

Socialist Worker

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TIME FOR A VOICE FOR THE WORKING CLASS:

VOTE



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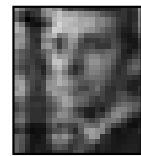
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SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

PARTY

CORRUPTION, GREED AND COVER-UP...

Socialist Worker names the Ansbacher gang

NOT ONLY will the Irish rich do anything to avoid tax they are even using the courts to avoid being named.

The Ansbacher accounts were set up by Haughey's bagman Des Traynor and run from the offices of CRH.

Companies and individuals put money in the dodgy offshore accounts and then got loans from the bank in an elaborate tax scam.

Taking out a loan from Ansbacher meant companies could even claim back corporation tax on interest on the loan—so avoiding tax twice.

The Irish rich weren't just avoiding tax they were defrauding the Irish taxpayer.

Trusts

In 1984 there were over 900 companies and trusts under the management of Guinness Mahon Cayman Trust and 462 individual depositors. The tax avoiding deposits came to more than 254m.

Unfortunately Socialist Worker is unable to name all those involved in the Ansbacher scam but here we offer a select list, which includes names not included in any other newspaper.

Oddly Independent Newspapers—while naming some of the companies involved—have omitted Tony O'Reilly from their somewhat shorter list.

★ THE Ansbacher crooks are using the courts to hide their identity.

Compare the disgraceful attempts to hide the names of the Ansbacher account



The bank that likes to say no to tax

The names they don't want you know:

- ★ Charles Haughey
- ★ Tony O'Reilly has admitted using the Ansbacher bank but denies being a depositor
- ★ George Crampton, director of Fianna Fail builders Cramptons has been linked to the Ansbacher accounts.
- ★ Michael Smurfit gave £60,000 to
- ★ Fianna Fail via the Ansbacher accounts.
- ★ Peter Sutherland, who was chairman of AIB and a former Attorney General.
- ★ Denis Foley Fianna Fail TD
- ★ Fianna Fail estate agent John Finnegan. Finnegan has a long relationship with Ahern and regularly attends Bertie's £2,000 a head annual fund-raising bash. Finnegan arranged the purchase of Ahern's Drumcondra home, which the local party branch bought as a present.
- ★ Tony Barry, chairman of CRH has already owned up to having an offshore account. He is a former deputy chairman of the Fine Gael party. Barry is also former director of IBEC, the bosses organisation.
- ★ Jim Culleton is another former chairman, of CRH and former

- chairman of the Allied Irish Banks.
- ★ Michael Dargan, another CRH board member was chief executive of Aer Lingus and was a chief executive of the Bank of Ireland.
- ★ Fianna Fail Property developer and close friend of Charlie Haughey, John Byrne.
- ★ The late Hugh Coveney, a former FG minister;
- ★ The late Liam McGonagle
- ★ The late John Guinness
- ★ Roches Stores
- ★ Murrays Europcar Ltd;
- ★ MacCormack Products Ltd
- ★ Super Ser Ltd;
- ★ Gombrette Ltd
- ★ Ken O'Reilly-Hyland, In 1973 Ken O'Reilly-Hyland was appointed director of the Central Bank!
- ★ Gerald Hickey solicitor.
- ★ Beresford Investments Ltd;
- ★ D. O'Reilly-Hyland;
- ★ Robert Wilson & Sons Ltd;
- ★ Christopher Woodward;
- ★ HB Dennis Ltd
- ★ Cassidy Silks
- ★ Management Holding Co Ltd;
- ★ Watership Ltd;
- ★ Stephenson & Gibney
- ★ Foxrock Securities Ltd.

holders to the case of Bridgit McCole.

The late Bridget McCole wanted to use the assumed name "Bridget M Roe" to sue the Blood Transfusion Service Board (BTSB) for infecting her with hepatitis

C through the use of infected anti-D.

Despite the strength of McCole's argument, the judge ruled: "The public disclosure of the true identities of parties to civil litigation is essential if justice is to be

administered in public."

In another case Justice Liam Hamilton refused permission to a group of haemophiliacs infected with HIV to sue St James's Hospital without disclosing their names and addresses.

Church child abuse scandal The cover-up continues

VICTIMS of sexual abuse have made some 8,000 individual complaints of sexual and physical abuse from the religious.

In addition to the cases already being investigated, victims' organisations and rape crisis centres have been inundated with thousands of calls from previously silent abuse victims, since the screening of the BBC documentary on paedophile priest Fr Sean Fortune.

But many of the priests under investigation will never appear before a court and many aren't even being investigated at all.

Only a small number of the hundreds of clerical child abuse investigations completed by the gardai over the past five years, will ever result in court prosecutions.

Unsuitable

Over 90 percent of files prepared for the DPP on institutional physical and sexual abuse have been returned as unsuitable for prosecution.

One solicitor representing the Survivors of Child Abuse (SOCA) organisation says that his practice alone is processing "200-300 cases involving the abuse of primary school children".

"It's not just the Church which has questions to answer. Senior politicians and civil servants in the Department of Education would be every bit as responsible for consistently turning a blind eye to reported and documented abuse."

The Church is facing lawsuits over the abuse of children by priests and religious in every diocese in the country.

