

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

Inside:

**US warship in
Irish waters
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**March against USS JFK's visit
Tuesday July 2nd 7pm
People's Park Dun Laoghaire**

AS NURSES DENIED DEAL

Politicians' £10,000 pay hike scandal

The TDs in Dail Eireann think they are underpaid and overworked.

And they want more money.

Not for them a modest increase such as the nurses are demanding. They want a whopping £10,000 extra a year. And they are not joking!

They have gotten yet another group of consultants to make their case for them.

Fee

The fee for these consultants—a mere £20,000—has

already been paid for by the taxes of working people.

They persuaded the consultants that they work a 70 hour week when the Dail is in recess and a staggering 81 hours a week when Dail business is on.

But no one explained why the Dail benches are usually empty for such exciting programmes as Dail Report.

Lying

The reality, of course, is that they are lying through their teeth. Most of them hang around the Dail bar or make phone calls to get a few favours for their supporters.

At the moment a Dail

deputy earns a basic rate of £33,354 which is nearly twice as much as what most low paid white collar and manual workers earn.

On top of that they get a minimum of £7,738 in tax free expenses.

In addition, they are allowed to earn a fortune from their other jobs. Take Michael McDowell, for example.

His party, the Progressive Democrats, wants a cheap

labour economy like Hong Kong.

Yet McDowell can earn an extra £1,000 a week on top of his Dail salary for appearing as a top barrister in the courts.

Pensions

Only 63 of the 166 TDs rely solely on their basic wage.

Most of the rest draw on pensions from serving as

former government Ministers or get salaries from other jobs.

The TDs claim that if do not get their pay rise, they will not attract the 'right calibre of person' to the job.

But how do they explain how the right people are carrying out responsible jobs as nurses when they get only half their pay?

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WATER CHARGES:

Politicians on the run

AT A public meeting organised by a local residents' association a Fianna Fail councillor stated that only 17% of households in the South Dublin council area had paid their water charges in full over the last three years.

It's becoming clear that the mass non-payment campaign and the resistance on the ground is putting the politicians under enormous pressure.

At the Democratic Left conference last month things got quite heated when anti-water charges protesters asked Prionsias de Rossa to account for his actions in government.

Abused

A protester had a placard pushed into his face by de Rossa while a photographer from the Irish Independent was verbally abused and obstructed from taking photos by three of de Rossa's aides.

The NUJ has since passed a motion of censure of Democratic Left.

There will be more court appearances by non-payers over the coming weeks with



the first appeal cases being heard in the Circuit Court, most likely on June 20th.

The courts have consistently shown no justice towards non-payers—with pensioners like Jim

Campbell and Lawrence both having disconnection orders made against them.

Resistance

It is therefore vital that we continue to use the

courts as a focus for protest and have no illusions in the courts themselves as a means of abolishing the charges.

The resistance to water

charges has really shaken the political establishment.

With the pressure kept on and the non-payment kept up the charges can be defeated.

Children with 'nowhere to go' left in hospital

IN THE same week that TDs revealed that £50,000 a year was not enough for them, Dublin's Temple Street Hospital revealed that healthy children had been kept at the hospital for periods of more than a month.

The reason is that the government refuses to fund more residential homes for children in care.

At Risk

One baby of less than a year old was in hospital for more than two months because he has 'nowhere to go' according to Dr Tom Matthews, chairperson of the hospital's medical board.

The Irish Association of Social Workers has demanded that the government end the use of hospitals as 'places of safety' for children at risk.

They want proper funding for decent emergency residential units and increased payments for foster parents.

British scientist warns of mad-cow yoghurt

A KEY British scientist, Richard Lacey has warned that products containing gelatine are still a major health threat.

Gelatine is found in sweets, yoghurt and jellies.

Lacey has been denounced for being hysterical by those who are more concerned by farmers' profits than people's health.

But he has a long record of standing up to the lies of the food industry.

He was originally associated with the London Food Commission.

But when he revealed the danger of salmonella in eggs, the Tory government removed grants from his research.

He was also the first to suggest a link

between BSE and the human form of the brain disease.

Lacey was contradicted by an Irish food expert, Dr James Sheridan from Teagasc—a body which closely with Irish farmers.

Research

But Lacey pointed out that research which showed that gelatine was safe were based on experiments with mice which is not satisfactory.

Lacey is fully supporting the ban on British beef products and has warned that cattle farmers in Britain would have to 'learn a new trade'—just like the miners who lost all their jobs.

Babyfood scare: Beware of another cover-up

THE BABYFOOD scare in Britain suggests another government cover up like the one over BSE.

The British Ministry of Food has once more come out on the side of the big food companies who stand to lose from the health scare. The ministry claims there is "nothing to worry about".

But chemicals banned in Japan 20 years ago have recently been found in baby formula milk at levels close to those which seriously harmed baby rats during experiments.

The chemicals, known as phthalates, damaged the testicles and lowered the sperm count of the rats.

Phthalates are used for softening plastics like PVC. In some cases when they are used in food containers or wrapping they can migrate from the plastic to the product.

The Irish government relies on the advice of the British ministry instead of carrying out independent tests on babyfood products.

The consumers, association says that "manufacturers rights are being put before those of consumers".

Companies like ICI and BP Chemicals make huge profits from dangerous Chlorine and PVC products. In Ireland, Superquinn says it is not taking any action over the scare.

Independent tests should be carried out immediately instead of relying on the biased opinions of food and retail bosses.

T.D.s' pay hike scandal

Continued from page one

And why is it only people who can talk and make speeches who have to be of 'the right calibre'?

The truth is that it is the *wrong* people who are already attracted to the Dail by the huge salaries and tax free expenses.

If they were all put on the average workers wages, many of the upper class sharks who make hypocritical speeches might at least go away.

Preaching

At the moment government Ministers are preaching about the need for pay restraint almost every day.

They claim that if nurses, teachers and other public sector workers are paid the salary they deserve the economy will be ruined.

But now they have given the game away.

They only want restraint for us while they live it up. Not only should they be told to get stuffed but we should all look for decent pay rises so that we can be sure to have the 'right calibre of people'.

The TDs in Dail Eireann are already overpaid and enjoy massive tax free expenses. Here is what they get.

- a basic salary of £33,354 a year. This is twice what the average nurses earns.

- £58.48 overnight allowance for TDs who live 20 miles outside Dublin. Most TDs get an average of £4,795 a year from this number.

- Free phone bills of up to £2,000 for 'constituency business'.

- A 50p a mile travel allowance.

- A £5,000 grant for setting up a constituency office.

- £2,650 a year for office expenses.

No wonder these earnings of around £50,000 a year attract the greediest sharks who care little about the massive poverty they were voted in to eradicate.

inside the system

US force 'oil for food' deal on Iraq

"IT'S AN excellent day for the Iraqi people" were the words of Madeline Albright, the US Ambassador to the UN.

She was referring to a new plan to allow Saddam Hussein to sell oil in return for food and medicine.

A Whitehouse spokesper-

son was more honest when he called the deal an 'important victory' for the US.

The agreement will profit both the multi-nationals who will get their hands of 2 billion dollars of cheap Iraqi oil every six months and Saddam's regime who will benefit from a new source of hard currency.

It will do nothing for the 500,000 Iraqi children who have died over the six years of UN imposed sanctions on Iraq.

Nor will it do anything to help ordinary Iraqis who have seen their living conditions destroyed since 1990 when the sanctions were imposed.

Chained to a workbench!

Bobby Northington a 29 year old temporary production worker at Hambleton-Hill Publishing in America really knows what the bosses drive for more productivity means.

His supervisor chained him to his workbench to stop him mingling with fellow workers!

According to a legal suit filed in Nashville, last month Bobby moved away from his work station to offer a stick of chewing gum to a friend.

His supervisor arrived and "instructed him to put his right leg adjacent to the table leg" according to the suit.

She then "wrapped the chain tightly around his leg

and locked it" said Northington's lawyer, Stephen Pate.

After 30 minutes, a supervisor walked by and said they "should now be able to get some production of Mr

Northington".

The legal suit charges Hambleton Hill with "false imprisonment, outrageous conduct and an extremely abusive work environment".

The final frontier

Female astronauts may work on the Russian space station *Mir* but they still cannot escape some earth bound ideas about their role.

In commenting on the presence of a female American astronaut on *Mir*, a Russian space agency official said that the space station's "micro-climate will definitely be improved."

He made his judgement on the grounds that the station's "fans will be taken care of in a more timely manner because we know women love to clean, and they will take care of the fans to allow less dust in the environment".

News from nowhere

"The *Evening News* is not politically aligned, nor has it links with any groups or organisations that have any interests other than newspaper business".

So read the editorial in Dublin's new evening newspaper.

Yet despite all their professed independence, the paper refuses to reveal where exactly the finance—nearly £2 million—was coming from.

SORRY ABOUT THAT

THE BRITISH Nazi writer David Irving is running into more trouble.

Irving receives regular praise from the *Irish Times* columnist Kevin Myers who argues that his ideas should be given free publicity.

But now the very moderate publisher St Martin's Press have cancelled plans to publish his biography of Joseph Goebbels, the propaganda chief for Hitler.

Thomas McCormack the chairperson of the company said the company had originally planned to print the book. But they "made a mistake and there is no worse way to compound a mistake than by not admitting it and not correcting it if you can".

While valiantly defending the 'right to free speech' the

liberal *Irish Times* refused to print letters from the Anti-Nazi League condemning their decisions to print articles from the Coleraine Nazi, Richard Lynn.

★ IN THE 1970s, there was a Queen's Silver Jubilee commemorative mug for royal fanatics.

In the 1980s, there was a special Charles and Di "fairytale wedding mug".

Now the Cornwall china company J&S Chown has a new one of those who want to complete their collection.

Yes, it's the 1990s Charles and Di divorce mug. The bone china mug features a picture of a royal couple looking away from each other with the legend, "Sadly, they have announced their intention to divorce".

what we think

Sinn Fein: After poll success, where to do now?

