught could be the key to a peaceful settlement of the war.

The Americans are pushing through a peace plan which will benefit Serbia and Croatia economically and politically, but will leave Bosnia landlocked and dependent on Croatia and, to a lesser extent, Serbia.

But this peace plan involves "cleaning up" the maps of Serbia and Croatia to create "ethnically cleansed" areas.

This kind of cleaning up would mean even more



Serb refugees flee the Krajina: "If the leaders got lost we'd make peace in a day."

refugees, population migration, and all the misery and hardship that goes with it.

Even worse, the Western strategy of trying to even the balance of power between the "good" Bosnians and Croatians on the one hand, and the "bad" Serbs on the other, could risk drawing even more of the country into a new round of even bloodier conflict.

Carve-Up

While the Bosnians are for the moment in alliance with the Croatians, and are receiving arms shipments mainly orchestrated from the US, they also have reason to fear the US-brokered

peace plan.

They are mindful of the 1991 agreement between Serb leader Milosevic and the Croatian boss Tudjman to carve up Bosnia between them.

Indeed, the Bosnians have no reason to trust their Croatian bedfellows, who have in the past presided over ethnic cleansing of both Serbs and Bosnian Muslims.

Within the Bosnian camp, the forces favouring a Muslim-dominated, ethnically cleansed state are playing a dominant role.

The stage is set for ethnic cleansing on an even wider scale than the West is allowing for.

No 'good guys' in this war

THE ROLE of the Bosnian government in the war has been exposed in the onslaught on Krajina. Up to now most peace campaigners including some socialists have identified the Bosnians as the "good guys" suffering at the hands of the Serbs.

But Bosnian soldiers have taken part in the latest round of "ethnic cleansing" against Serbs in the Krajina. Troops of the Bosnian 5th Corps torched homes in at least six villages in the region. UN peacekeepers reported hearing the screams of the inhabitants.

A UN spokesman, Phil Arnold described atrocities by both Croat and Bosnian soldiers as "monstrous, inhumane and against all international standards".

A UN eyewitness saw troops with Bosnian insignia murder five elderly and handicapped Serbs dragged from a school in Dvor. One victim was in a wheelchair and the others were mentally retarded.

The US was quick to divert attention away from these atrocities by suddenly "discovering" mass graves where over 2,000 victims of Serbian ethnic cleansing in the Bosnian "safe haven" of Srebrenica were buried.

While all three of the factions involved in the war—Serbs, Croats and Bosnian Muslims—have been involved in bloody bouts of ethnic cleansing, the West's intervention on the side of one or other group can only add to this bloodshed.

Already Serb refugees fleeing the Krajina have forced Muslims and Croats from Banja Luka the main town in Serb-held Northern Bosnia.

To take sides between the three sets of rulers is to postpone the chance of ending the war. The war is the result of the disintegration of former Yugoslavia. When they were faced with a revolt by workers in the 1980's the bureaucrats turned to the oldest trick in the book—"divide and rule" and whipped up ethnic hatred.

Ethnic identities did not matter when Serb, Croat and Muslim stood side by side as workers against the old regime. As war-weariness grows that kind of unity can arise again to topple all the corrupt politicians and generals.

As one refugee from the Krajina said on BBC radio: "If the leaders could get lost the people would make peace in a day."

FRANCE:

Metro bomb used to whip up racism

SINCE LAST month's Metro bombing in Paris, police have gone on the offensive against thousands of immigrants living in France.

In the week following the blast, over 25,000 people were stopped for random identity checks as police swamped the immigrant areas of the city.

To date, over 90,000 people have been stopped and over 140 arrested.

Many of those arrested have been packed on the infamous charter flights

which are now departing French airports on a weekly basis with cargoes of deportees.

The French state is using the bombing to carry forward its racist immigration policies.

In the aftermath of the bombing, just as in the case of the Oklahoma bombing, Islamic militants were immediately targeted.

The climate of suspicion was reinforced after police released photofit pictures of three men of Arab appearance being sought for questioning.

One daily paper, Liberation, refused to publish the pictures on grounds that they could incite racial ha-

tred.

France has also used the bombing to tighten immigration controls at its borders, in spite of EC agreements allowing the free movement of passengers within its borders.

Suspicion

By increasing suspicion of Arab and non-European workers, and by creating a climate where racist expulsions are acceptable, the French government hopes to distract attention from the crises of unemployment, homelessness and poverty which afflict the population.

Scapegoating immi-

grants has long been a favourite tactic of the far-right in France.

But the new regime under Tory president Jacques Chirac is hoping to use the same tactics to bolster support while it carries out attacks on working-class living standards.

Blaming immigrants for economic woes paves the way for attacks on other vulnerable groups in society, as the new ban on begging in French cities shows.

But there are signs that the working class is not prepared to take the regime's declarations at face value.

After a short lull, in the wake of the Presidential

elections, there are signs that the workers are again beginning to press forward their demands.

Train drivers in the Channel Tunnel have already struck over pay.

There are signs of real discontent over the government's pursuit of nuclear testing, and Chirac has taken a tumble in the polls.

All the more reason, then, for the regime to turn to racism to bolster its credibility.

Socialists in every country should oppose the racist imposition of immigration controls and demand equal rights for all workers, regardless of their country of origin.

ONE YEAR AFTER THE CEASEFIRE

Can the 'Peace' bring peace?

THE WALLS of sectarianism are not coming down. Instead, they are rising higher.

Earlier this month Catholics living in Bombay Street in North Belfast appealed for the wall dividing them from the Shankill to be built higher, after nightly attacks from missiles lobbed by Protestant youths.

Bombay Street was burned to the ground by a Loyalist mob in August 1969. More than a quarter of a century later, it seems little has changed.

Despite all the hype, the "Peace Process" is not binding up wounds and leading to reconciliation. Indeed, there are signs that, coming to a year after the ceasefires, sectarianism is thickening in both Catholic and Protestant working-class areas.

Sparked

Since disturbances sparked by Orange demonstrations around the Twelfth of July, the tempo of attacks on Catholic and Protestant homes, churches, businesses and halls has been increasing.