★ **THIRTY-SIX** gardai who won their legal challenge blocking the Oireachtas sub-committee inquiry into the death of John Carthy at Abbeylara have been awarded costs estimated at more than 1m. Not satisfied with this the gardai are now seeking damages to cover their legal bill for their appearance before the Oireachtas sub-committee. On April 20, 2000, John Carthy died after being shot four times by members of the Emergency Response Unit following the siege at his Co Longford home.



Cardinal Desmond Connell

In Canada rather than putting the victims through the trauma of tribunal and court appearances, the Canadian authorities compensated the victims directly and then, in turn, sued the Christian Brothers organisation.

Victims organisations say that the Christian Brothers and other religious orders have "bought" immunity against prosecution by agreeing to pay into the State's compensation fund for institutional abuse victims.

■ In the case of the notorious Christian Brothers Industrial School at Artane, gardai will bring just one case against 30 alleged serial abusers despite a four-year investigation which resulted in more than 100 statements being taken from victims.

Similar investigations into widespread abuses over a number of decades at other industrial schools

such as Letterfrack, Daingean and St Joseph's in Tralee, are also likely to result in, at most, just a handful of prosecutions.

The DPP has decided not to proceed in any of the cases relating to the Daingean Industrial School in Co. Offaly and, while files on 19 alleged abusers at the infamous Letterfrack were forwarded to the DPP last year, no proceedings have yet been issued.

Five charges against Christian Brothers were issued in relation to alleged abuse at St Joseph's Industrial School in Tralee but three of the defendants successfully appealed against the proceedings in the High Court last year.

They appealed on the grounds that, because of the length of time which had elapsed since the alleged offences, they would have difficulty mounting a successful defence.

Church claims it doesn't exist

The Catholic Church has told lawyers representing victims of paedophile priests that the Primate of All Ireland, the Archbishop of Dublin, the Catholic hierarchy and the Church itself have no legal existence.

The Hierarchy's lawyers are telling victims of sexual abuse that the Catholic Church cannot be sued.

It has told the victims that Archbishop Sean Brady, Cardinal Desmond Connell and the bishops aren't legally representatives of the Church and so

cannot be sued either.

There is direct evidence of the failure of the Church at central level to deal effectively with suspected child abusers, such as Fr Sean Fortune in Wexford.

A lawyer representing victims who are bringing criminal actions against clerical abusers accused the Catholic Church of being in "absolute and total denial about its responsibility for the actions of child abusers within its ranks."

"In public, they are fulsome in apologising and expressing remorse but when it comes to the Four Courts, they are stonewalling cases wherever possible.

Their strategy is to deny everything," he said.

Consultants get 223m PR firms get 3.8m

THE FIANNA Fail-PD Coalition spent more than 233 million on consultants services during its five years in government.

Mary O'Rourke's office paid out 131 million on consultancy services, including a 74 million payment for the disastrous sell-off Eircom.

4 million was paid to Irish International for media advertising.

O'Rourke also spent more than 3 million on the aborted Aer Lingus privatisation.

John O'Donoghue approved spending of more

than 8 million on computers in the Department of Justice.

And Government departments have spent more than 3.8 million on public relations.

Ahern was the biggest spender on spin doctors paying out more than 2.7 million on PR advice since 1997.

Drury Communications was paid more than 2.5 million. Fleishman Hillard Saunders has handled more than 250,000-worth of government contracts.

Carr Communications got 350,592.

The great insurance rip-off

A RECENT report on the Irish insurance industry shows they are making ten times more profit than their equivalents in Britain.

Legal costs in Ireland are also far higher and this leads to huge premiums for those who have cars.

The situation facing young drivers is particularly disgraceful.

■ **The average premium for car insurance is 609—but many young drivers pay ten times that.**

A report from the Motor Insurance Advisory Board showed that insurance companies make a profit of more than two and a half times the average on young drivers.

Politicians of all parties—especially at election times—will "express concern" about this. But they do not get to the root of the problem—which is a system built on profit and greed.

Speculation

Insurance, finance and property speculation are a growing part of modern capitalism. In the US, for example, more money is being made from this sector—known as FIRE (Finance, Insurance and Real Estate)—than from manufacturing.

It is a sector that is riddled with fraud and parasitic behaviour. It has to be challenged head on.

The insurance industry should

be taken into public ownership.

There should be a state run insurance company which puts a simple premium on the cost of petrol to cover the price of insurance.

However reliance on cars also leads to more pollution, stress and accidents.

Many working people are now spending an extra two hours a day in traffic jams.

We need a proper public transport service to get people out of cars.

Up to 1997, Dublin Bus only got a 4% subsidy from the state—compared to a 50% subsidy given to the bus service in Athens.

Socialists say—fund the public transport system; cut the fares; introduce free transport. It will save lives and the environment.

..VERSUS ORDINARY PEOPLE FIGHTING BACK

Using the election to build resistance

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL SOCIALIST



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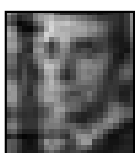
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Waterford

JIMMY KELLY is running in Waterford. Among the issues his campaign is highlighting are the fight against local service charges and the funding crisis in Waterford Regional Hospital.

Jimmy Kelly told *Socialist Worker*, "We are making a big noise about the underfunding of the health service of which the scandal of the Regional Hospital is a part."

Kelly condemned the South Eastern Health Board and the Department of Health for its refusal to fund a new pain relief service in Waterford Regional Hospital.

Costs

The Spinal Cord Stimulator, the first in the south east, was donated to WRH but cannot be used as the SEHB has refused to pay the 100,000 yearly running costs.