THE increase in the Sinn Fein vote to 44% of all Ireland has come as a shock to John Major.

It was a thumping rejection of his demand that Sinn Fein meet a number of pre-conditions before they could enter talks on the future of Northern Ireland.

For the last two years Major, Trimble and Paisley used the issue of de-commissioning to pretend that Northern Ireland faced a "normal policing problem" and that the neutrality of the RUC and the British army had to be accepted.

Support

Sinn Fein have proved that they have huge support from Catholics in rejecting this demand. But the question now is: what happens with the IRA?

One option they are debating is to call off the armed struggle, probably for good, and allow Sinn Fein to become a party like the SDLP or Fianna Fail.

Or they can return to the military campaign as an answer to the frustration they feel with British intentions. They could avoid this choice for a period by continuing the 'de facto' ceasefire which has been in effect for the past few months.

But increasingly this looks more a matter of indecision rather than a planned strategy.

Hatred

Socialist Worker is opposed to any return to the armed struggle. It would intensify sectarian hatred and inflict massive suffering on both working class Catholics and Protestants.

Rejecting any notion of armed struggle does not, however, mean endorsing the likely road that Gerry Adams is likely to follow.

Throughout Irish history republicanism has often shifted from being opposed to helping to manage it.

Dropped

From the days of Michael Collins through to Frank Aiken and Sean McBride republicans who dropped the gun became the most conventional of politicians.

There is no reason to believe that Gerry Adams will be any different.

What is on offer from all party talks are real improvements for the growing Catholic middle class and a

refurbished system of sectarianism whereby Catholic and Protestant workers compete for low paid jobs from multinationals.

But the price for even these changes is that homage is paid to US imperialism and its more active role in Ireland.

As Sinn Fein gets ready to follow the road already set by Fianna Fail, there is a

need to start building a different set of politics for the North and South.

These have to see class as the main division in Ireland.

They have stand outside the Green and Orange camps and promote a fight against the two states which locked Ireland into a carnival of reaction for so many decades.



IFA goes mad over beef

Leaders of the Irish Farmers Association are claiming that they are facing the worst crisis ever to hit agriculture because of BSE scare.

Last month they stormed out of the Dail because Ivan Yates the Minister for Agriculture was not doing enough.

Yet Yates has done everything to hide the full implications of the BSE scare. He argues that Irish cattle are completely safe—even though we have the 3rd highest rate of BSE in Europe.

Already the Irish government has offered a £57 million compensation package to the farmers because of falling beef prices—but they insist that it is not enough.

Organisations like the IFA have always championed the

free market. They are a right wing group who attack the very idea of trade unions representing their members.

When CPSU members went on a work to rule in the Department of Agriculture the IFA organised a sit-in in protest. They denounced the workers for trying to 'rob the public purse'.

Work

But when the free market does not work they want more hand-outs from the EU and the Irish government.

The reality is that the mar-

ket is a disaster when it comes to food production.

The drive for profits means that food is being produced at artificially high prices across mass starvation exists when the world.

Last year, for example, even before the BSE scare, 121,600 more cattle were reared in Irish farms even though there was a drop of 40% in demand for their meat in Europe. The market is not about responding to human need.

The BSE scare would never have arisen if farmers did not use cheaper bonemeal products to feed their animals. In Britain, they got the Tories to remove all regulations on the use of these products in order to push up their profits.

Agriculture, like every other industry, needs to be run on a co-operative basis that responds to human need.

A decent socialist society would remove the scandals of poor quality food, beef mountains and set-aside land because it would be concerned to use resources effectively.

Public ownership of land and co-operative farming would also mean relief for small farmers who are forced to work long hours. It would guarantee them access to labour saving machinery, decent holidays and the satisfaction that they are making a real contribution to society.

Breaking the power of the IFA over Irish politics will be an important part of that fight.

Job statistics scam

When the government talks about job creation it conveniently forgets to mention that many of them are half a job - at best.

Between April 1992 and 1995 a total of 95,000 new jobs were added to the economy, according to former Irish Press journalist Colm Rappale.

Part-time

But "half of these net new jobs were part-time while the number on special job schemes jumped by 25,000," he writes.

"Some 12% of all workers are now in part-time jobs compared with 7.5 percent in 1989.

Right wingers who claim that Irish capitalism is working also use the Labour Force Survey as proof that the boom is creating new jobs.

System

But this systematically understates the number of people on the dole.

It gives a figure of 175,000 for April 1995, compared to the Register's 276,000.

This difference of more than 100,000 is due to people excluded by the Labour Force Survey, which asks what you were up to last week, not whether you receive social welfare benefits.

So it excludes around 27,000 long-term unemployed who are not looking for work any longer and 26,000 part-time workers who only sign on for part of

the week. It does not include the 40,000 people on job schemes nor the 17,000 FAS

course participants. Many women tick the Labour Force Survey's 'On Home Duties'

category even though they sign on, and they are not counted.

FORFAS: Less dole for jobless & less tax for bosses

Fewer rights for workers, less social security and tax cuts for big business—that could be the Irish government's industrial strategy for the next 15 years.

Forfas, the agency that advises the Minister for Enterprise and Employment, has just drawn up a vicious report whose "pro-employer trust" even the national papers picked up on.

The social welfare system is so generous, it says, that

people prefer not to work at all. "The incentive to create and take up part-time jobs could be reduced" thanks to all that dosh we get on the dole.

It recommends that employers pay less in social security contributions for

their workers. Workers take out private pensions to save the State money.

Even if the EU won't let Ireland continue its special 10% tax rate for firms beyond 2010, Forfas has still good news for the bosses.

"It is planned to adopt a single low rate of tax by 2005 as close as possible to 10%,"

Stress hits women at home

Women who stay at home are twice as likely to suffer depression than those who work outside the home.

A Dublin Northside GP, found that 17.8% of housewives were depressed compared to 8.6% of women who also worked away from home.

Worries

Financial worries were the biggest problem. More than half (57%) of non-working women "regarded the family income as inadequate," Dr Dolores Rafter states.

Money troubles increase the burden on marriage. They create feelings of "insecurity in the marriages of these non-

working women, making them more susceptible to depression," according to a 1990 study.

Out of all the depressed women a whopping three quarters (76.9%) mentioned difficulties with bills to Dr Rafter.

Women who are not in paid employment also see their doctor more often. Dr Rafter describes a vicious circle: "linking anxiety over financial problems, stress-related illness, and a tendency to more frequent GP consultations of a more serious nature."

Middle class DL-ers sneer at workmen

"Hell cannot be worse than having workmen in the house. Holy God would cheer if one were to crawl through a floor space."

This piece of hatred could have come from some magazine for upper class twits.

But instead it appeared in an official Democratic Left magazine, *Women's Forum*.

The writer, Esther Steel, argued that when workmen discovered that a woman was living on her own they were "more dangerous to women than all the Jack Rippers or Des Hanifin put together". Every socialist should con-

demn sexist behaviour no matter where it comes from. But the idea that working class men are more sexist than upper class rugby supporters is a nonsense. The claim that every workman is a rapist in disguise is a real insult to the thousands of former supporters of DL. Maybe if they showed the same degree of contempt for Fine Gael, they might get somewhere.

Cracking down on immigrants is Europe's main concern

As a lead up to taking up the Euro presidency in July the Irish Government has boasted of its plans to put unemployment and drugs at the top of the agenda.

But a comment from the European police agency, Europol, reveals the true aims of Europe's governments. Europol's director

recently declared that "a crackdown" on the smuggling of illegal immigrants as its "main concern".

This announcement comes at a time when Germany, France and Britain are using immigrants as scapegoats for unemployment as well as pushing repressive immigration laws through the courts. Ireland's policy on immigration is no different.

Behind the headlines

Drugs crisis: we need resources not vigilantes

Drug addiction has produced shock horror headlines in the papers and calls for harsher measures against pushers.

If only the "Mr Bigs" can be caught and put behind bars the problem will be solved.

But what none of the media have highlighted is that drug addiction is the result of poverty and deprivation. As long as there are profits to be made from this social misery, criminals will always be willing to supply the demand.

All the studies show the clear link between unemployment and drug addiction.

One recent study by the Health Research Board pointed out that 42 percent of addicts receiving treatment in 1991 had left school before the official leaving age of 15 and more than half lived in areas of greater Dublin linked with high unemployment, poor housing and with a history of drug related crime, dealing and use.

One Dublin drugs black spot, the south inner city, is one of the most poverty-stricken and run down in the state. Youth unemployment stands at 70 per cent. Less than 1 percent of local young people are in third-level education—whereas in middle class Castleknock the figure is 53 percent.

Beaten

The majority of heroin addicts also want to come off the drug. Instead of getting beaten up by vigilante groups, they need drug treatment centres for back-up and legal heroin substitutes like physopetone.

Yet official policy makes the problem worse.

There are an estimated 7,000 to 10,000 addicts in Ireland. Yet only 3,000 were treated last year in 22 centres.

There are 1,900 addicts on waiting lists for treatment. The result is only a quarter of those looking for help receive it.

And there are just 20 detoxification beds.

By far the most sensible approach to drugs has come from the Merchant's Quay project which has worked on the problem for a number of years.

Some of their spokespersons have defended the idea of decriminalising drugs as it is a medical rather than police issue.

One of their recent reports states that "the lack of medically prescribed and legally controlled access to physopetone (and other substitutes to street drugs) contributes directly to the high cost of street drugs and to the high cost of street drugs and to the high level of crime associated with them."

One of the workers on the project, Father Sean Cassin said: "If the health system takes your child away, the judicial system incarcerates your mother

There are 1,900 addicts on waiting lists for treatment, only a quarter of those looking for help get it.

or father and the welfare system gives you an insufficient amount to live on, you are going to see the world as a lousy place."

Local people trying to improve the amenities in their areas after years of official neglect are obstructed at every turn.

In west Tallaght there is now huge concern about the drugs problem.