Protestant homes in the Whitewell area of north Belfast have been attacked, prompting one of the targeted families to complain that Protestants were being "ethnically cleansed" from the district.

Catholic families were meanwhile moving out of their homes in nearby Greymount after attacks by crowds of youths.

Local priest Hubert Rooney said that community relations in north Belfast generally, far from improving, were "deteriorating".

At the last count, 17 Orange halls in Belfast, Fermanagh, Armagh and Tyrone have been attacked since 12th July, a number burned to the ground.

The Star of the Sea Catholic primary school in north Belfast and a former Presbyterian manse in the Duncairn Gardens area of the city have been firebombed.

St Brigid's Catholic Church in the Malone Road and the Drumcree Church of Ireland hall in Portadown have been attacked with petrol bombs.

A Catholic graveyard in Comber, Co. Down, has been desecrated.

Derry priest Fr Joe Coulter, speaking after a Catholic family had been forced to move out of



Dick Spring, John Bruton and Sinn Féin's Lucilita Bhreathnach and Gerry Adams

Newbuildings, three miles outside the city, said that "The 'Taigs get out' idea in Newbuildings is not just a slogan, it is a campaign".

Graffiti such as "Trick or Treat"—a reference to the slogan shouted by the UDA gang in the Halloween massacre at Greysteel—"Fuck the Pope" and "Taigs get out"

have appeared on gable walls in the village.

The list of such incidents lengthens by the day.

Designed

So common have they become, they are sometimes not reported

even in the local press.

But then, why should it be otherwise? The peace process is not designed to loosen the grip of sectarianism.

The notion that people in the North might be able, ever, to identify themselves in politics other than by reference to the religious com-

Does the North need a Labour Party?

FOR SOME people who want change in the North, the idea of a Northern Ireland Labour Party has some appeal.

People from both Catholic and Protestant backgrounds could set aside their cultural differences and build a mass party of the working class.

The argument has a certain attraction because people are sick of Tory rule and the Labour party seems to offer the only alternative.

But it is clear that any Labour party in the North would be modelled on Blair's "New Labour" in Britain. This means that any political ideas that looked like losing votes or threatening the system would quickly be rejected.

In fact, politicians would pander to sectarian ideas in order to win votes.

This is borne out by the record of the NILP in the 1960s. In the words of Paddy Devlin, a former Labour politician:

"I was pushed into a Catholic area to canvass the vote, while Protestant members were pushed

into Protestant areas. I knew that speeches in favour of the Orange Order were made from NILP platforms and that members of the platform parties had even worn sashes."

In a situation where British capitalism is weak and in decline, the Labour party cannot offer reforms but can only attempt to manage the decline.

Failure

The failure to deliver reforms—and Blair is barely promising to make any reforms—would quickly lead to demoralisation and the kind of despair that feeds sectarianism.

The argument in favour of a NILP is pushed by those who believe that the working class of the North is intrinsically sectarian and divided.

Since we can't unite the class on political issues, we can perhaps

by EAMONN McCANN and CATHERINE CURRAN

community they "belong" to doesn't figure in the peace process at all, even as a possibility.

Those who defend the process uncritically are accepting sectarianism.

The process is a scheme for managing sectarianism, and a flawed and futile one at that.

The settlement implicitly envisaged is sectarian stalemate. Catholics and Protestants living, perhaps, at one with one another, but never as one.

The plan is not to bring people together but more efficiently to police them apart, consolidating two separate political systems, with politicians and parties vying with one another as to who can be trusted to win most advantage for their own crowd vis-a-vis the other crowd.

Even if it "worked" it would merely mean that physical conflict between the communities would be replaced by economic competition for scarce resources, every cut-back in leisure-centre spending in one area monitored to ensure that the other side was, in fairness, being hit equally hard, the question of which community's children are being given the better chance of flipping burgers becoming the standard stuff of politics.

And economic competition will always have the potential to flare up into open conflict again. In a sense, after all, economic competition is what it's always been about.

All the process guarantees is that "the two identities" will be given equal respect—although the constitutional mechanism which would bring this about is very far from clear.

Nationalists are being invited to believe that there'll be major constitutional change, Loyalists reassured that there won't be any noticeable constitutional change at all.

In all these circumstances it's small wonder both Catholic and Protestant workers are angry and frustrated.

Communal identity is an important fact of political life in the North. But there's more—potentially much, much more—to the consciousness of working-class people on all sides.



RUC protect Apprentice

But it suits certain elements particularly the Catholic middle in the North and the ruling class in the South, to direct attention from any possibility other than a sectarian stalemate.

If the problem lies only in finding a way of getting the Protestant Taigs to agree not to enter on one another's areas, in terms of either geography or conscience then there's no need for fundamental change in the shape of the society, and certainly no need

Sinn Féin

WHEN THE ceasefire was negotiated a year ago, it seemed that a real peace dividend would be gained as a result of the Sinn Féin leadership's new strategy.

Certainly the armed struggle was going nowhere, and people on both sides of the community felt a genuine sense of relief that the killing was over. To many people, it seemed that there were real possibilities of finding a way out of the deadlock.

For Gerry Adams and the rest of Sinn Féin's leadership, there was the promise of a benevolent intervention on the part of US

CEASEFIRES...

'The Process'



UC protect Apprentice Boys from Republican demonstrators in Derry in August

But it suits certain elements, particularly the Catholic middle class in the North and the ruling class in the South, to direct attention away from any possibility other than sectarian stalemate.

If the problem lies only in finding a way of getting the Prods and the Taigs to agree not to encroach on one another's areas, in terms of their geography or consciousness, then there's no need for fundamental change in the shape of Northern society, and certainly no reason for

disturbance of political tranquillity in the South.

This has been the main motivation of all the Leinster House parties in their enthusiastic support for the process, and the main reason many bourgeois commentators became enraptured with Gerry Adams the moment he and his associates had delivered the Provos into the process.

All these elements are bitterly hostile to the only process which could deliver real and fundamental

change—working class unity across both the sectarian divide and the border against exploitation and oppression in both States.