Jimmy Kelly's is a shop steward in Waterford Crystal and in the ATGWU locally.

His union branch prompted the Waterford

Trades Council to call a protest to demand a Radiotherapy Unit at the hospital. The march will take place on Sunday 28th April at 3.00pm.

Jimmy said "I would like to offer my support to the consultants and nurses in Waterford Regional Hospital who are lobbying for funding for the implementation of this service in the south-

east. It is appalling that people must travel to Dublin for a pain-relief operation".

"Of course we have heard all this before with the radiotherapy unit, people being forced to travel half-way across the country, with all the extra pain and stress that involves, to receive treatment.

"This, once again, displays the government's

Dublin South East

SWP CANDIDATE Shay Ryan's campaign got off to a flying start with an open air street meeting to organise against bin charges.

Shay is coordinator for the Campaign Against the Bin Tax in the area and a meeting of the local campaign was planned for Pearse St area.

As Shay told, *Socialist Worker*, "The management of the local community centre refused local people the use of the hall for a Bin Tax meeting. So we took the initiative and held an open air meeting in Pearse Square."

More than 40 people turned up and Shay took the megaphone to put locals in the picture over the campaign of non-payment of the bin tax.

"Twenty people joined the campaign then and there and even took my election leaflets for their blocks.

"We now plan further street meetings in both Rathmines and the Bride Street areas to get the message out."

Shay's campaign team have also been leafletting at the Portobello Bridge. "So far the response has been very positive."

Bray

Our town is not for sale

SWP candidate Catherine Kennedy was invited by residents of Connolly Square, a council estate in Bray, to witness the installation by Bray Town Council of meters on their water supply.

All new houses have been fitted out with meters for the last number of years but as they are normally located at the households mains connection, many people are unaware of their existence.

However in Bray the council is beginning to install them in older houses. It seems obvious that the government, and Bray town council, are putting in place the infrastructure for privatisation behind people's backs. When the issue was raised at a council meeting, it was claimed that it was stop-cocks, and not meters, that were being installed.

Meters

However residents saw with their own eyes what was going on and local council workers claim that all domestic houses in the greater Dublin area will have meters installed in the next eighteen months.

According to Catherine "We need to get it across to the politicians that our services are not for sale. Bray still doesn't have a full-time fire service and they want to privatise everything".

On April 26, refuse collection will become fully privatised.

refusal to address the chronic problems within the public sector.

"Public services are being sacrificed to fund tax cuts for the wealthy and for corporations".

In another development, Jimmy Kelly hit out angrily at the treatment handed to student nurses in Waterford Regional Hospital who have been refused meal allowances by the

The council service was deliberately run down in the aftermath of the strike two years ago, and is no longer viable according to the council.

The man who introduced privatisation to the Wicklow area, Hubert Fitzpatrick, for-

mally acting county manager, has since become a consultant with Celtic Waste, the group that supplies waste disposal services in the area.

However the mood in Bray and across Wicklow is one of anger and the politicians are feeling the heat on

the door steps.

Catherine is getting lots of support and hopes to build a campaign to resist the attacks on public services so that people can continue to make their voices heard long after they cast their vote in May.

Dun Laoghaire

DUN LAOGHAIRE Rathdown council has put its Draft Coastal Development Plan on display to the public in Dun Laoghaire Town Hall.

After months of speculation they have officially revealed that they want to redesign the Carlyle Pier, allowing for residential development and other uses.

There are clear indications that luxury apartments and hotels are on the cards but as a sop to public opinion the locating of a diaspora museum on the pier has also been mentioned.

According to local SWP

candidate Richard Boyd Barrett this is another example of the privatisation agenda that is being pursued by the council.

"The pier is a public amenity, used and enjoyed by generations of people in this area and beyond.

Selling

"While the council may try to present it differently they are selling off a public site to private developers and they should not be allowed get away with it."

With regard to the public baths site the plan proposes an aquacentre, built under a public private partnership (PPP) scheme.

The decision not to press

for residential development is a victory for the campaign to save the baths.

This pulled 600 people onto the streets of Dun Laoghaire last summer.

However the decision to involve the private sector in the provision of a new amenity is unacceptable.

Dun Laoghaire badly needs good amenities that are accessible to all, and it is the job of the council to provide these.

Involving the private sector turns them into profit making enterprises that always fail to deliver to everyone.

For the fight against rent increases in Dun Laoghaire turn to page 11

Dublin North Central

Fighting to defend Beaumont Hospital

Socialist Worker election candidate Ritchie Browne is working together with Beaumont Hospital workers and local residents to build the fight for a decent health service.

Nurses in the Accident and Emergency Depart-

ments were forced to take strike action in order to highlight the chaos in our health service:

■ Due to lack of beds there is now constant overcrowding in A&E departments where patients are regularly left lying on trolleys for up to three days!

■ Extreme stress and overwork is affecting the quality of the care that staff can provide.

■ Nurses are being forced to endure excessive workloads and even physical and verbal assault from stressed out patients.

■ There are two and three year waiting lists for vital operations.

According to Ritchie, "Nurses and staff in the Beaumont hospital need the support of local people and other trade unionists, to fight for a decent health service.

"Beaumont hospital needs a major upgrade. In the run up to the general election we can put real

pressure on the government parties to provide the kind of health service staff and patients deserve.