Nightmare

One west Tallaght youth worker told *Socialist Worker*: "It's a nightmare trying to get a grant for a simple thing like a snooker table for a youth club. Local people have tried to get things like youth clubs going. But all the red tape and lack of funding means it usually comes to nothing. Facilities for youngsters round here are just not a priority for the government."

The drugs crisis is a massive public health problem. The "get tough" law and order lobby has failed in the US after spending \$85 billion since George Bush announced his war on drugs. But cocaine, crack and heroin are as plentiful as ever in the slums of America's cities.

Anyone must sympathise with parents who want to run suppliers off their estates but the vigilante groups failed in the '80s.

Even if pushers are run out of their houses or flats, they will simply move to another area. And the majority of dealers are not big time crime figures but junkies themselves.

Resources

In the short term the government must be made to provide the resources for adequate drug treatment facilities and substitution programmes to help users get off drugs.

The only long term solution is to tackle the roots of the problem.

In the public housing estates of Dublin's inner city and areas like west Tallaght unemployment is as high as 80 per cent. What jobs exist are frequently low-paid and casual.

Until serious resources are provided to eliminate poverty and to provide worthwhile jobs in these areas the hopelessness and the drugs crisis will remain.

—KEVIN WINGFIELD

The frame-up of Colin Duffy

ON 21st June, Colin Duffy will appear before an appeal court in Northern Ireland to try to clear his name of a murder charge.

Colin is the victim of one of the most blatant frame-ups in recent years.

Colin's nightmare began in 1990 when a friend of his, Sam Marshall, was assassinated by a loyalist murder squad. Colin was present at the murder and appeared at a press conference in Belfast to allege direct collusion between the RUC and the murderers.

Ever since he was subject to intense harassment. "They would raid the house, lift him for a few days and threaten him in Gough Barracks", Susan Duffy, his wife, told *Socialist Worker*.

Arrested

Then on June 23rd 1993, a former UDR Sergeant, John Lyness was shot dead near his home in Lurgan. Four days after the shooting Colin was arrested and eventually convicted for the murder.

The evidence against Colin hinged on two key witnesses. One was a former soldier in the Ulster Defence Regiment, known only as witness B.

He claimed to have been driving at speed some distance away from the attack. He could only have caught a glimpse but in that split second he claimed to have recognised Colin Duffy.

The way he knew it was Colin Duffy was that he had searched a car he was travelling in three years ago!

"We did a re-construction of the events to show that this witness could not possibly have recognised Colin—but the judge just dismissed us," said Susan Duffy.

The case was presided over by Judge Brian Kerr who had previously found the Ballymurphy 7—a group of teenagers—guilty of planning a murder of a police officer. That case was later thrown out on appeal.

The other witness who helped to convict Colin Duffy was Lindsay Robb, who was subsequently found guilty of



RUC organised campaign of harassment against Duffy

gun-running to the UVF in the midst of the ceasefire last year.

Duffy claims that he was walking in Lurgan Park just after the murder and saw two men on bicycles leaving the scene.

Yet he never rang the police at the time.

Instead he waited un-

til midnight of July 1st when it had already become public knowledge that Colin Duffy had been arrested.

Matches

The defence asked for the tape of his phone call to the station but it has never been produced.

He claims to have recognised Colin through pool matches at the Derryhirk Inn but this is dismissed by Colin's friends.

The defence produced one witness, Gregory McCann, who knew Colin and was also in Lurgan Park where he saw two men running

away from the scene of the attack. He testified that Colin Duffy was not one of them. Yet he was dismissed as an unreliable witness by Judge Kerr.

Flimsy

For this flimsy evidence, a man has been sent for a life sentence. Even before his trial he spent two years on remand.

"The whole trial was a farce", said Susan Duffy, "I could not believe that they could convict Colin on that evidence. Colin was known as a republican."

"He never hid that fact. He has been framed because of his political views".

Key figures in Britain are now taking up this case. Chris Mullin who championed the Birmingham Six and Tony Benn have supported the campaign to release Colin Duffy.

THE UVF CONNECTION



UVF gun-runner Linsey Robb (extreme right) with a PUP delegation to Stormont

Some of the bizarre aspects of the case is the way that the prosecutor may be looking for a Public Interest Immunity Certificate.

This allows them to hide certain evidence that which is 'in the interest of national security'.

Most likely, it relates to the role of Lindsay

Robb. Robb was a member of the PUP delegation that had talks with the British government in Stormont.

Claimed

After he helped to frame Colin Duffy he claimed that his life was in danger from the IRA. He was given £2,000, a personal protection

weapon and moved to Ayr in Scotland.

There he finalised the organisation of an arms shipment to the UVF—in clear breach of the ceasefire.

There are some indications that he may have begun organising this shipment even while giving evidence against Colin Duffy.

When he eventually came to trial he was

given a character witness by an RUC Sergeant involved in the Colin Duffy case.

After receiving a 10 year sentence, he shouted "Up the UVF".

This convicted gun-runner who went on a peace delegation to British Ministers is the person mainly responsible for sending Colin Duffy on a life sentence.

LETTER:

Panic in Dublin West

"Depend upon it, Sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully."

The truth of Samuel Johnson's words, written some 200 years ago, is presently being demonstrated in Dublin West where panic buttons have been hammered in the wake of the recent by-election.

Across the spectrum, the scramble to save seats at the next general election has be-

gun in earnest with hitherto uncommunicative members of the Oireachtas suddenly finding the urge to write to their constituents informing them of Advice Centres and home telephone numbers and practically begging for business in the problem-solving market.

So great is the alarm in Minister of State Joan Burton's Labour Party camp, indeed, that households have been receiving multiple copies of the same letter addressed to mothers, fa-

thers and children separately.

Not to be outdone, Fianna Fail deputy Liam Lawlor has issued two simultaneous newsletters to Clondalkin constituents. These appear under the title "The Liam Lawlor Report" (why do I instantly think of Sesame Street News with ace reporter Kermit the Frog?) with the motto "Keeping you informed".

The first is no more than a photocopy of an *Irish Times* report speculating that the

Duke of Westminster may take a £60 million stake in a local shopping centre. The Republican Party's spokesman on Arts, Culture and Heritage sees no irony in welcoming possible investment by one of the wealthiest of Britain's aristocracy.

Let's face it. With the general election still a full 18 months away according to Dick Spring, the good folk of Dublin West will just have to grin and bear the expected avalanche of helpful correspondence from the Dail and Senate has-beens and wannabees. ■NIGEL COOKE

international news

RUSSIAN ELECTIONS ON JUNE 16TH...

Is the Communist Party an

by DAVE CROUCH.

BORIS Yeltsin's rule has been a disaster for Russian workers and is powerful proof of the bankruptcy of the market.

With presidential elections set for 16 June, Yeltsin is well behind in the polls.

Unfortunately, a victory for opposition candidate Gennady Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party, will change nothing in workers' favour.

An analysis of the Communist Party (CP) leadership, politics and membership shows why.

After the final victory of Stalin's counter-revolution at the end of the 1920s the CP was the tool by which the state-capitalist ruling class maintained control.

Through it the ruling bureaucracy organised ruthless exploitation and repression to force Russian industry to compete with the West.

Though the CP was a mass party, the membership had no democratic rights. The leadership lived in the lap of luxury, free from any control from below.

Today the CP is no longer the party of the ruling elite as a whole. But, just as before, it is not led by workers either.

The CP leaders include top bosses like Pyotr Romanov, general director of the Krasnoyarsk Chemical Combine, Vladimir Semagov, presi-

alternative to Yeltsin?

dent of the private bank Rosbiznesbank, and Anatoly Lukyanov, former Soviet vice-premier and a leader of the August 1991 coup.

Bureaucrats

The bulk of the CP's leadership is made up of middle to high-ranking bureaucrats and military personnel who lost out because of the reforms.

The party's politics are not rooted in the original ideals of Marx or Lenin, but on Stalin-worship and crude Russian nationalism.

Zyuganov, for example, praises Stalin for his efforts to resurrect the pre-revolutionary imperialist traditions of the tsars.

Since 1992 he has led a mass nationalist movement on the streets that unites the CP with monarchists and Nazis.

Zyuganov is standing in the June election as head of a "People's Patriotic Coalition", which includes extreme nationalists such as the Union of Officers.

The CP has also embraced the ultra-reactionary Russian

Orthodox Church.

In a recent book Zyuganov writes that the CP is a party of "empire supporters" and "patriots" who have "rejected the extremist thesis of class struggle" to unite workers with "nationally oriented entrepreneurs".

In place of "Workers of the world unite!" the CP changed its motto to "Glory to Russia!"

Crushing

The CP is in favour of crushing the independence of Chechnya and a major point in the CP's programme is to halt military-civil conversion and a build up of weapons.

True to its traditions of managing Russian capitalism, the CP today is not opposed to market policies and admits that the command economy failed.

Zyuganov has held many meetings to reassure Russian and foreign businessmen, and has declared his support for privatisation.

He announced, "We have all the documents ready to give the business world the opportunity to calmly invest their capital

here in Russia and be confident to make profits."

One foreign industrialist who met him told the press: "This guy would do very well if only he'd change the name of his party."

Spoils

Rather than representing a "threat" to Yeltsin's market reforms, a CP victory in June would simply mean attempts at a re-division of the spoils of privatisation within the ruling and middle classes.

As one leading liberal newspaper put it:

"We shouldn't worry about nationalisation (if Zyuganov wins), but rather re-privatisation in the interests of the parliamentary majority; not the spirit of communism, but rather panic among the Kremlin bureaucrats."

Indeed, Western leaders such as Major and Clinton are worried more by the uncertainty that would result from a new bout of infighting within the Russian ruling class than by any threat to market policies posed by the CP.



Supporters of the old stalinist ways demonstrate in Moscow

Nationalism dominates over class in the CP's politics.

The party has 500,000 members but no organised links with any trade unions and, apart from a month-long flirtation last year with the leadership of the main union federation, it has made no efforts in this direction.

The CP is not a workers' party—either in terms of its leaders, members or politics. It

is not social-democratic, but right-wing populist.