Unrealistic

They say this is "unrealistic". But it's by no means as unrealistic as imagining that peace and harmony can be achieved in the North by making an equation in political morality between "the two traditions" and then offering the lower orders

on each side parity of lack of esteem.

What needs to be discussed now is what road forward other than armed struggle—which is over—can be opened up once it's plain that the process can deliver nothing worthwhile.

Catholic workers who have supported the Republican Movement should be especially interested in discussing how to move towards an outcome which would represent an adequate return on the investment of pain and energy that they have put into a struggle for real change.

Sinn Féin has long argued that the demands for a British withdrawal and the release of all political prisoners must be met before we can talk about class politics.

Now the Republican leadership is backing away from even these demands in order to sustain the alliance with the likes of John Bruton.

The SWP argues that the fight against the sectarian state should be carried through.

It should be pursued in the context of the struggle for jobs, decent wages, union rights, against privatisation and the destruction of the National Health Service.

And in close association with the same struggle taking place in the South.

This is the only way to make it clear in practice that the united Ireland we are out for will advance the interests of all Irish workers, Catholic, Protestant and of no religion, North and South.

It is the only practical way now of continuing any unshamed struggle for a united Ireland at all.

Sinn Féin's blind alley

WHEN THE ceasefire was negotiated a year ago, it seemed that a real peace dividend would be gained as a result of the Sinn Féin leadership's new strategy.

Certainly the armed struggle was going nowhere, and people on both sides of the community felt a genuine sense of relief that the killing was over. To many people, it seemed that there were real possibilities of finding a way out of the headlock.

For Gerry Adams and the rest of Sinn Féin's leadership, there was the promise of a benevolent intervention on the part of US

president Bill Clinton, and even the possibility of US investments to give jobs in deprived areas.

But over the past twelve months the hollowness of British pronouncements on peace, and those of the Irish Government, have become increasingly clear.

The British determination to make an issue out of arms decommissioning has stalled talks indefinitely.

The hope that prisoners in British jails would be transferred to Northern Ireland, where their families would have easier access, has been dashed.

Even in the case of

Patrick White, a republican prisoner in Whitemoor who has cancer, the authorities played a cruel game of cat and mouse and refused ultimately to move him to the North.

Extradite

Conditions for the prisoners have worsened rather than improved. And the US continues to extradite Republicans to Britain, in spite of the alleged sympathies of Bill Clinton.

The lack of progress on peace talks has led to a growing disillusionment among both Catholics and Protestants. This feeling

can be exploited by those who want to stir up sectarian tensions again.

Already there are signs that this is happening. Sinn Féin has gambled on the success of peace talks and has banked on winning a place for itself at the table of the world capitalist class. It has abandoned the Catholic working class while offering no solution to their Protestant fellow-workers.

The advance of the Republican movement has been gained, as it always has been gained in Irish history, at the expense of the working class.

what do socialists say?

The politics of euthanasia

WHEN the Supreme Court upheld a decision by the High Court to withdraw a feeding tube from a 45 year old woman the Catholic Church and various "Pro-Life" groups were quick to jump in complaining about the threat to "moral values".

The Fellowship of Catholic Scholars pronounced that the case had "outstripped" the Nazis and provided the state with a "constitutionally correct alibi for euthanasia in Ireland".

The case was of a woman who in 1972 had several heart attacks following a "simple operation" which left her seriously brain damaged and with little or no awareness of the world around her.

Following a long period of consideration of her physical and mental state and what was known of her wishes her family felt further tube feeding and antibiotic treatment were dehumanising and of no benefit.

Deprived

The feeding tubes were allowed to be removed on the grounds that the woman was deprived of her rights to privacy, bodily integrity and a quality of life that included the right to die without undue medical intervention.

The "pro-life" objections are based on an abstract view of human life as being something that has to follow the laws of nature.

It does not celebrate the real process of living and enjoying life.

The cruel logic of this view is that it is better to keep someone alive in a vegetative state even though their life has no real meaning and there is no hope of recovery.

The case raises a number of issues surrounding the debate about euthanasia. There are many peo-

ple in endless pain who want to die but the state denies them this right.

Where someone chooses to die they should be allowed to do so in dignity. At present euthanasia is a criminal offence—it should be decriminalised.

What then for those of us who would like to have a say in our way of dying or would like to leave instructions for how we would like to be treated should we be in a coma and unable to say what we would like?

What are needed are guidelines for good practice where "good practice" means maintaining optimum quality of life at all times, and respecting the right of autonomy of the individual to decide, to choose or refuse his treatment, including the right to terminate his or her own life.

But what about someone who is in a "vegetative" state and who cannot make a decision for themselves?

Is there not a danger that a patient would be allowed to die because it costs "too much" to keep them alive?

The fear that vulnerable people will be abused can be overcome by involving friends and family as defined by the individual as well as hospice terminal care and primary care teams in the drawing up and

carrying out of guidelines. Even the decision in the recent case concedes to the "pro-lifers" an abstract notion of life.

Rather than give the woman an injection to end her life the courts ruled that she should be effectively let starve to death.

This panders to the bigots' idea of "letting nature take its course" regardless of the continuing suffering of the patient.

Option

The most humane way to end someone's suffering when death is the only option is to administer drugs or an injection that will deliberately end that person's life.

But while socialists defend the right to die we fight for alternatives to be made available to patients.

One thing the demand for euthanasia shows is the lack of proper medical care afforded to the majority of people in society.

Far fewer patients would wish to die if they could afford the pain-killing drugs and treatment needed to make their lives liveable.

But governments the world over are cutting back on health services for working class people.

And the task of caring for the sick often falls on their families which means that many patients wish to die to avoid being a burden on their loved ones.

Opponents of euthanasia argue that "nobody needs to die".

But for that to be a reality an alternative needs to be provided which gives people proper medical care in a properly staffed hospital and outpatient system.

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The Irish famine



A Socialist Worker pamphlet

As Abu Jamal wins a stay of execution

Hundreds condemned to wait on Death Row

BRIAN ROBERTSON has little more than eight weeks to live. On November 14, he will be strapped to an operating table and injected with poison in Huntsville Prison, Texas.