"Nurses' pay and conditions must be improved to stem the tide of nurses leaving the profession.

"There are currently 1,700 nursing vacancies in Dublin alone, that cannot be filled because of the long hours and low pay.

"As well as a pay rise other incentives should include housing supplements for nurses working in the city and childcare facilities."

Beaumont Hospital Action Group Public Meeting Margaret Carroll (SIPTU shop-steward Beaumont Hospital.) Ritchie Browne (SWP) Kilmore West Community Centre, Cromcastle Rd, Monday 29th April 8pm

Cork South Central

MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN, who is running in Cork South Central told Socialist Worker, "I am coming across widespread hostility to parties of the establishment on the door steps of many areas of Cork South Central and these parties know it.

"One person spoken to in Mahon said to me that 'Fine Gael and the PD's have avoided canvassing corporation houses such is their fear of residents anger'."

Michael points out that local authority tenants are being treated disgracefully by the Corporation, with old

age pensioners waiting years for downstairs bathrooms and extensions.

Michael is highlighting the widespread frustration at the poor state of local services and amenities.

Many residents in outlying areas such as Ballincollig have been demanding recreational facilities for children.

The local army barracks and surrounding land is up for sale but private developers seem to have it sewn up.

"Ordinary people in the street seem to have no say in how our town is developed. I will fight for facilities such as a swimming pool to be built here."

Dublin South Central

BRID SMITH is representing the Socialist Workers Party in Dublin South Central. Already a lively group of supporters have begun leafletting, poster and canvassing around Drimnagh, Crumlin and Ballyfermot.

Bríd's outspoken support for public sector workers defending services and conditions has won her the endorsement of a leading shop steward in James St hospital.

The campaign has organised a series of public

meetings on the theme "Defend Our Public Services" with a Dublin Bus shop steward, a St James Hospital shop steward and a local teacher activist joining Bríd on the platform.

The first meeting is in Ballyfermot on May 8th—see local posters for details or phone Bríd's campaign headquarters on 087-9090166

MORE CAMPAIGNS TURN TO PAGE 11

HYSTERIA OVER CRIME...

We need resources not more jails!

As the election campaign got underway, a predictable hue and cry broke out for tougher action on crime and in particular on youth crime after the accidental death of two gardaí following a collision with joyriders. **DEIRDRE CRONIN** and **SIMON BASKETTER** report.

THE DEATHS of the two gardaí on the Stillorgan dual carriageway only tells one small part of the story.

Joyriding and vandalism are endemic in some of the most deprived housing estates across the country, and the young people, or children, who carry out these crimes are the most marginalised and forgotten in the state.

While politicians fat on "legitimate donations" wax lyrical about the need to crack down on youth crime the reality is the massive inequalities in the Celtic Tiger are far more to blame for joyriding than any hooligan culture.

And those same politicians have no interest in addressing that poverty.

Disadvantage

Dublin's inner city, where the two boys lived, is the most concentrated area of disadvantage in the country.

According to a recent Dublin Inner City Partnership report levels of long term unemployment are almost four times the national average and almost 10,000 local residents depend on social welfare.

In addition 43.8 percent of the adult population left school at or before the age of 15 while 37 percent have either no formal education

or primary education only.

The flats complexes in the south inner city where these children live have unemployment rates of 70 percent.

According to a teacher who taught in the area "From the time these children reach us in junior infants it is clear that they have experienced far too much hardship.

"Their world can be a fairly brutal one where they see drink, drugs and violence from a very young age.

"There is very little back-up for parents under huge stress who often don't have literacy skills to pass onto their children.

"Yet despite the endless calls from teachers the Early Start pre-school programmes are still in pilot phase and only available in some disadvantaged schools while our class sizes are far too big.

"It's not rocket science; these kids need very intensive, almost individualised supports and the government will just not fund it."

Roisin, a community worker in Dublin's Fatima Mansions, believes that the basic necessities of life have been denied many families.

"While there are regeneration programmes in some of the worst affected estates in the country, most communities have very little faith in the government's ability to deliver the necessary supports and structures to seriously change people's lives.

"The reason is that in a

O'Donoghue's short term memory

JOHN O'Donoghue seems to have forgotten his own department reports on "joyriding".

Dave Farrington, wrote a report on joyriding which was launched by the Minister for Justice.

Farrington, a former youth worker, looked at north Coolock, and has no doubt that the fundamental underlying cause is socio-economic disadvantage.

"Economically deprived local authority

estates are where recurring joyriding is found," he says.

"The demoralisation, lack of opportunity and lack of ambition that derive when communities are socially disadvantaged mean these kids change from being problem individuals to part of the culture of those communities."

Most young people in these areas don't get involved in joyriding, Farrington insists.

Among the reasons some children did was the absence of opportunities for children out of school and out of work.



What is the future for these inner city children?

time of so-called economic boom some of the basic services are still not being delivered.

"Unemployment, bad housing, lack of facilities (from shops and chemists to recreational facilities), a disgraceful level of housing maintenance, very little social care backup and no supports for drug misuse are the hallmarks of many estates in the country.

"In this kind of environment it is no wonder that young people can't make sense of their lives."

While the government is quick to point out that local communities have received funding for community centres, educational courses and recreational projects it is all very small scale.

According to Roisin, "The sourcing and defending of funding by local community groups takes up huge amounts of valuable time.