Many workers, however, will vote Communist. This is partly a reflection of the fact that, apart from the CP, there is no other serious force in Russian politics that consistently criticises Yeltsin.

But it is also a worrying indication that, with the level of struggle still relatively low and in the absence of a genuine

socialist alternative, reactionary nationalists can fill the yawning vacuum created by the failure of the market.

The Soviet Union and its political successor, the Communist Party, have nothing to do with real socialism.

The basis for that will be forged by the mass workers' struggles against militarism and the market that are certain to come.

German workers fight back against Kohl's cut-backs

HUNDREDS of thousands of public sector workers in Germany have taken to the streets in a series of half-day stoppages and massive demos.

They are fighting Kohl's plans to slash social security, sick pay and pensions. It is a 50 point package every bit as nasty as Alain Juppe's failed attempts to attack French workers

Half-day strikes hit every federal state.

On 18 May, 100,000 letters and parcels were left untouched.

Around 23,000 protesters marched through Hamburg on 22 May and hundreds of thousands were on demos throughout the rest of the country.

As in France, Bonn wants to reduce government spending to qualify for European Monetary Union. But strikes by public sector workers could topple Kohl's ten seat majority.

"If our strikes take off it will be better than France," says 61v (the public sector workers' union) shop steward-Rudi Gajewski. Rudi, who works in Hamburg's dole office, says this is the first strike ever backed by absolutely everyone in the office.

The union leaders, how-

ever, have a tight grip on the protests which workers need to break.

They want a show of strength but will not have the determination to push through the fight to victory.

Eliminate

"Kohl wants to eliminate one in five workers from the public sector by the year 2000", Rudi explains. "Our office alone will lose one of its eight jobs."

"No civil servants have been recruited for two years now. Between 1990 and 1992 we got pay increases of 2% which didn't even keep pace with inflation."

"Now they want a total pay freeze in the public sector. So in real terms we would have lost pay for the last six years in a row."

"At the same time they want to abolish a wealth tax



Cologne transport workers on strike last month

on the rich. This will benefit the top five percent of the population. Ministers had also pencilled in pay rises for themselves but they've already decided to postpone them for half a year.

"And while we've paid for German reunification out of

the social security funds, not one firm's taxes went to pay for its costs. Instead they're talking about streamlining the public sector and the need to save the State DM 70 billion."

In the past German unions have been hopeless at

defending public sector pay.

Demands

They dropped demands for better pay in exchange for job guarantees until the 1992.

But Kohl's government

met more firm resistance that year.

Over 100,000 striking metal workers stamped on plans to cut sick pay then. The government's current austerity plans are the first attempt to take on the unions since its 1992 disaster.

Up to now Kohl has deployed the salami-tactic—taking on one group of workers after the other. But this frontal assault could still backfire into the biggest confrontation since the 1960s.

Moreover, Kohl's and the bosses' assault are only two ingredients for a German "hot summer". In May tens of thousands protested against transports of radioactive material, the biggest such protests since the mid-1980s. "We will see more such battles in the next few months," says German socialist magazine Linksruck.

Clashes

Massive clashes with the police infuriated even people who weren't there. The papers report that around 6,000 phones are being tapped and that the whole operation cost DM 50 million.

The German working class has partly recovered from its defeats during the 1980s. Crucial battles were won in 1992, 1994 and 1995. Dockers who occupied their yards last year reflect the new militancy.

But a strong layer of independent shop stewards and a huge push from below are still needed to break through the union leadership that is intent on avoiding confrontation.

The myth of John F Kennedy

The warship that is coming to Dun Laoghaire in July is named after an American President who had almost the status of a saint in Ireland in the 1960s.

When John F Kennedy visited the country of his ancestors in 1962, schools closed down for the day and tens of thousands lined the streets.

For more than a decade afterwards two pictures of ten hung in the living rooms of many houses: one of Pope John 23rd, the Pope who began the reforming Vatican Council, and the other of John F Kennedy.

Yet Kennedy was a brutal imperialist who was determined to use military might to intimidate small countries.

His millionaire father, Joseph Kennedy, was an ardent supporter of Joseph McCarthy who set up a special commission to track down left wingers and blacklist them from their employment.

Kennedy carried on his father's fanatical anti-communism. In his inaugural speech, he said that "Americans are ready to be called to greatness" and that they could win victory in the cold war with Russia.

Process

One of his key advisors was the academic economist Rostow. Rostow developed a theory that all countries were engaged in a process of modernisation. They had to go through a set of stages of growth to reach the model set by the US.

But, according to Rostow, societies which were in transition from a Third World position were particularly vulnerable to left wing revolutions.

This socialist revolution "was a kind of disease which can befall a transitional society if it fails to organise effectively those elements which are prepared to get on with the job of modernisation."

This theory provided the justification to allow the US to organise coups and support military dictators who were regarded as the only 'elements' who could carry through the modernisation programme.

Before Kennedy came to power, the Cuban revolution had overthrown the dictator Batista who was a puppet of the US Mafia and was determined to turn his country into a gigantic gambling casino.

Kennedy denounced the Eisenhower regime for letting an 'Iron curtain appear 90 miles off the US coast'. He began the vicious campaign to topple the Castro government that has lasted ever since.

In 1961, he ordered the CIA to organise an invasion of Cuba, thinking that there would be a massive rising against Castro. But when US forces landed at the Bay of Pigs they were completely routed.

After this Kennedy began the blockade that has lasted ever since. He tried to organise a joint Latin American military exer-

Kennedy was a brutal imperialist who was determined to use military might to intimidate small countries.

cise against Cuba but as one Mexican diplomat put it, "If we publicly declared that Cuba is a threat to our country, forty million Mexicans will die laughing".

In 1962, he took the world to the very brink of World War 3 when he told Cuba to remove nuclear missiles from the island.

But Kennedy was not just concerned to destroy 'communist' governments. Every Latin American President who used the slightest rhetoric about the poor was regarded as a threat.

In 1961, Joao Goulart became President of Brazil and began using mild populist rhetoric. US businesses were angered by his call for a minimum wage for workers. The Kennedy Administration ordered the CIA to begin a policy of destabilisation.

They financed mass demonstrations by right wingers against Goulart and began preparation for a coup after Kennedy told his advisers that "the military probably represented the key to the future".

Crime

But Kennedy's most horrendous crime was to start the US intervention in Vietnam. He first sent in 300 US pilots in 1961 to help lead the army of the Vietnamese dictator, Diem. But within months the number of US "advisors" had jumped to 4,000.

These "advisors" included the notorious Green Berets, the US equivalent of the British SAS.

One of their main tasks was to help round up the Vietnamese population into "Strategic Hamlets" where they would be quarantined away from "communist influence".

Diem and the South Vietnamese regime were massively unpopular. Kennedy's own Assistant Secretary of State summed up the situation accurately. "Here you have a country that is 95% Buddhist, led by French speaking Vietnamese who are beating up pagodas, killing nuns, killing priests".

Yet for Kennedy this regime was the safeguard against communism that had to be supported at all costs.

No wonder that when Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, the great black leader Malcolm X simply said "The chickens have come home to roost".

by KIERAN ALLEN

US WARSHIP IN IRELAND

ON JULY 2nd, one of the most vicious war machines in the world will sail into Dublin Bay.

The John F Kennedy aircraft carrier will be welcomed by the Irish government which includes Ministers like Proinsias de Rossa and Michael D Higgins who once spoke at meetings against the Gulf War.

During the Gulf War, the JFK was one of the flag ships which organised the bombing of civilians in Iraq.

A press release from the US Embassy in Dublin proudly announced that planes from the JFK "delivered 3.5 million pounds of ordnance in the conflict".

Targets

One of the targets which its planes attacked was an underground bunker in Baghdad where more than 300 men, women and children were burnt to death. Afterwards a US army spokesperson claimed that this was just "collateral damage".

Planes from the JFK also played a major role in attacking retreating Iraqi soldiers as they fled towards Basra.

One general afterwards described what happened as a 'turkey shoot'.

Tens of thousands of terrified conscripts were burnt to death long after their army had been defeated. It was meant as a terrible warning for anyone who de-

A Socialist Worker special report

fied the power of the Pentagon.

The ship was also involved in the bombing of the Libyan capital Tripoli after that country refused to toe the US line.

Its visit to Ireland is designed to weaken any real feeling for neutrality.

The US Embassy in Dublin has always been worried about the level of support in this country for people who were struggling in Nicaragua or El Salvador.

Its officials have written to newspapers several times to condemn 'anti-Americanism'.

Now it believes that the popularity of Bill Clinton's visit will allow them to shift the political atmosphere in the South.

This is why the ship is not only visiting Dublin, but US warplanes are being allowed to fly over Galway and Shannon.

But while Clinton presents himself as a peacemaker, the JFK shows the real face of US imperialism today.



The USS JFK (above) from which aircraft were launched which massacred thousands of retreating Iraqis (left). US soldiers in Desert Storm (right)



Billions of dollars for death merchandise

MEDIA commentators have spoken and written in amazement about the sheer size of the vessel: it is longer than O'Connell St and taller than Liberty Hall. They want us to forget that it is a killing machine.

The rulers of American capitalism have always tried to make a fortune from selling guns and bombs.

Today American firms control 72 percent of all arms sales to the Third World.

Russia and France only

sell an eighth of what US companies sell to the developing world.

While the media blames petty tyrants for starting tribal wars, US companies like Lockheed or McDonnell Douglas rake in the profits from the weapons they sell.

Protested

Although he protested against the Vietnam War in his youth, Bill Clinton has behaved no differently to Reagan or Nixon when it comes to promoting arms sales.

After he came to office in 1993, a staggering 36 billion dollars worth of

arms cont signed wi

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Yet the c of US firej for ordina workers.

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In 1994 showed tl American sales to d under noc governme

Get organised to protest!

FORMER members of the No to War in the Gulf Campaign have come together to mount protests against the visit of the US warship.

A series of meetings are planned around the country culminating in a major protest on the night the ship enters Dublin Bay.