Brian is unable to sleep at nights. Every-time he closes his eyes he visualises a scene from countless movies, of burly prison wardens taking his arms and leading him to his death, while a priest mumbles prayers in the background.

Brian's nightmare began one Friday night almost nine years ago when he and a friend, Darryl, went out clubbing.

The date was August 30th 1986. The two men headed for home at about 4am. On their way they stopped at a public toilet. When they had finished Darryl drove Brian home and then went home to his wife.

Unknown to either of the men, a murder had been committed a few blocks away while they were using the toilet.

The following day Darryl was arrested and charged with the murder on the basis that his car had been seen two blocks from the scene of the crime.

Darryl died of a brain tumour in police custody. He had been in custody for 36 hours without being allowed to call his family or a lawyer.

When it was later discovered that Brian had been with Darryl on the night in question, he was arrested, brought to trial and convicted of murder.

Brian is extremely distressed about the way his trial was conducted. "If I'd had \$20,000 to hire a fancy lawyer I would have beaten the rap no matter

Following the indefinite stay of execution granted to the former Black Panther, Mumia Abu Jamal, in the United States, Socialist Worker's John Serge spoke to an inmate on Death Row in Texas and found that the authorities are still determined to execute hundreds of others across the country.

He is proud of the fact that he has always had a job since he left college. He has a thirteen year old son, Victor.

Brian describes the Texas prison system as 'hell on earth'.

As part of the State government's crack-down on crime the prison population of Texas has doubled to 100,000 over the last two years.

Yet the crime figures, far from falling, continue to sky-rocket.

Prisoners are allowed three hours recreation per day during the week. There is no exercise at weekends. Brian spends most of his time preparing appeals.

He told me, "You couldn't believe how bad life on Death Row really is."

"You always have to keep your eyes open to avoid getting caught up in some trouble. Just last week a guy was stabbed forty times in the toilets."

"He was dead before anyone could call a guard. I've enough to deal with without any of that crap".

Violent inmates are not his only worry, though. Amnesty International is currently investigating allegations that prisoners in another Texas prison,

Brian constantly refers to America as "AmeriKKKa". He believes that if the murder victim had not been white he would not be on death row. Figures released by Amnesty International would tend to support his claim.

While blacks make up 12% of the population in the US, they are 40% of all death row prisoners.

84% of prisoners executed since 1977 had been convicted of murdering white victims—despite the fact that blacks and whites are murdered in roughly equal numbers across the country.

The statistics also suggest that factors such as class, race, politics and location of the crime can play a far more important role in deciding who receives the death penalty than the crime itself.

The horror of an execution goes be-

Hang I em and Flog I em: An angry woman demonstrates outside the Merseyside court where Steven Heaney was charged with the murder of schoolboys Robbie Gee and Paul Barker.



yond the mere fear of pain or death.

It is connected with the cold blooded politeness of the ceremony in which prisoners are supposed to collaborate as if it were a minor surgical operation performed for their own good.

Most prisoners struggle in the condemned cell. Some have to be tied to a chair. Others are dragged to the room, limp, bowels open, arms pinned behind their backs like animals.

Still things happen which have no other place but in nightmares. In the last decade more than 50 prisoners suffering from mental illness or retardation were executed in the United States.

Over the same period nine juvenile offenders were executed.

In 1972 the United States Supreme

ally statutes have been gradually introduced.

To date thirty eight states have reinstated the death penalty.

There are currently 2,870 prisoners on death row across the USA. Nearly 270 executions have been carried out since 1977.

Those in favour of the death penalty argue that it is a powerful deterrent to would-be murderers.

However, this ignores the fact that most murders are not pre-meditated affairs. It also disregards the fact that capital punishment can never be a deterrent to those high on drugs.

Neither will it deter those who are insane or mentally deranged, those who have killed in a quarrel, in drunkenness,

'The inevitability of factual, legal and moral error gives us a system that we know must wrongly kill some defendants.'

Court struck down most US death penalty laws on the grounds that they were arbitrary and discriminatory.

However, since 1977 new death pen-

or in a sudden surge of passion.

The retiring Supreme Court Justice Harry A. Blackmun, long considered to be a conservative on law and order issues recently said publicly, "I feel morally and intellectually obliged to concede that the death penalty experiment has failed."

"The inevitability of factual, legal and moral error gives us a system that we know must wrongly kill some defendants."

Last October Judge Marilyn Patel of the Federal District Court ruled that California's gas chamber, where nearly 200 prisoners have been executed since 1938, was a barbaric relic, and must be shut down immediately.

Judge Patel cited evidence that prisoners in the gas chamber remain conscious for up to a minute and are likely to experience intense physical pain. California now executes condemned prisoners by lethal injection.

It is clear that capital punishment does not exist to deter crime. Instead, it serves to intimidate the working class and victimise those like Mumia Abu Jamal who try to fight back against racism and oppression.

By scapegoating blacks and poor whites, the state seeks to divert attention from its own barbarity, leaving the rich free to commit all manners of crime against humanity.

By fighting for socialism, we can be rid of the conditions that breed crime—poverty and unemployment—and of the greatest criminals of all—the ruling classes.

'If I'd had \$20,000 to hire a fancy lawyer I would have beaten the rap no matter what. I'm innocent: I'm on death row because I relied on a court-appointed lawyer.'

what. I'm innocent: I'm on death row because I relied on a court-appointed lawyer."

In a reference to the O J Simpson trial he said, "If only I'd played national football then there's be no way I'd be here."

Brian Robertson is a 31 year old black man from a family of five. He has two older brothers Reginald, David, and his twin, Bruce.

His father was stabbed to death outside a convenience store in 1974. His mother, Betty, brought the boys up alone.

He graduated from High School in 1982, and attended college for a few semesters before too much partying caused him to drop out.

Ramsey I Unit, have died through lack of medical care and that ill and disabled prisoners are being forced to do hard labour.

Two guards were recently charged with the murder of a prisoner, Michael Mc Coy, who was kicked to death in his cell in Terrell Unit last December for spitting at a female guard.