"Government funding initiatives like Rapid appear to be another bureaucratic minefield which will leave communities spending countless hours trying to access valuable resources.

"There are promises of

increased recreational facilities for young people but because of Public Private Partnerships there are no guarantees that the future management of these facilities will allow cheap access to low income families.

"This could be reversed immediately by giving these guarantees. Sports and recreational facilities are a right."

At present in Dublin 8, the Rialto Youth Project is fighting to retain a sports worker who works with young people at risk.

Roisin believes that the roots of the problem need to be tackled.

"People who are marginalised need intensive support structures and a huge investment into key resources would go a long

way towards supporting a meaningful life.

"That means providing State funded childcare facilities, decent housing, proper access to health services, youth and community facilities and workers, social workers, family support services etc.

"Otherwise we will see more crime, more despair and more death."

Children who spend 22 hours a day in a cell

THERE IS much froth in the media about increasing the number of places in the principal custodial centre for young offenders, St. Patrick's institution.

St. Patrick's already suffers from considerable overcrowding, sometimes having twice as many occupants as it was designed for.

The Association for the Prevention of Torture, in its *Report on Detention*

Conditions in the Republic of Ireland for the Council of Europe, describes St. Patrick's Institution as "decrepit, badly in need of renovation, with small, dark cells."

In half the cells, prisoners must still slop out.

Conditions are cramped, single cells often being shared.

Only forty have access to work or training; the remainder spend 22 hours a day in their cells.

There is no rehabilitative regime. Many of the prisoners

are in need of psychiatric care.

The report also noted that children are being imprisoned with adults in the Prison Training Unit and Wheatfield, the report pointed out, the prison conditions were preferable to those in St Patrick's.

What we think

WE DON'T need to put more young people in jail and we don't need any new laws to put more people in jail.

John O'Donoghue has brought in 47 new laws on crime, including his latest attacks on Travellers and protestors in two new Criminal Justice Bills. He is promising more but there is no need.

Property

According to the Institute of Criminology, "recorded crime in Ireland has been falling from 1984." Offences against property were down 14 per cent in that period, and larcenies were down 19 per cent. Offences against the person, including sexual

offences and murders, are at a lower level than in the 1980s.

Crime is linked to poverty: Ireland was in boom in the 1990s and crime fell—it was at its highest in the 1980s in a recession.

Every year 10,000 people are sent to prison—the vast majority of them are poor. *Astonishingly a third of these people are sent to jail for not paying fines*

That can mean going to jail for not paying a television licence.

There is no clearer example of how prison hits for the poor.

The Ansbacher crooks are even using the courts so we don't find out their names.

And while Liam Lawlor plays with the courts, Charlie Haughey, Ray Burke and the

rest haven't even been prosecuted.

Any time the rich or their friends get into trouble, they can afford highly paid barristers and support from politically appointed judges.

And if that goes wrong there will always be a government minister who can ring up the judges to get their friends off.

Instead of spending yet more money on extra gardaí and prisons, the Criminal Assets Bureau should take the money of the Ansbacher account holders and the corrupt politicians.

That money alone could transform the lives of the people in Ireland's poorest areas.

It could provide jobs and facilities for young people that would seriously tackle the issue of joyriding.

Lies, damn lies and elections

IF THERE is one thing the main political party agree upon, it is that we need to be tougher on crime and "anti-social behaviour".

Ireland, they say, is becoming more dangerous and criminals are on the rampage.

But facts contradict the hype:

★ The crime rate in Ireland is low by international standards and has been dropping for a number of years.

★ Less than two percent of crime is against people. The rest is against property.

★ The majority of indictable offences fell within the categories of larceny from unattended motor vehicles and burglary.

★ In most thefts the value of the property taken is under 200.

★ The cost of keeping one person in custody for one week is over 1,000.

★ A third of people who go to jail go for non-payment of fines.

★ No one has ever gone to jail for tax evasion!

what we think

Vote Socialist and organise the fightback

THE GENERAL election offers working class people a chance to put some manners on the crooks in the Dáil.

Fianna Fail are promising more of the same—corruption, privatisation and the rich getting richer. Fine Gael say they want to sack thousands of public sector workers and the PDs want to sell every state asset they can find time to privatise when they aren't ringing up judges on behalf of paedophiles.

There has been a huge transfer of wealth to the rich. In 1987, one third of the national economy went to holders of capital. Today it has risen to a half.

Taxes

We have a run down public service because all the main political parties are for cutting taxes on the rich.

Ireland has the lowest level of tax on profits in Europe. But we also hold the record for cutting hospital beds.

Our roads are jammed because the government did not invest in public transport.

The main parties in the Dáil are in the pockets of big business. They get huge donations and are mired in corruption.

But opposition is growing. Fianna Fail has lost two referenda and two by-elections in Tipperary saw the FF vote sink to its lowest level since

the 1920s.

The coming election will be the most important election for decades because a fight is now on to give a voice to that discontent.

The Labour Party is supposed to be linked to workers. But when it was in government it presided over tax amnesties and tax cuts for the rich.

Its most radical proposal is to take £5 billion from the pension fund to pay for the public services. They are terrified of calling for high taxes on the rich.

The terrible record of Labour shows why support for Sinn Fein and the Greens is growing.

But both these parties want to join a future coalition government.

Unlike Sinn Fein or the Greens, Socialist Worker is opposed to coalition with the bosses' parties—instead we pledge to organise resistance to them.