Already the Stop the Warship Campaign has

organised a protest outside the National Lottery Office because it is giving free publicity for the ship by having a raffle for tickets to visit.

The following are the main protests meetings being held around the country.

DUN LAOGHAIRE: Smyths Bar, Tuesday 25th June, 8.00pm

8.00pm
BRAY: Mayfe
Wednesday 2
8.00pm
GALWAY: Cu
Eyre Square
June 7.00pm
CORK: Conn
Tuesday 25th
WATERFORD
Keyser
8.00pm

BRITISH WATERS

US: The world's peace maker?

SUPPORTERS of the US war machine claim that there is a need for a strong power to keep peace in the world.

But it is the US establishment which is fomenting war in parts of the world.

■ **TURKEY:** In the last ten years 15,000 people have died in the war conducted by the Turkish state against the Kurds.

Yet this state has been armed to the hilt by the US.

In those ten years the US government organised the supply of \$5 billion worth of weapons for this poor country.

Last year, Clinton gave the green light to the Turkish Prime Minister Cillar to invade Iraq to wipe out Kurdish villages.

Invasion

Fevzi Rashid, a 43 year old Iraqi Kurdish villager describes what this US-sponsored "peace-making" felt like:

"First the planes bombed our village. Then soldiers came some days later and burned our houses. Yesterday, they came

again and fired the village with mortars and rockets'

■ **ISRAEL:** Israel's recent invasion of Lebanon had the full support of the US.

They even advised the now defeated Israeli Prime Minister Peres to carry out the attack to look tough for the general election.

When 100 women and children were massacred by the Israeli bombing of Qana, the US prevented the UN making any condemnation of Israel's murderous campaign.

Yet the Gulf War was supposed to be about punishing invaders who do not respect the sovereignty of other nations!



A WAR FOR OIL

SUPPORTERS of the US ship the USS JFK will praise its role in the Gulf War for "protecting democracy and national independence". But nothing could be further from the truth.

The war began after Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. But the issue at the heart of the conflict was about oil prices.

Kuwait always ensured that oil

flowed to the Western multi-national on the cheap, and broke any reduction of supplies organised by countries like Iraq.

Artificial

It was run by the al Sabah family who had 100 billion worth of assets throughout the world. This family had been put in power by the British who ran it as a protectorate until 1961.

Its borders were entirely artificial. They were drawn up by the British empire in 1922 to prevent the newly independent Iraq getting access to the Gulf.

Saddam Hussein would never have even been able to carry out the invasion if he had not been armed and financed by the Western powers throughout the 1980s.

They saw him as a bulwark against the idea of the Iranian revolution and, as the Scott inquiry showed in Britain, began to secretly arm him.

Saddam Hussein was a thug. But he was a thug who had been created by the US and the Western powers.

Rights

The US, Britain and France have never been concerned about respecting the national rights of Third World countries.

They often turn a blind eye to invasions or attempts to seize resources.

But in the Gulf they were determined to protect the profits of the oil companies.

The US bosses' magazine *Business Week* simply proclaimed that 'Oil is worth going to war for'.

The gigantic oil companies knew that every time there was a 1 dollar rise in the price of oil, they made profits of an extra £200 million.

That was why they brought such a bloody and brutal war to the Gulf.

Demonstration: March against the US Warship

Tuesday July 2nd Assemble 7pm People's Park Dun Laoghaire

What do socialists say?

Karl Marx's Kapital

THE COMMUNIST Manifesto of 1848 and Das Kapital (Capital in English) of 1867 are Marx's two most famous works and the two most important books in the history of the socialist movement.

At first sight they could not be more different. The *Manifesto* is a racy little pamphlet which can be read at a single sitting.

Capital is three heavy volumes which require serious study. Nevertheless there is tremendous continuity between them.

The *Manifesto* outlines a new revolutionary view of history based on class struggle.

Capital takes the same view and applies it in detail to the capitalist system, showing how capitalism works, what drives it forward and the contradictions which will bring about its downfall.

Perhaps the first question to ask is why did Marx write it? Why did someone who had been a popular revolutionary journalist and written many easily accessible pamphlets devote more than 15 years of intense labour to producing a book that by its nature most workers would not read?

The answer is because it was necessary.

Defeat

After the defeat of the 1848 revolutions Marx knew that capitalism was surging forward and it would be some time before the next revolutionary outbreak.

It was essential to use the time to lay the theoretical foundations of the workers' movement.

Those foundations had to stand the test of time and arm the movement with the intellectual weapons it would need for decades to come.

Marx knew that as long as his ideas reached a minority of worker-socialists and revolutionary activists they would then percolate through to the

movement as a whole.

He succeeded brilliantly in his aim. Volume one of *Capital* was published in 1867. In the next 30 years parties, some of them mass parties, sprang up all over Europe which took the ideas of *Capital* as their starting point.

It is obviously impossible to summarise all these ideas here but, in my opinion, the most important points are as follows:

1. The labour theory of value: that contrary to appearances under capitalism, commodities do not have a life of their own. They are only the products of human labour and their value is determined, ultimately, by the amount of labour needed to produce them.

2. The theory of surplus value which shows how capitalists extract surplus value, or profit, from the labour of workers by exploiting the gap between what labour power is worth as a commodity and the much greater value it produces when set to work.

3. The theory of capital accumulation: that the extraction of surplus value and the accumulation of capital is the central aim and dynamic of capitalist production.

This leads to a polarisation in society between the concentration of wealth in a few hands at the top and the spread of poverty and misery among the many at the bottom.

4. The tendency of the rate of profit to fall (to be found in Volume Three): that while profit is the lifeblood of capitalism, it contains a built in tendency for the rate of profit to fall thus throwing the system into crisis.

This is because al-

though profit derives exclusively from the exploitation of labour power, each capitalist firm, in the search for competitive advantage, combines even larger amounts of machinery with relatively smaller amounts of labour.

Thus the profit extracted from labour becomes smaller in proportion to the capitalists' total outlay on labour and machinery.

The overall rate of profit declines and the result is shorter, weaker booms and more frequent, more severe recessions.

In the course of his analysis Marx showed how what looks like relations between things and money are really relations between people—capitalists and workers—and so can be changed by people.

He showed that profits are neither produced by machines nor a reward to risk taking investors. He explained why capitalism inevitably leads to mass unemployment.

He proved that the market, far from being the best method for allocating goods and services, leads to inequality, waste and economic disaster.

Explain

Capitalism has changed a lot since *Capital* but its underlying dynamic and its basic contradictions remain the same.

One last and crucial point. I acknowledged at the beginning that *Capital* would never be a best-seller. This does not mean that for the thinking worker and the serious socialist it is out of reach.

Marx took enormous pains to explain his ideas as clearly and vividly as possible.

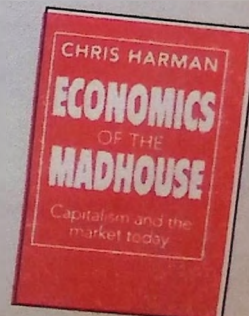
Much of *Capital* is packed with dramatic historical examples and inspiring language, especially Volume One chapter X which deals with the struggle over the working day and part Eight at the end on capitalism's bloody birth and historical destiny.

So do not be deterred, start with Volume One and have a go.

— JOHN MOLYNEUX

Out now!

Economics of the Madhouse—Capitalism and the Market Today by Chris Harman
£3.50 + 70p p+p from: SW Books PO Box 1648, Dublin 8



WILLIAM MORRIS CENTENARY

Socialist by design

For most people the heavy exotic flock of a William Morris design on wallpaper or fabric is more familiar than the life of the man himself or his ideas

Morris died 100 years ago at the age of 62 having pioneered the growth of revolutionary socialism in Britain.

The media has mostly marked his centenary by painting a picture of an eccentric, sentimental Victorian with a quicksilver imagination and endless reserves of creative energy.

He was supposed to have degraded his Art by allowing himself to become absorbed in politics.

This is a common caricature of those artists, writers, musicians or film-makers who openly hold radical or revolutionary politics.

The film-director Ken Loach, for example, has argued that "the possibility for change must come because of the vast inequality which the capitalist system creates".

And for this, he has received much criticism directed at the "preachy" methods or "economic determinism" which supposedly flaws his work.

Many artists themselves fuel this reactionary approach by declaring themselves to be above politics. Art must remain independent, or so their argument goes.

O.K., so the world might be a pretty miserable place but the role of art is to transcend the nitty-gritty of "realism" and elevate audiences to a higher imaginative of spiritual plane.

Seamus Heaney, the Nobel-prize winning poet, is a good example of the type of writer who wants to see poetry as a "safe" place, describing it as something apart from "the domain of the matter-of-fact" and belonging to "the domain of the imagined".

For Heaney poetry is "redress", used like alcohol or drugs to numb the awfulness of the present, rather than offering any real insight into how people interact with each other and the society around them.

It is important for socialists to argue against these views. Cultural politics is not something separate from other arguments about reformism or class.

It is necessary to see the effects capitalism has upon creative work and how, in turn, artists work with or against these effects.

For these arguments, the life and works of William Morris provide a brilliant example. A designer, a craftsman, a painter, storyteller and political polemicist, Morris was, for most of his life, a Marxist first and foremost.

Revolutionary socialism underpinned his work in every area.

He would have little truck with today's "New Labour" Blairites who claim to stand as part of his legacy.

According to his own account, Morris was the son of a successful businessman who "engaged in a fortunate mining speculation before his death....(and)...left us very well off, rich



William Morris revolutionised Textile design but he was also an active revolutionary socialist in the Socialist League (inset)

in fact".

He was one of the Victorian elite at a time when desperate poverty, disease and back-breaking exploitation were the norm for the majority of the Queen's subjects.

As a young man Morris intensely despised the private school he was educated in, describing these schools as "boy-farms".

He knew that he got the time in which to think, paint and write, through the massive exploitation of English workers in the tin and copper mines of Devon and Cornwall.

His father's money had granted him a freedom from poverty, paid for by the labour of others.