Brian is one of 390 prisoners on death row in Texas. The state provides funding for only one appeal in Texas.

Brian is among the many condemned prisoners currently forced to file their own appeals in longhand.

They are trying to raise \$800 to buy a word processor to give themselves, a fighting chance, as Brian puts it.



The American Way: Thomas Shipp (19) and Abe Smith (18) lynched by the Ku Klux Klan in 1930s Indiana.

reviews

NOAM CHOMSKY

A fierce
opponent of
the system

by CATHERINE CURRAN

CHOMSKY'S POLITICS by Milan Rai sets out to explain the political ideas of a man who is not only the founder of the modern science of linguistics but also one of the most radical critics of American foreign policy and of the American media.

It attempts to explain why Chomsky's political writings are ignored although he is seen as one of the foremost intellectuals of our time.

He grew up as a Jewish immigrant in New York during the Depression of the 1930's.

Some of his earliest memories of that time aroused in him a deep sense of injustice, whether it was the sight of poor people selling rags at the door or the police attacking strikes.

"My family had plenty of unemployed workers and union activists so you knew what a picket line was, and what it meant for the forces of the employers to go in there swinging clubs and breaking it up."

In spite of his perception of the power of working class struggle, Chomsky rejected the politics of the socialists Lenin and Trotsky, and was pulled towards the philosophy of anarchism.

Vietnam

In fact, he did not begin to put his political beliefs into action until the movement against the Vietnam War.

As his students dodged the draft, he realised that he could not remain indifferent to their plight.

His experiences of the civil rights movement increased his distrust of the system.

He could remember marches when the authorities, rather than preventing the abuses of power by state police, "stood by and took notes while people were beaten and on occasion murdered".

Chomsky's experience in mass struggle gives him an edge to his writing that is missing in the work of other academics.

This is probably why they have turned in him, denouncing his criticism of US foreign policy as "simple minded" and irresponsible.

His writings are virtually ignored by the liberal media within the US, despite their popularity elsewhere.

Nevertheless, Chomsky's anarchist tendencies, and his isolation from the day to day struggles of the working class, lead to serious political weaknesses.

In fact, Chomsky com-

pletely fails to grasp the dynamic of working class struggle and it's role in ending the domination of the US as a global power.

Instead, he emphasises the role of the media in brainwashing the masses into complete and unquestioning acceptance.

He targets the "domestic moral and intellectual culture of the US", the narrow set of beliefs which govern the thinking of much of the population.

Media

He thinks that the purpose of the media is to cultivate public stupidity and conformity, in order to protect the powerful from interference.

In Chomsky's opinion the people are easily manipulated.

This ignores the rich history of struggle by American workers and the fact that today the scapegoating policies of reactionaries like Newt Gingrich are increasingly unpopular.

The US working class may have suffered defeats in the past but they are not unwitting pawns as Chomsky seems to believe.

His conclusion is both elitist and pessimistic. Chomsky believes that the masses need guidance from an enlightened individual.

Rai backs up this opinion, describing Chomsky as "the reluctant activist endangering himself for others".

In spite of the political weaknesses, Chomsky is the most consistent critic of the US ruling class in his field.

He has been one of the main voices highlighting the US government backed genocide in East Timor.

He records many other "constructive bloodbaths" which the US heartily approved, for instance in Indonesia in 1965 when the Government massacred hundreds of thousands of people to defeat Nationalist forces and eradicate the Indonesian Communist Party.

Chomsky's political writings are well worth reading if only for his condemnation of the US ruling class.

The biography itself is too uncritical to be of much use.

Chomsky's Politics by Milan Rai, Verso, £10.95

A story of murder
and frustrationby ROISIN
RYDER

BUTTERFLY KISS is billed as a road movie, lesbian love story, psychodrama and black comedy.

It is directed and co-written by Michael Winterbottom who directed Roddy Doyle's "The Family".

Set in Northern England the story centres around the relationship between Eunice (Aminda Plummer) and Miriam (Saska Reeves).

Eunice is homeless, wandering aimlessly around the motorways of Northern England, visiting service stations in an obsessive search of a past lover Judith.

Alienated and disturbed, she only relates to people she meets through her search for



Stepping out of a mundane existence

Judith.

Before she meets Miriam she has already battered to death a petrol station attendant who didn't answer to the name of Judith.

She is about to set fire to herself after soaking her clothes in petrol when Miriam (the petrol station attendant) rescues her and so begins their friendship and love affair.

The friendship forces Miriam to step out of her

mundane drab existence in a council flat with her sick mother and work in the petrol station.

She follows Eunice and together they journey up and down the motorways in stolen cars and vans.

Spiral

Eunice, however, does not stop committing murders in her search for Judith. Miriam becomes

drawn into this violent spiral.

At first shocked she then sets out to "save" Eunice and bring out the good in her.

Eunice is convinced she is evil and cannot be reformed and continually tries to prove it.

The film is gripping, shocking and at times funny.

But what struck me about the film is the total alienation of Eunice and Miriam's lives.

The film portrays this very well—the isolation of individuals in our present society where a mad escapade can open up horizons unthought of.

Miriam comments that until this point she never realised that the petrol station customers came from places or were going anywhere.

They were just people who came in and out of her working day without lives, without offering her anything.

She also never regretted her adventure with Eunice.

One other comment she makes in the film which I thought was great was that most people would love to do what Eunice did—rob a car they fancy, drive away from a petrol station and not pay, do runners from restaurants.

The lives of these characters express a common frustration with a society that destroys and alienates the best in us.

Roll on the day when we can kick it all out and live more fruitful lives.

Butterfly Kiss is on in the IFC (Irish Film Centre), Eustace Street from August 18th-21st Sept.

BOOKS

A tale of lives
out of control

IF YOU had to say one thing about William Trevor's novel Felicia's Journey it is that it shows how few of us have any real choice in our lives.

by JANE
ELBERTON

The novel centres on the life of a young Irish woman who discovers she is pregnant and flees to Britain.

She comes to find her boyfriend and to decide whether to go ahead with the birth or have an abortion.

Thriller

Yet the book is more than this. It is also a gripping thriller. What is most striking about Felicia is her innocence.