It is vital that the largest possible number of votes go to openly socialist candidates.

That means supporting the candidates of the Socialist Workers Party and Joe Higgins' Socialist Party.

Socialists fight for working class interests with the same determination that Fianna Fail stand up for their class.

Voting socialist is the surest and clearest way to signal that a real fight against the political establishment is starting.

Not to war—justice for Palestine



100,000 people marched in Washington

ONE moment summed up the enormous tensions that George W Bush's administration is creating with its support for Ariel Sharon's reign of terror in the Palestinian Occupied Territories.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell spent a week dawdling around the world before arriving in Israel on his supposed "peace mission".

That gave Sharon's butchers plenty of time to do their bloody work.

Powell's first stop was Morocco in North Africa. At a public session for the media, King Mohammed of Morocco effectively told Powell to get lost.

"Don't you think it was more important to go to Jerusalem first?" he asked Powell.

The Moroccan monarchy has been one of the most servile and repressive pro-Western regimes since it gained independence in the 1950s.

Yet now this pampered king was giving voice to the anger of the Arab streets.

The reason is simple. Bush's

policy of treating Israel's war against the Palestinians as one of the front-lines in the larger "war on terrorism" is destabilising the Middle East.

The fury in the Arab world is important for two reasons.

First of all, it could threaten Bush's plans to attack Iraq.

But the turmoil in the Arab world has a longer term significance as a force that can grow to defeat Israel and the corrupt Arab leaders.

The other side of America was shown in the magnificent 100,000 people who protested in Washington in solidarity with the Palestinians, and

against Bush and his cronies in the IMF.

Here the national demonstration on April 27th should be the launch pad to building up the anti war movement.

This movement can give expression to the depth of opposition to war and the extent of support of the Palestinians.

It needs to continue to build not just as an act of solidarity but to stop the Irish government from sending troops to Afghanistan and their disgraceful backing of Bush's war on the poor of the world.

These are some of the policies the Socialist Workers Party is fighting on in this election:

★ Jail the corrupt politicians. Over 60 million euros has been spent on tribunals but only one politician has been jailed for a short time.

★ Tax the Rich to fund decent public services. No Privatisation. Free health care for all.

★ No Bin Charges, No Incinerators, State funded re-cycling facilities. Bin charges are a double tax.

★ Only 8 percent of waste comes from domestic sources. Make big business clean up its act.

★ All out opposition to Bush's war. Justice for the Palestinians. No US troops at Shannon. No to the Nice Treaty.

★ Legislation for a woman's right to choose.

★ The people have voted twice. So let's cut the hypocrisy and stop forcing 7,000 women to travel to Britain each year for abortions.

★ People before Profit.

To help in the campaign ring (01) 8722682 for candidates in your area see page three

Socialist Worker Appeal reaches 13,459

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MASS REVOLT AGAINST THE SYSTEM ACROSS THE WORLD

Turmoil in Venezuela

Coup foiled by popular uprising

THE POOR of Venezuela defeated an attempted coup against the country's president, Hugo Chavez.

The attempt to remove Chavez was the work of the head of the employers' organisation, with the connivance of army generals, the head of the Catholic church, and even a corrupt trade union leader.

They were defeated by a popular uprising in Venezuela's capital, Caracas. From the shanty towns on the hills that surround the city, thousands of people risked their lives to take to the streets and defy the coup.

Some were rioting and looting, others besieged the presidential palace and main military camp, and others seized control of the country's main TV station.

The *New York Times* reported that those rising up in defence of Chavez were "the vendors and factory workers, the maids and truckers".

Their heroism split the army, broke the coup attempt, and saw Chavez restored to office.

The coup's failure is also a serious setback for the gang around George W Bush in the US White House.

The South American country is one of the world's biggest oil producers, and it also supplies 15 percent of all US oil imports.

At least some of those around Bush's White House seem to have encouraged the coup plotters.

The coup attempt was prepared by Venezuela's employers, who seized on Chavez's appointment of new directors to the state oil company as a pretext to organise a shutdown of industry. The corrupt leader of Venezuela's

by **CHRIS HARMAN**

main union federation claimed the shutdown was a "strike" since it had the support of middle and upper management, and called on workers to support it.

Disgracefully, the International Federation of Free Trade Unions, to which Irish Congress of Trade Unions is affiliated, supported him in this.

Closed

On the second day of the shutdown there was a mass anti-Chavez demonstration of the middle classes in Caracas.

The protest clashed with a smaller demonstration of Chavez supporters, and shooting took place.

Supporters of the coup within the armed forces then intervened, claiming they were "preventing bloodshed", and declared that Chavez had resigned.

Carmona, head of the employers' organisation, declared himself president, closed down the country's congress, and began mass arrests of those believed to be Chavez supporters.

What upset his plans and saw him removed from office was the reaction among the poor.

The popular uprising saw



Protesting against the coup

sudden panic overtake many ruling class figures who had backed the coup only hours before.

They feared civil war between different sections of the armed forces. They also feared a repetition of the great riots of 1989, the "Caracazo".

On that occasion a spontaneous revolt of the country's poor against a government and International Monetary Fund cuts package was only put down after more than 1,000 deaths.

The mere threat of a repetition of such turmoil was enough for the heads of the armed forces to force Carmona to resign and announce Chavez's reinstatement.