As an Oxford student Morris was fascinated by medieval romances, Celtic and Norse mythology and was inspired by the Middle Ages which he saw as a period of serenity compared to the squalor and destructiveness of 19th century capitalism.

But he also came under the influence of "socio-political" ideas and found his idealism challenged by the outrageous living conditions which the champions of capitalism justified as part and parcel of some "natural" political economy.

Giving up on his early notion of entering the priesthood he started to train as an architect, while also attempting to become a painter. Outside the college walls he found his Romanticism severely limited.

It was not enough to criticise the ugliness and meanness of industrial society — practical alternatives had to be found. He had from an early age a keen interest in design and the art of craftsmanship.

Yet everywhere he looked he saw shoddy goods produced by workers which capitalism had reduced to tools, deprived of control over or pride in their work.

He thought he could transport his notion of the Middle Ages — "when every craftsman was an artist and brought definite intelligence to his work" — to Victorian England.

To that end he set up workshops to produce goods designed by himself and insisted on quality and equality at work.

He was immensely successful and soon his designs became part of the fashionable apparatus of the leisured classes.

But at this point he realised the limits of his individual crusade and vowed not to spend life adding to "the swinish luxury of the rich".

As a man of talent and energy this was a period of near-despair for him. Art was meaningless unless it railed against the system and even then "only from the life of the people could there come a living Art".

All around him the consumers as well as the producers of art were drawn

largely from the wealthy upper classes, so he asked "what business have we with Art unless all can share it?"

He became involved in the anti-war movement which was mobilising against the Disraeli government's threat to enter upon a war with Russia. This was an aggressively imperialist piece of war-mongering and a group of radicals and liberals campaigned militantly against it.

Ultimately, though, their rhetoric was far stronger than their action. In vain, Morris looked around for a party "more advanced" than the Radicals but the conditions for the sort of mass militancy he desired were absent.

During the early 1880s he grew cynical as the Liberal government failed to rein in the bloodthirst of Britain's imperialists abroad or the greed of the industrialists at home.

The betrayal of the Liberals and the hypocrisy of the Radicals saw Morris become a seasoned opponent of reformism. He said that its role was to "play... (a)... part as a red herring to spoil the scent of revolution".

Though he was developing politically he was desperate to merge his ideas with action, — to "cross a river of fire". With high hopes he joined the Social Democrat Federation in 1883 — a two year old party of some 200 mem-



by Patricia
McManus

bers with a Marxist politics.

Despite his enthusiasm as an organiser and speaker at the S.D.F.'s public meetings and paper sales, Morris soon saw through the weakness of the S.D.F.' leader, Hyndman.

Hyndman was a former Tory who adopted Marx's economic view late in life — but never fully broke from being a British patriot.

Morris led a breakaway from the S.D.F. and founded the Socialist League on a more revolutionary basis.

The League's manifesto, drawn up by Morris, made clear that their priorities were "the principles of revolutionary international socialism: that is we seek a change in the basis of society — a change which would destroy the distinction of classes and nationalities."

For over a decade the League worked to spread socialist politics, and to combat the ideas about anarchism, terrorism and individualism which some prominent socialists had faith in.

At the end of the 1880s they were well situated to influence the wave of militant strikes which swept throughout England as part of the "New Unionism".

Many of the union leaders were socialists who had formed their ideas through either the League or the S.D.F.

But internal divisions and a preoccupation with abstract socialist education at the expense of practical action prevented the League gaining popular influence.

Yet they were still crucial in spreading the seeds of Marxism among important sectors of workers and pioneering a tradition which is still alive today.

At the height of all this activity Morris was working to inject art with a sense of the change that had to come if the power of all human imagination was to be set free.

All his writing from 1870 on — whether in poems, pamphlets, essays, lectures or novels — emphasise the unity of artistic and political aims.

For Morris all spheres of activity — moral, aesthetic, commercial, political — were interdependent. Questions about art or the artist's role were inseparable from political and social considerations.

"Art has been handcuffed" by the spread of capitalism he wrote, and as long as "the system lasts... it chains the minds as well as bodies of men."

Artists were not aloof from society, free to comment and reflect on whatever took their fancy and those who maintained that art must be for art's sake were either liars or fools or both.

Throughout all his work, lies the belief in art as a weapon for influencing people. But Morris was also quick to acknowledge that though artists may be snipers and their work weapons, the revolution needs an army. For socialists everywhere, his words still ring true today:

"nobody can exist in society and be neutral, nobody can be a mere looker on. You must either be a reactionary or you must join in the march of progress."

What's the truth about superbugs?

"Without doubt, diseases as yet unknown, but with the potential to be the AIDS of tomorrow, lurk in the shadows". This is not a trailer for a sciencefiction movie but a statement from the World Health Organisation, in its report on antibiotic resistance and over use of antibiotics.

Most of the present antibiotics have been in use for under 40 years. Yet in that short space of time bacteria which are the targets of antibiotics have developed the power to change their own genetic make-up in order to be able to resist the drugs.

The human body houses a great many benign and harmless germs which are normally untouched by simple old-fashioned drugs such as penicillin.

Infection

If you take penicillin for a specific infection such as pneumonia, the rest of your protective body germs remain, and guard you against more vicious invading organisms.

However, use of powerful "broad spectrum" antibiotics kills off the body's natural defending organisms and leave the path open for powerful invading organisms. These can then mutate themselves to resist even the most powerful antibiotics.

This can lead to the ever-increasing problems of MRSA, a hospital based multi-resistant killer germ which is highly infectious.

It can also cause killer viruses such as Ebola in Africa, which attacks when body defences are weak, and has no known treatment.

In the mid-1980s the US National Institute of Health attempted a global initiative to stop overuse of antibiotics.

Their efforts were quickly halted by the US government under the influence of the major pharmaceutical companies, the biggest profit-making industry in the world.

Companies

The problems of antibiotic resistance have been created by the competition between the multi-billion-dollar drug companies. These have rushed to persuade doctors and nurses in the developed world to prescribe broad spectrum antibiotics, which are highly expensive, toxic, and kill off protective bacteria. Advertising and bribery have also been so successful that even patients have been sucked in.

Most patients feel let down by a doctor who failed to prescribe an antibiotic for a viral cold—which doesn't even respond to antibiotics.

The biggest killer diseases remain those which were known in the 19th century.

When the cold doesn't get better they are encouraged to look for a "stronger" antibiotic.

Left over, out of date and dangerous antibiotics are also dumped on Third World countries where drugs are often issued over the counter. Yet despite all the antibiotics, the biggest killer diseases remain those which were known in the 19th century.

Responsible development of medicines geared towards curing the real health problems of the world could eliminate them quickly.

Malaria, which kills 2.1 million each year could be reduced by draining swamps and providing better public sanitation. TB, which kills 3.1 million could be cured by eradicating bad housing, overcrowding and poverty. Disease from diarrhoea could be reduced by providing clean water and sewage.

Profits

But the drugs companies put profits before people and push ever increasingly powerful drugs against these diseases — drugs which encourage the development of resistant malaria for example, while swamps and dump-sites ensure that malaria cannot be eradicated.

The world's leading killer diseases can only be eradicated by a change away from capitalism. The madness of the market means that real health needs are never met.

It is in the interest of the drug companies to exaggerate the effects of their products. So the huge company Wellcome for example, deliberately hid research on the effect of the anti-AIDS drug, AZT after some tests indicated that it was not particularly effective.

As long as these companies continue to rake in megabucks at the expense of people's lives more and more people will die of simple diseases that should have been eradicated a long time ago.

—JULIET BRESSON

Pipelines of death

Book

Reviewed by
PATRICIA
McMANUS

BORN IN 1941 near the beautiful southern coast of Nigeria, Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa was a political agitator, a writer and the president of MOSOP—the "Movement for the survival of the Ogoni people".

At 11.30 am on 10th November 1995, after 18 months inside a military detention camp, he was hanged on the orders of General Sani Abacha — Nigeria's military dictator.

Rights

MOSOP is an organisation which has campaigned since the late 1980s for the rights of the people of Ogoniland. Home to half a million Ogoni people, the area lies at the heart of Nigeria's oil producing region, the Niger Delta.

In *A Month and A Day*, Saro-Wiwa makes clear the dependence of Abacha's tin-pot dictatorship on the multi-million dollar oil industry.

The systematic robbery and organised destruction of the Ogoni's land and resources by Shell bosses was threatened by the mass popularity of MOSOP and its leader.

Executed

On that morning in November, nine Ogoni activists were executed. Their crime was to threaten Shell's profits. As Owens Wiwa has said: "My brother ... was a man of peace whose only crime was op-

posing the racist standard of the Shell group in their dealings with Sub-Saharan Africa."

This book, which is subtitled "A Detention Diary", tells about the author's time in a military prison in 1993.

Locked up under a pretext, he was subjected to physical and mental torture and was released only to be hounded and subsequently rearrested.

But this book is about more than a month and about more than Ogoniland. It traces the history of Nigeria: a nation-state "conceived in the European colonist interest for European imperial or commercial purposes".

Bloody

It examines in bloody detail the effects of 50 years of industrial pollution, ecological devastation and institutionalised extortion on the Ogoni people.

It recognises that the Ogoni are only one of many "despairing and disappearing peoples suffering the yoke of political marginalisation, economic strangulation and environmental degradation." And Saro-wiwa is clear that Ni-

Shell

The Niger Delta is a fertile agricultural area and was once well able to support its farmers and fishermen but today it reeks of sulphur and gas.

There are enough of Shell's corroded pipelines strewn across the land of Ogoni—an area the size of

Co. Louth -- to stretch from London to New York.

These "pipelines of death" are causing a "slow genocide" for the majority.

But they are the lifeblood of Abacha's Junta and have fed a succession

of Nigeria's military governments on a diet of huge revenues and the most sophisticated of military weapons and technology.

A month and a day by Ken Saro - Wiwa £5:99 Penguin

Book

Tales from the atomic wasteland

In Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant in Denver, Colorado there is a permanently abandoned and sealed room, the door to which reads 'Pu 238 10x6 MPC'.