The question is can that innocence survive as the world does its best to destroy her?

In most thrillers the explanation of what motivates characters comes down to some sort of notion of evil.

Often the only escape is to retreat into the past, into childhood.

One character tries to create a world unchanged since the 1950s, listening to old records and refusing to watch TV.

Yet as the novel unfolds we learn even childhood is not the time of innocence we like to think.

The book is marvelously evocative and haunting.

Wrecks

You can almost see the effects of the recession in the English Midland towns Felicia travels through—the closed factories and desolate housing estates where "you can't walk a yard without the recession impinging".

But life is not all bad.

Trevor does show people trying to help each other.

He describes a factory as "another world"—where people care for one another and show real loyalty—and the novel is littered with people showing kindness towards Felicia.

It is not that people do not want to help one another, it is that their capacity to do so is limited by the world we live in.

Do not expect any answers as to how we can change society, however.

Enjoy *Felicia's Journey* as a poignant tale of how the system we live in destroys the hopes and dreams of youth and, often literally, wrecks people's lives.

Felicia's Journey, by William Trevor, Viking, £5.99.

Desperate
pursuit

by NIMISHA TRIVEDI

DESPERADOES IS a novel set in Nicaragua in 1985, following the Sandinista revolution.

It is written like a road movie and follows Frank Little, a taxi driver from Dublin, and his estranged wife Eleanor.

They arrive in Nicaragua in search of their missing son, Johnny. They have been told he's been killed in the war.

They arrive to find the Contras, backed by the US government, waging a war against the people.

Towns and cities are ruined, supplies are scarce, there is chaos everywhere.

Frank and Eleanor travel in a hippy style transit van accompanied by Johnny's rock and roll band.

Gripping

We get an insight into their lives in Ireland while the descriptions of the atmosphere in Nicaragua give a taste of people's everyday battles.

This is a humorous, gripping thriller. If you're going on holiday this summer, it's a very good read.]

Desperadoes by Joseph O'Connor, Flamingo, £5.99.

where we stand

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

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be reformed out of existence. Parliament cannot be used to end the system. The courts army and police are there to defend the interests of the capitalist class not to run society in a neutral fashion.

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

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST:

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

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression which divide and weaken the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women. We stand for: free contraception and free, legalised abortion and the right to divorce; the complete separation of church and state, an end to church control over schools and hospitals; an end to discrimination against gays and lesbians; an end to racism and anti-traveller bigotry. We argue for working class unity in the fight against oppression.

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH:

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

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT:

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

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY:

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

news & reports—politics; the unions—

Wexford fire fighters strike set to spread

THE TWELVE week old strike by Co. Wexford firefighters is now the longest firefighters strike in the history of the state.

Representatives of the retainer service from 15 counties recently met in Wexford town to spread solidarity action for their colleagues. Workers in seven other counties will now be balloted for a full escalation of the dispute.

Local councils around the country are watching the outcome of this fight. If the Wexford authorities succeed in pushing through savage cutbacks on the service, other authorities are ready to follow. But the fraternity and solidarity among the firefighters is solid.

One representative from Dublin Fire Brigade said, "There will be great support for your strike in Dublin. If Wicklow come out we will not be touching their work."

Wicklow is one of the counties to be balloted. Over the Summer the Wicklow fire service has been pinned to the collar in fighting forest fires. Their action will be key in pushing through for a victory.

Tipperary North and South, Laois, Roscommon and Kerry will also be voted

Solidarity for ever!

WATERFORD Socialist Workers Party raised £170 at a social organised in the town. They also held a lively public meeting in New Ross to build solidarity for the strike.

Firefighters in Liverpool sent cheques of over £200 to the strikers fund and support has been coming in from brigades around Britain. The strikers are planning to tour brigades in England to build support.

Workers in Waterford Glass have held meetings with the strikers and donated generously to the fighting fund.

All donations should be sent to The Firefighters Fund, c/o SIPTU, North Main Street, Wexford.

to spread the action. Wexford firefighters will be active in lobbying for full support for the ballot and holding meetings around the country. As one shop steward told

Socialist Worker, "This is a fantastic development for us. We need to up the ante in this strike and now we have every reason to get up the morning and go out and build for support".

GOVERNMENT FUNDS ARMY SCABBING

DESPITE ALL their talk of saving money, the government are paying from Exchequer funds to keep the Army scabbing on the Wexford firefighters strike.

Army units are being billeted in B&B's around the county and money is being spent on new equipment for them.

More soldiers are being trained up for firefighting duties as the current batch are due to go to the Lebanon in September.

They might do a better job than this lot. Local people are angry at the service the scabs are giving. One striker told Socialist Worker:

"The army are getting lost going out on calls. The jeep which is supposed to guide the appliance, races through the town, turns off in one direction and the appliance in another."

A few weeks ago it took the scabs 45 minutes to get to a fire in the centre of New Ross. When flooding occurred in Wexford town the Army were hopeless in coping.

But local people find that their complaints are being censored. Wexford Local Radio cut dead callers who phoned in to complain. The strike is rarely reported by any section of the Irish media.

Military

Pickets on the B&B accommodation used by the Army have been maintained by the strikers. In Enniscorthy pickets were told by Gardaí to "get lost. This is a military installation".

In Gorey the pickets have successfully won support from local creamery workers who have refused to collect milk from the farm where the scabs are staying.

As we go to press, the firefighters are expecting to be injuncted by the state from picketing these "Army installations". But they are more determined than ever to win. A victory in this dispute could force the government to back off on the cuts.

DERRY:

CWU fight to save GPO

THE Communication Workers Union in Derry city are campaigning to save the GPO which Crown Post Office is attempting to relocate in local department stores.

This would threaten post office workers' conditions, job security and pay levels.

Customers will lose out as services are re-

duced. The campaign shows how fighting for improved conditions for all cuts across the sectarian

divide. Within minutes of each other the CWU petition was signed by both Tony Crowe, Deputy Governor of the Apprentice Boys and Bernie Bradley a Sinn Fein councillor.

But the key to winning against the Crown Post office will be workers' action.