Struggle from below is the key

WITHIN two days the forces that had plotted to overthrow Hugo Chavez were terrified by the poor protesting on the streets.

They brought Chavez back in the hope they could persuade him to bring the poor under control again.

Armed forces commanders who switched from supporting the coup to opposing it will now be putting pressure on Chavez.

They are telling him the only way he can remain secure is by following poli-

cies of "moderation". In his first statement on restoration to office Chavez seemed to endorse that message himself.

He announced he was convoking a "round table of national unity" involving "the Catholic and evangelical churches, the employers, the political parties and their leaders, the unions and the mass media".

To those who had risked their lives going on the streets on his behalf he said, "I hear there has been rioting and looting. Let's return home and reflect upon events."

It is a message that many who took to the streets will

not want to accept.

They saw how little concern the bosses' have for democracy or human rights.

They are bitter at the newspapers and TV proprietors for conniving in the coup attempt.

They want to be rid of those military commanders who did not immediately move against the coup.

Action

It is up to ordinary people to take action to challenge the power of those at the top of society while their structures of control are in disarray.

This cannot be done by

relying, as much of the left has done for three years, on Chavez to do things using the top-down method.

It means direct struggle from below, run by workers and the poor themselves, not middle class military officers who can so easily switch sides.

It also means being absolutely clear that attacking the wages and conditions of employed workers is no way to help the unemployed, the semi-employed and the rural poor.

That only plays into the hands of the rich, the multinationals and the Bush gang in the White House.

A defeat for the Bush gang

THE ATTEMPTED coup came after a long series of denunciations of Chavez by the US government.

In February the US State Department and the CIA expressed their "worry" over his activities.

A US State Department official told the *Washington Post*, "Venezuela is in a very dangerous position."

If Chavez does not arrange things quickly he will not complete his term in office."

This suggests that at least a section of the US government encouraged the coup plotters. *The New York Times* spelled out Chavez's crimes in US eyes:

"Visions of a united South America unshackled from the dominance of Washington's power," "Selling oil to Castro,"

"His not so tacit support for the Colombian rebels," and, "The potential threat he posed to thousands of American gas stations."

"Above all," the paper argued, "the US wants stability in its

backyard. Mr Chavez did not fit in with President Bush's vision of the century of the Americas."

This is in line with the approach of the core group in the Bush administration, who hold that the US can do whatever it wants anywhere in the world.

The Bush gang suffered a significant setback when the poor took to the streets of Caracas on Saturday. That should be good news for everyone opposed to US power.

General Strike in Italy

A new vision for a growing movement

VITTORIO AGNOLETTO is the spokesperson of the Italian Social Forum movement. He was a leading figure in the protests against the G8 in Genoa last July. In the run-up to Italy's general strike, which took place at the start of April.

Did the Genoa protests contribute to the three million strong demonstration called by the CGIL union federation in Rome on 23 March?

THEY WERE absolutely essential. The 23 March demonstration would probably not have developed in the way it did if Genoa hadn't happened. Genoa opened up a debate about democracy. We opened lots of possibilities.

Members of the centre-left Democratic Left party have now started demonstrating.

The CGIL union federation gained a bit more courage to take decisions independently of the two other federations. I'm not trying to say that everything needs our rubber stamp of approval—but we've made a recognised contribution.

What kind of discussions are you having with the trade unions about the general strike called for 16 April?

We're going to deal with issues beyond those faced by unionised or waged workers. We're calling on all non-unionised and self-employed workers not to go to work. If some services aren't closed down we're thinking of closing them down ourselves.

And we're going to blockade workplaces where illegal and temporary work takes place—workplaces where they risk the sack if they go on strike.

Have the union leaders given you permission to do this?

We don't need their permission. Our movement is



Striking against Berlusconi

strong even in its relations with the unions. We've told them this is what we'll do, and we'll soon see how it all fits together on the day.

Not that we want to hold demonstrations on our own—we'll be on the union marches, but we'll be bringing these issues along with us.

We're happy about defending the current law giving workers some protection from sackings, but it's pointless if we don't start talking about extending rights at work.

You recently said, "The 'Third Way' died on the fields of Afghanistan." What did you mean?

When we had a centre-left government in Italy the Florence summit took place.

All the European leaders met and said that there is a "Third Way" between old-style Communism and the attacks of the big international financial institutions. Blair has been figurehead for all this.

I say there is no "Third Way". It died on the fields of Afghanistan. Blair behaved as if he were Bush's helmeted recruiting sergeant. He then had summits with Berlusconi, but the "Third Way" had already died. Furthermore, I'd say that the alternative is not between neo-liberalism, the WTO and old-style Communism.

The real alternative is between the World Bank and the peoples of Porto Alegre.

What role do you think political parties play nowadays?

I think parties still have a role to play, particularly as regards institutions.

However, I don't believe in the "autonomy of politics", the idea that politics dominates over social questions.

This is something that has been practised by elements of the Italian left, and which has destroyed mass parties.

I think the mould in which movements raise demands and questions, and parties provide the answers, has been broken. Today, the movements are also providing answers.

What do you mean by the phrase "a non-ideological left"?

For example, you can't call our movement a communist movement.

We've got people who look to communism and people who don't, those who look to environmentalism and those who don't, and so on.

What keeps us together is ideas and programmes. Our movement doesn't conceive of the world as a classical painting that we just have to copy to be able to change things.