This piece of scientific code means that the room contains approximately a million times the maximum permissible concentration of plutonium -238.

History

Since the discovery of radiation at the turn of the century the world has become home to millions of tons of radioactive materials whose half-lives exceed our written history by thousands of years.

Plutonium has a half-life of 25,000 years. Uranium-228 has a half-life of 4.5 billion years.

Jeremy Hall travelled the world talking to people in and around the nuclear industry.

From the scientists researching the long-term effects of radiation contamination to the Russian families turned out of their homes after the Chernobyl accident who have now returned home to live their lives in the most contaminated countryside on earth.

The first part of the book is about the towns of Hanford and Richland in Washington State. Since 1943, these towns were the main site for the development and manufacture of the US nuclear arsenal.

During the 'golden age' of the cold war car bumper stickers urged locals to

'Know Nukes' and 'Be a nuclear family - Radiate love'. Richland proudly displayed its local symbol - a mushroom cloud.

Since the end of the cold war attempts have been made to clear the site up, and the local people are waking up to the long-term consequences of living in the 'dirtiest town in America'.

Refused

The author talks to the 'whistleblowers', ex-nuclear workers who refused to toe the line and spoke out about the dangers.

We also hear from local women who are now realising that they were effectively guinea pigs in a nuclear experiment.

The issue of dumping nuclear waste affects people all over the world.

This book is a remarkable journey into the dangers of the nuclear age.

It reminds us that while the nuclear industry was part of a lethal game of Russian roulette with the future of the planet at stake, for capitalism it is just another multi-billion dollar industry.

'Real Lives Half Lives - Tales from the atomic wasteland' by Jeremy Hall (Penguin £6.99)

—Richard Willmson

Film:

Rebels who shook the system

—Geno Kenny

Panther, the film released last year, and slammed by critics in the US, has made it on to video.

It tells the story of the rise and fall of the Black Panther Party for Self Defence, which was set up, out of the black ghetto in Oakland California, by Bobby Seale and Huey Newton in 1966.

Challenged

The Panthers challenged the oppression black people suffered from the "pigs" as they were known.

But they also developed into a movement that was willing to take on the whole racist machine in the US.

The film has many memorable scenes, from the recruitment of black women, to Newton and his comrades preventing the beating of a black man by the police.

Newton challenges the police by stating under Californian law everyone has the right to bear arms. He is



The Black Panther Party for Self Defence

eventually cheered on by the surrounding crowd. In this scene you see the police beginning to be frightened by the Panthers.

Powerful

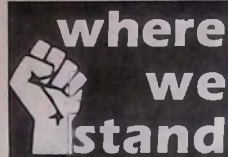
When the Panthers start to become powerful, the full weight of the racist machine becomes apparent, with murder and frame ups organised by the FBI to discredit the party.

The film advances the

theory that the Mafia and the FBI colluded to flood black areas with drugs. It was a fact that the communities had problems, but the glut of drugs was not the thing that killed the Panthers.

It was the US establishment itself.

Whatever you may believe, *Panther* is a great testament to the movement and shows the potential for revolutionary upheaval in the US in the sixties.



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—

AN POST:

'We're glad we came out but we could have won more'

WORKERS at An Post returned to work after five weeks on strike over management attempts to recruit outside secretaries at £100 a week more than the existing staff.

Management were forced to agree that for every outside secretary they recruited one member of the internal staff would be promoted.

Six existing secretaries also won a rise of £100 and 17 clerical assistants were upgraded.

Concessions

"The feeling inside is that we're glad we came out. Management thought they could push us around because there was never a strike here before," one worker told *Socialist Worker*.

But many workers also felt that if they stuck it out a bit longer they could have won more.

Despite the concessions, management have won some right to hire outside staff and so reduce promotion prospects for those inside.

A number of workers also believed that they should have been paid for the two weeks they were suspended.

Unfortunately a prominent left winger on the CPSU Executive, Terry Kelleher, recommended the deal and it was carried by only 60 votes in favour.



Vote NO to new Civil Service deal

Union leaders in the CPSU are rushing through a ballot on a major new deal even though most members have not yet been adequately briefed on its real implications.

The biggest gain in the deal is that 1,500 low paid clerical assistants are to be upgraded to clerical officers. But they will face a longer pay scale of 15 years.

In return for this, there are to be massive changes in working conditions. These include:

- More temporary staff to be taken on.
- Part timers will be hired at 'work peaks' and overtime payments will be reduced.
- More flexible hours that

suit management. Offices are to remain open over lunch times and finishing times can be later than 6.30pm.

With 'flexibility' there is no extra payment for these unsocial hours.

A tougher probation system and more appraisal of staff performance.

The much heralded Strategic Management Initiative gives Department heads greater rights to fire staff.

Union co-operating with changes in technology.

In the banks, management used these agreements to slash hundreds of permanent jobs.

For other grades in the civil service, there are even more difficulties. Clerical Officers who



John O'Dowd

sought promotion in the past usually won it by seniority.

Now a large number will have to face selection from management.

Union activists could face active discrimination on this front.

The starting salary for

Staff officers—which many clerical officers aspired to has also been cut by £1,908.

The new deal follows hard on the removal of the CPSU work to rule over the jobs embargo.

John O'Dowd removed the ban days before the union conference without consulting the members.

Yet the government has announced that it will still cut 570 jobs between now and July/August. In place of an embargo, there is now a 'cap' on jobs which will equally damage promotion prospects.

A major campaign needs to be mounted in the CPSU to stop its leaders ramming through a deal which is against the interests of the members.

Aer Lingus cabin crew work to rule

AER LINGUS cabin crew have voted overwhelmingly to go on a work-to-rule over plans to cut back on staff.

Aer Lingus is linked with the US company Delta airlines which block-books 40 seats on its transatlantic flight. Delta insists that it has to have one of its own crew members on the flight even though this is completely unnecessary.

This will mean the loss of one Aer Lingus job for every Delta crew member put on the flight.

Management are trying to put through the arrangement on a 'trial basis'.

Resist

But most workers know that it is the thin end of the wedge.

If Delta begins to block book more seats in future they will argue that further Aer Lingus jobs have to be cut.

Cabin crews have already seen their numbers cut under the notorious Cahill Plan which saw huge redundancies at the airport and now want to resist further attacks.

Many of the union spokespersons are putting the case in terms of Irish jobs for Irish workers.

But a much deeper issue is that Delta is a viciously anti-union firm. Aer Lingus workers are right to resist non-union workers being taken on and should insist on no job cuts.

If they are to win, they will need to escalate the action to full scale strike action. They would get massive support from other Aer Lingus workers who want to see them stand up to management.

SWP branch meetings—all welcome

- BELFAST**
Meets every Wednesday at 8pm Central Hall Rosemary St. Wed 12th: Paris Commune: The first workers revolution; Wed 19th: Why socialists are against partition.
- CORK**
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in Dennehy's Pub, Cornmarket St. Tues 11th: The Paris Commune: When workers first took power; Tues 18th: Can Irish workers make a revolution?
- DERRY**
Meets every Tuesday in Badgers Bar at 8.30pm Tues 11th: US and the new imperialism; Tues 18th: Is human nature a barrier to

- socialism
- BRAY**
Contact 872 2682 for details.
- DUBLIN NORTH-WEST**
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in The Old Brogue, Dorset St. Wed 12th: Public Meeting see below Note change of venue/day/time; Tues 18th: Is nation replacing class?
- DUBLIN ARTANE/COOLOCK**
Meets every Wednesday at 8pm Phone 872 2682 for details of venue. Wed 12th: Public Meeting see below Note change of venue/day/time; Wed 19th: Marxism and

- Feminism
- DUBLIN DUN LAOGHAIRE**
Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in Shanganagh Park House, Shankill. Wed 12th: Public Meeting see below Note change of venue/day/time; Tues 18th Do all revolutions lead to tyranny?
- DUBLIN DRIMNAGH**
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in the Bentley Pub, Drimnagh Road. Wed 12th: Public Meeting see below Note change of venue/day/time; Tues 18th: 1926: The General Strike in Britain.
- DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL**
Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Conways, Parnell St.

- Wed 12th: Public Meeting see below Note change of venue/day/time; Wed 19th Paris Commune: When workers first took power.
- DUBLIN RATHMINES**
Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in O'Connell's Pub, Richmond Street. Wed 12th: Public Meeting see below Note change of venue/day/time; Wed 19th: The USS JKK's visit: The US and the new imperialism
- DUBLIN SOUTH-CENTRAL**
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in Trinity Inn, Pearse St. Wed 12th: Public Meeting see below Note change of venue/day/time; Thurs 20th: The Paris Commune: When workers first took power.
- DUBLIN TALLAGHT/CLONDALKIN**
Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm, Tallaght Welfare Society, Tallaght Village Wed 12th: Public Meeting see below Note change of venue/day/time; Tues 18th The USS JKK's visit: The US and the new imperialism
- GALWAY**
Meets every Thursday at 6pm in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square
- MAYNOOTH**
Phone 872 2682 for details
- WATERFORD**
Meets every Thursday at 8pm in ATGWU Hall, Keyser St. Thurs 13th: Paris Commune: When workers first took power; Thurs 20th: USS JFK visit: The US and the new Imperialism.

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

CAN CATHOLIC & PROTESTANT WORKERS UNITE?

PUBLIC MEETING

Speakers:
Sean McVeigh (West Belfast);
Moira Morton (East Belfast)

Wednesday 12 June, 8pm ATGWU Hall, Middle Abbey St, Dublin

Pub Quiz against the Death penalty in the USA

Brian Roberson Defense Fund
Teachers Club 36 Parnell Square,
Dublin 1
Saturday June 8th, 8.30pm
£2.50 per person — Teams of 4

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

Almost six months on the picketline...

Victory for the Early Learning Centre Strikers!

THE SIX MONTH strike by members of Mandate at the Early Learning Centre in Cork has ended in victory for the shop workers.

Despite a confidentiality clause, it has been reported that the company, owned by British based multinational John Menzies, are recognising the union in the Cork shop.