If Derry post office workers stop the plans to sell off their services, workers in Portadown, Belfast and elsewhere could follow their lead.

BRICKIES FIGHT VICTIMISATION

TWELVE MEMBERS of BATU, the bricklayers' union, went on strike in Dublin's Pearse Street in early August.

The workers took action after their boss sacked their two shop stewards and three other workers for trade union activity.

Work at the site, an extension of student residences in Trinity College, has been completely held up. The workers's had

sought negotiations with the building company John Sisk & Sons who had contracted out the operation.

Contracted

Sisk, the biggest construction company in Ireland, only directly employs

a handful of bricklayers. All other work is contracted out.

One striker told Socialist Worker: "We are typical of most construction workers in Dublin.

Many workers are in the black economy.

"But none of us enjoy the full protection and benefits that we are entitled to. The sub-contracting practices are widespread."

SWP branch meetings—all welcome

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

8pm in the Anchor Inn, Georges Quay.

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

Community Centre, beside Finglas Inn.

CURRANS HOTEL, Eyre Square—contact national address for details.

address for venue.

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

DERRY
Meets every Tuesday in Badgers Bar at 8pm

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

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

NEWRY
Meets every Wednesday at 8pm—contact national

WATERFORD

Meets every Thursday at 8pm in ATGWU hall, Waterford.

CORK
Meets every Thursday at

BRAY
Meets every Thursday at 8pm Contact national address for details.

DUBLIN CLONDALKIN
Contact 8722682 for details of meetings

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

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The best beginner's guide in Ireland to all the basic ideas of Socialism—economics, history, oppression and the class struggle.



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send in your reports telephone: (01) 872 2682, fax: (01) 872 3838

Marks & Sparks cleaners and porters fight cuts

SEVENTY workers in Marks & Spencer's Dublin stores have been on strike since August 1st.

Cleaners and porters at the multi-million pound company are fighting against cuts in their wages, pensions, sick pay and holiday pay.

Marks and Spencer made a last minute offer to settle the dispute but insisted on excluding full-time staff from their offer.

But the workers have rightly stuck together and part-timers and full-timers are holding out to win a decent settlement.

Cuts in pay could amount to £29 per week and for some workers this

MARKS & Spencer is an enormously wealthy company. In its May staff newsletter, "St Michael's News" management announced "another record year for sales and profits".

■ Profits up to £924.3 million

■ Turnover up to £6.8 billion
Marks & Spencer boss Sir Richard Greenbury got a 17% rise this year, taking his wages to £807,000 a year for running the company.

Sir Richard recently headed The Greenbury Report into top peoples' pay.

This committee was set up by

the bosses organisation, the CBI and backed by John Major following public outrage at a wave of huge payouts to top executives.

But, like a committee of convicts asked to draw up a thieves' code of conduct, it was stuffed full of the very "fat cats" it was supposed to investigate.

will mean an annual loss of £1,300.

The strikers, who are members of SIPTU, are united and determined.

But so far they have not won the support of the sales or Security staff.

SIPTU should immediately call out security workers in support of the strikers.

Operate

Marks & Spencer could

not operate their stores effectively without security and MANDATE members should refuse to work with any scabs brought in by management.

Some of the pickets are frustrated with the way

the strike is being run. Pickets are usually kept to a minimum of six.

But the Dunnes workers showed how large and lively pickets could win the support of the shoppers.

RESISTANCE AT TEAM

TEAM WORKERS are still hitting back at management.

The general operatives in the company took unofficial action in late July for two days.

They refused to use a new clock-in "swipe" system which Team bosses say "makes the work more efficient for paying customers".

Craftworkers received a productivity payment two years ago for using the new system.

But Team refused to give anything to the general operatives.

After two days the workers were taken off the payroll and another row was set to take off in Team.

But union leaders stepped in and the workers agreed to operate the new system under protest.

Negotiations are taking place on a productivity payment.

Meantime, the famous five year plan for the company has run into troubled waters.

The independent chairman, appointed by the Labour Court to mediate on an £8 million cost saving plan has walked out of the talks.

The bosses insist there is agreement on how the money will be saved.

The workers insist that they are prepared to negotiate savings but not at their cost.

The unions have rightly refused to agree to binding arbitration.

Team workers have already given the company productivity and extra hours while management continue to look after their own interests.

Workers in Team are saying enough is enough and have no faith in the Labour Court or its "independent" chairman.

Hospital workers plan stoppage

A THREE hour work stoppage by over 5,000 hospital workers is planned to take place across the Eastern Health Board region on August 23rd.

Cleaners, porters and domestics voted by 17 to 1 to support action over demands for early retirement and improved pensions.

During the month of July strike committees met to plan a campaign of action following the strong mandate for strike.

Already union leaders are talking of calling off the action if the Labour Relations Commission offers to intervene.

But this issue will not be settled by mediation. Ruairi Quinn's Department of Finance has already made clear that "no more cash" will be given out.

The workers are determined to win and plan a further ballot for a series of

★ THE IRISH Nurses' Organisation plans to ballot members in September for strike action on early retirement. Nurses have waited since 1984 for the Government to

negotiate with their unions on pensions and retirement schemes.

The nurses's union represents 15,600 of the South's 22,000 general nurses.

Nurses are already angry

and impatient with the government over the issues of pay and overcrowding of wards. Their action on early retirement is set to coincide with action by ancillary workers throughout the

Eastern Health Board. Workers from all sections of the health service have everything to gain by showing strength and solidarity together during the strikes planned for September.

24 hour stoppages in September.

Strike committees have already made plans for emergency cover during the stoppages.

Improved

Workers in the Health Board and voluntary hospital sectors will only receive £28 after 40 years of service and this is linked into the state "old age pension".

The union are demanding that the pension scheme be improved and separate

from the state pension.

"The union should put a figure on our demands.

"We should be quite clear that we want early retirement at 55 years of age, the same as teachers, and double the figure that we get now", one shop steward told Socialist Worker.

"The union leaders are wrong to call off any action on the promise of talks.

"And when the action goes ahead we want a clear strategy for escalation of our strike".