They are also phasing in pay rates established by Mandate in the rest of the retail industry.

Celebrations

These were the two key demands for the strikers and judging by their champagne celebrations and the dismay on the faces of the managers the taste of victory is sweet.

The strike began on 6th December, with the staff at the Early Learning Centre demanding a pay rise that would allow them to catch up with the rest of the retail industry - they were up to £2 an hour behind.

It soon became a test of union recognition, anxiously followed by trade unionists throughout Cork and beyond.

The company fought hard, spending thousands of pounds on full page ads in the local papers



Workers from the Early Learning Centre celebrate their victory

and hiring bouncers who repeatedly called the guards and tried to intimidate the picketers.

Throughout the winter the strikers maintained their picket lines and the shop experienced a huge consumer boycott.

An Easter sale 20 per cent off goods in the Cork shop failed to bring back customers.

A number of fundraising events took place to boost the morale of the strikers and collections were raised by fellow trade

unionists, especially Marks and Spencers workers who kept up a regular collection throughout the strike.

Sign

Finally, with no sign of their customers returning or the determination of the strikers faltering, the company agreed to meet the strikers' representatives face to face.

And it is evident that the com-

pany has had to accept a major shift in policy, given that in the UK and elsewhere in Ireland it refuses to recognise union representation.

The victory of the strike sends a powerful message to all employers looking to attack the rights of retail workers — especially those new companies about to open up shops in Ireland — Irish workers will insist on their rights.

Stuggles improve union membership

MORE AND MORE workers are joining trade unions. Last year, nearly 10,000 new members joined bringing the total to 52% of the Irish workforce.

At a time when commentators are predicting the demise of the organised working class because of 'globalisation' and 'new technology', the figures tell their own story.

Ireland has now the highest rate of trade union membership in Europe outside the Scandinavian countries.

The ICTU leaders used to argue that 'old style' trade union militancy would frighten off women workers and those in atypical employment.

Militancy

But again the recent figures show the exact reverse. Union membership is growing in those unions where militancy is rising.

The MANDATE union, for

example recruited more than 2,000 members, mostly women on part time contracts, because they fought a major battle with Dunnes.

And the Irish Nurses Organisation has grown by a fantastic 3,000 after it geared itself up for strike action over pay.

Traditionally it was seen as far too moderate but now it is the members who are making left officials like P.J. Madden look moderate.

One of the biggest gaps in trade union membership remains the US multi-nationals who dominate the computer industry.

Here the union leaders should be launching a recruitment campaign by showing that they are willing to fight.

Eircell

CPSU members strike over work practices

CPSU members in Eircell, the Telecom subsidiary, have staged a one day strike in May and are still in dispute with their company.

The dispute has arisen over the company's decision to introduce new work practices without agreement.

The company has begun to recruit a "yellow pack" telesales and services grade on a starting salary of £8,000 a year - £2,000 a year less than for CPSU members doing the same work.

Future

According to one Eircell worker:

"We can't allow yellow pack jobs like this in. This is the future management wants - people working for wages they can't live on, with decent jobs gradually phased out.

"The company is making more than £100 million a year. There's no reason why they can't afford to give new recruits the extra £2,000."

This anger led CPSU members to hold a one-day strike, followed by a work-to-rule and an overtime ban.

Some workers believe that more determination needs to be

put into winning on the issue.

"A strike by all Telecom CPSU members would hit the cashflow of the parent company and forced them to tell the Eircell bosses to back off."

Another worker added, "We had a great victory a few months ago when we forced management to make FAS workers permanent. When you're serious about fighting you can win. We should have linked all the issues back then."

Telecom Eireann wants cuts of £110 million over the next ten years, with longer working hours and job losses central to their plans.

Fight

It's clear that there are big fights ahead, but it's even clearer that the union leaders will be very slow to lead the fight.

We need to build links at rank and file level so that we will be in a position to stand up to management in both Telecom and Eircell who are out to worsen all our conditions and weaken our unions.

Londis strike

Fourteen workers, members of Mandate, started a strike on 31st May at the Londis shop in Blakestown, Mulhuddart near Dublin.

They are paid the JLC rate of pay which starts at £2.30 an hour but are demanding the higher JIC rate, usually paid to Supermarket workers, which would mean 50p extra an hour in most cases.

But Basil Duffy, the owner, even turned down a modest proposal from the workers that a total of £120 a week be divided between the fourteen.

Duffy responded to the strike by closing the shop at Blakestown and moving stock to his outlet at Oldbawn.

Solidarity from the union members in Oldbawn is key to winning the strike and, as we go to press, Mandate is considering secondary picketing there.

Dunnes Stores

Workers prepare for action with mass meetings

Huge meetings are taking place of workers in Dunnes as the MANDATE union once again gears itself up for action against the company.

The main issue at stake is the refusal of Dunnes to honour agreements reached after the last strike.

Margaret Hefferman agreed to create 500 full time jobs after the union exposed the whole issue of hiring young workers on 'zero-hour contracts'.

Permanent

But now Dunnes are saying that they will only establish 150 permanent jobs by the end of the year.

They were also supposed to set up a pension scheme for

their staff. But the company refuses to reveal any detail about the nature of the scheme until the workers first vote for it!

Eligible

Even then, they are only offering a scheme for the full time staff who make up only 10% of the workforce.

These will also have to have more than five years service to be eligible.

It is a clear case of a profit hungry firm trying to slide out of all obligations to their staff

in their old age.

Dunnes have also been told by the Labour Court to backdate a 3% pay rise to 1995.

But they are only willing to pay from January 1996.

Conduct

A meeting of Dunnes shop stewards agreed to conduct a new ballot for strike action and are now getting overwhelming support from their members.

Five hundred Dunnes workers took part in a mini-marathon to highlight their grievance.

The union has also produced new stickers saying:

"I'm still backing the Dunnes workers".

C and C Strike threat

CANTRELL and Cochrane is the latest company to start attacking its workforce.

The company is demanding £1.4 million in savings. It will cause massive hardship to many who have been there for years.

The bosses want a new bonus scheme which could cut the earnings of some by up to a quarter. They also want a new

programme of redundancies to slash the numbers of long term casual staff.

Workers at the plant have voted overwhelmingly for strike action. If it goes ahead, they should quickly link up with the plants in Cork and Belfast for solidarity.

Waterford Glass

Glass shut down in solidarity

In May, Waterford Glass shut down for a day after more than 1,000 workers respected the picket of a sacked worker.

Management claim that they have hard evidence that he was working on a coal distribution business when he was supposed to be off sick.

But unions in the glass factory are asking for a more compassionate approach.

Many workers have noticed a real stepping up of

harrasement in the last few months.

One worker told Socialist Worker:

"It was a difficult issue and obviously not everyone is of the same opinion on it. But what was great was the magnificent solidarity. It

shows that the feeling for a fight is really returning".

After the stoppage, management were forced to add an extra round to their procedures to look at the case again.

The results should be back in the next few days.

Socialist Worker

inside:

Drugs crisis:
We need
resources
not
vigilantes
—Page 4

The
frame-up
of Colin
Duffy
—page 4

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism 40p

As Sinn Fein vote rises in sectarian poll:

NO MORE PRE-CONDITIONS:



STOP THE HYPOCRISY ON TALKS!

THE TALKS about the future of Northern Ireland should start now, without any more pre-conditions.

For the last two years, the dinosaurs who run the two Unionist Parties have kept putting up obstacles.

They are using the issue of de-commissioning as an excuse for not making the slightest concession to nationalists.

It is a demand that reeks of hypocrisy. There are already over 100,000 legally held weapons in the North.

Supporters

Many are owned by supporters of the former Ulster Resistance Movement which Ian Paisley once set up to defy the

Anglo-Irish agreement.

The Reverend Roy McGee has revealed some of the "Unionist business types" who are now demanding the IRA hands in their weapons tried to get the loyalist paramilitaries to break their ceasefires.

The increased Sinn Fein vote in the last election has come as a shock to the Tories and the Unionist Parties.

The *Belfast Telegraph* claimed that it was a vote for an IRA ceasefire.

They forgot to add that it was also a vote for defiance against a Tory government who has stalled the peace process in order to survive in office with the help of Trimble.

In no other conflict

situation in the world has one side handed in its weapons before the talks begun.

It never happened in South Africa or even Israel.

Yet people like Mandela and Arafat were equally labelled terrorists.

Opposed

We do not believe that all-party talks between right wing politicians will bring real solutions.

But we are utterly opposed to Trimble and Paisley who want demand a surrender by republicans even before they begin.

That is why socialists—no matter what their background—are united in saying: Stop the hypocrisy. Let the talks start!

But build a socialist alternative

EVEN BEFORE they enter talks republicans have already lowered their sights.

Adams admits that they no longer expect to see a United Ireland in the short term.

All they hope for is that the number of Catholics will out-vote Protestants a few decades hence.

The well known Belfast republican Martin Meehan has also intimated that they expect little fundamental change in policing.

Here is what he wrote: "It is a statement of fact to say the RUC will not disappear overnight..

and travels to the city centre is left unexplained.

Arrested

Last year, for example, in the first full year of a ceasefire, 400 people were arrested and charged under emergency legislation.

94% were found guilty in non-jury courts.

A new settlement between the present parties in the Northern Assembly will do little to lessen sectarianism or repression.

It will only set up structures where communal politicians

will compete to represent a divided working class.

Today every politician from Adams to Trimble bends over backwards to welcome multi-national investment.

If there is ever a settlement they will be competing to offer lower wages so that "their communities" get the jobs on offer.

Express

Whether they are Sinn Fein or the DUP all of them claim that "national identity" is more important than a common class interest.

No one should be denied the right to express themselves.

But in the end wrapping yourself in a Tricolour or a Union Jack does little to keep poverty from the door.

What is needed throughout Ireland is a party that challenges the two rotten traditions of conservative nationalism and unionism.

One that stands resolutely against all oppression—but does so from the point of view of united the working class to put its interests first.