CIVIL SERVANTS BALLOT OVER JOBS EMBARGO

OVER 3,000 civil service workers are balloting on industrial action in the departments of Social Welfare and the Revenue Commissioners.

The dispute is as a result of the government's restrictions on recruiting more workers to the service. The embargo on jobs has led to major difficulties over staff shortages, vacancies, and promotions.

Many of the workers

involved are low-paid civil servants and promotional opportunities have been the only way they can escape the low pay net. The government are trying to penny pinch again on the lowest paid workers and blocking their chances to earn more.

The same re-structuring plan was voted in by a very narrow margin in the higher civil service grades.

One PSEU member told Socialist Worker "Even though I am at

Executive Officer level, my earnings are just above the lowest paid in the Service.

"Now I will be expected to do the work of a Higher E.O. without the pay that goes with it.

"The re-structuring is a hood-wink and our union did a hard sale on accepting the deal."

The ballot for strike by the low paid clerical grades is a good start in fighting the government's miserable treatment of their workers.

Socialist Worker Trade Union Conference

Saturday 23rd September
Teachers Club, 36 Parnell Square

SESSIONS INCLUDE:

Rebuilding Union Organisation:

Jim Larmour (Belfast Trades Council); Marnie Holborow (SIPTU Shop Steward)

Militancy or Partnership:

Eamonn McCann (Derry trades Council); Jimmy Kelly (Chief Shop Steward,

Waterford Glass)

Socialists in the unions:

Brid Smith (Socialist Worker Industrial Correspondent); Laura Duffy (INTO Shop Steward)

Time to make our unions fight...
Come along and discuss how we rebuild solidarity and militancy...

Why I'm going ...

"I think this conference is very important for trade union militants. Union leaders today are always talking about compromise and the need to be competitive. Instead of us making all the sacrifices in our jobs we need to get better organised at shop floor level and give the lead ourselves."—John, a mechanic in CIE.

Please send me more details and a full programme of the Socialist Worker Trade Union Conference

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Open to all who support the policies of this newspaper

Socialist Worker

Make the unions fight

THE UNION leaders in Telecom have done a massive U-turn on privatisation. David Begg of the Communication Workers Union says the sell-off of 35 per cent is 'liveable with'.

But two years ago the CWU ran a major publicity campaign calling on the fat cats to keep their 'claws off Telecom'.

The union hired billboards, printed T-shirts and even made an anti-privatisation film called *Sell-out*.

Now it is the CWU leaders who are selling out.

As one CWU member said to Socialist Worker: "After all the money they spent on the fat cats campaign the union now wants to join up with the fat cats."

John O'Dowd of the Civil and Public Service Union has also dropped the rhetoric about opposing the sell-off. Last year O'Dowd persuaded the CPSU executive to overturn union policy and agree to the sale of up to 30 per cent of Telecom.

The ESB union leaders have not caved in as dramatically as this but they have taken part in a Cost and Competitiveness Review.

They have adopted the same 'partnership' approach advocated by O'Dowd and Begg. This approach starts by accepting the employers' argument that competition is 'inevitable'.

But once the unions go down that road they have accepted the logic of job losses and cutbacks.

Disgust

And, as TEAM Aer Lingus and Packard show, once you accept attacks the buses inevitably come back for more.

Many rank and file workers are opposed to the attacks on the semi-states. Some CWU members have even left the union in disgust.

But this is a mistake. The best way to direct the anger is to stay in the union and organise from the bottom up to force the bureaucrats to lead a fight.

Workers in Telecom and the ESB are extremely powerful. Big business still depends on them for basic services and would be terrified of workers' action hitting their profits.

As Lowry attacks jobs in Telecom, ESB...

Claws off the public sector

The government is launching a major attack on the public sector.

They want to open up Telecom Eireann and the ESB to competition by the year 2000 and destroy thousands of jobs in both companies.

The Minister responsible, Michael Lowry, has given the go ahead for the sell-off of 35 per cent of Telecom under the guise of a 'strategic alliance'.

Democratic Left and the Labour Party have joined the consensus that has emerged among politicians, semi-state bosses and the media that competition is unstoppable and that 'ideological' objections to privatisation will have to be dropped.

Quibble

The main quibble from Democratic Left was over just how much of Telecom should be sold.

There is talk of 4,000 jobs being destroyed in Telecom and 2,895 jobs will go in the ESB. Management in both companies are waging a propaganda war to convince their workers to 'embrace change'.



Lowry: Letting the fat cats take over

ESB staff have been encouraged to watch a propaganda video of the Berlin Wall coming down and the Irish soccer team has even been used to sell the message that 'change is inevitable'!

Telecom bosses now issue a regular magazine called *XChange* to their workforce complete with personal messages from company

Chief Executive, Alfie Kane, on the need to face the 'challenges' ahead.

The main argument used to justify competition is that it will result in cheaper and more efficient services to the public.

Services

In reality the changes will result in worse services and higher prices for working class consumers.

When bosses talk about making their companies 'customer driven' they are really referring to the business customers.

Charges for electricity and phone calls will be 'rebalanced' so that residential customers will end up subsidising cheaper rates for companies.

Under ESB's new plans, rates for domestic users will rise by between 11 and 15 per cent while prices for businesses will fall.

Telecom's operator services are already being cut back. Emergency calls are now answered on a national network.

This means that if a caller in Kerry wants an ambulance, the 999 call could be answered by an operator in Dublin who has to look up a list of hospitals in Kerry.

One operator who spoke to *Socialist Worker* fears that sooner or later someone will die because of the delays resulting from this new arrangement.

The attacks on the public sector means that the drive to make big profits will take over completely from any notion of providing a service to meet the needs of ordinary people.

Who gains from sell-off?

THE ONLY people to gain from the sell-off of Telecom will be those who already own most of the wealth in society.

Financiers including Dermot Desmond of NCB Stockbrokers are competing for the lucrative tender to act as "advisers" to Telecom during the sell-off.

Semi-state directors and top executives will see their salaries and bonuses go through the roof over the next few years.

Telecom's Alfie Kane already gets close to £200,000 a year before privatisation.