We're a movement full of ideas which is building things step by step. Therefore we don't always approach things with pre-conceived notions, although we have got some clear reference points.

This is why I define our movement as being "non-ideological". If we were ideological we wouldn't be able to be a pluralistic movement.

How do you visualise the European Social Forum (ESF), which will be held in Italy in November?

Firstly as a journey. It should be built in all European countries.

It has to be discussed in all movements. For example, I hope that when the big international organising meeting is held in Vienna in May all organisations will have discussed their ideas thoroughly and come with proposals.

In turn, the ESF itself will be part of the journey towards another mass gathering at Porto Alegre.

Secondly, I think it should link the radical nature of social movements with cultural, scientific and political channels.

This is absolutely essential. For example, within the Italian movement we've got a lack of contacts with the world of culture, which has a tendency to try and hide away from us. Thirdly, we want a stop to Eurocentric attitudes.

We need to bring Eastern Europe into things, as well as the Balkans. This is an area of Europe that has been a war zone, where aspects of the free market played a central role.

Then there is the issue of the Mediterranean, and how to involve people who live to the south of it.

What do you think the important issues for building the European Social Forum are?

Without a doubt we should be arguing against "Fortress Europe".

We should be talking about a Europe that does not characterise its relationship with the US either on the basis of military competition, or on the basis of political hegemony or dominance over markets. It is absolutely essential that we start talking about a different form of social development within Europe.

We don't want to create a kind of European imperialism built around the European Union (EU), in which other European satellite nations hover around outside providing labour when needed.

There is a law by which the citizens of nations due to join the EU in 2004 will not be allowed to move freely within the EU. Instead they will be regulated by market forces within the existing 15 member states, which is outrageous.

So we should be for a "Europe without frontiers", in the sense that although there might be nations there will be no borders.

★The European Social Forum will be an event for anti-capitalists to map out the future of the movement.

For more information or for a model motion visit more details from *Globalise Resistance* email globalise_resistance@yahoo.com or ring 086-4098186.

Palestine

GOLIATH WON'T LIVE IN PEACE WITH DAVID

WHAT IS the solution to the Palestinian crisis? The conflict is presented to us as one between two equal forces, with right and wrong on both sides, who must compromise with each other and establish two separate states.

But there are not two equal sides battling it out in Palestine. Israel is one of the most heavily militarised states on earth. It is backed and armed by the US. It has received over \$92 billion of US "aid" over the last three decades.

Then there are the Palestinians, driven from their own lands, existing in exile, denied justice. Palestinian oppression and the conflict in the Middle East cannot be ended by telling them to exist in impoverished rump areas, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

And calling those areas "a state" does not make the suffering in them any less. Israel is built on stolen land. Zionist settlers from Europe began arriving in larger numbers in British-controlled Palestine in the early part of the last century.

But Palestine was already inhabited by an Arab population. Most were Muslims, but there was a big Christian and smaller Jewish population. They had lived peacefully together for 1,300 years. The Zionist aim was to create an exclusively Jewish state in the area. That meant refusing to mix with Arabs.

In 1947 Jewish people made up 30 percent of the population of Palestine. That year the UN decided to partition the area between Jews and Arabs. It did so at the behest of the US, which saw an Israeli state as a way of strengthening its influence in the area. The US bullied and bribed other states to go along with the partition plan. The Jewish minority owned only 6 percent of the land, yet the UN granted them 55 percent of Palestine.

Israel consistently refused to allow a right of return for those Palestinians driven out of their homes since 1947. Israelis claim this would undermine racial the nature of the Jewish state. A two state solution would therefore involve Palestinian acceptance of the ethnic cleansing undertaken by the Zionists over the past fifty years.

Any Palestinian state set up under those conditions would be entirely dominated—both economically and militarily—by Israel.

Israel's military machine. This does not mean "driving the Jewish population into the sea", as Israel's defenders claim. It means simple equality.

It is possible that the present intifada could force the US to pressurise the Israelis to withdraw from the territories occupied in the 1976 war. This would be a major victory and would give heart to the struggle to regain complete Palestinian freedom.

Clearly, although the Palestinians can achieve tactical victories, to win against the huge military power of the Israeli state requires mobilising the whole region. This means extending the Middle East, overthrowing the corrupt pro-Western Arab governments and mobilising the mass of Arabs in the fight against the racist Israeli state.

Playing that role has meant compounding the humiliation of the Palestinians through military expansion in every decade since Israel was founded. Israel went to war in 1956, 1967, 1973 and 1982, seizing more land, the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. It has also meant a steadfast refusal to allow the return of Palestinian refugees and their descendants.

The so called solution the US and its Arab ally Saudi Arabia are proposing now—a separate Palestinian state on parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip—does nothing to address the injustice that fuels the conflict. The UN partition left the Palestinian area overrun by its more powerful neighbour.

The Oslo "peace process" in the mid-1990s resulted in the creation of Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority. It was a mini-state in the Gaza Strip and some of the West Bank. But Israeli expansionism continued. The Israeli government encouraged hundreds of thousands of settlers to move into armed encampments in the Palestinian territories.

They are now 20 percent of the population. They consume 80 percent of the water in the area. The Palestinian Authority had official control of Ramallah, Jenin and all the other areas Israel has just invaded.

Calling those areas, criss-crossed by Israeli settlements, a state will not stop further invasions by Israel. The reality behind talk of a "two state solution" is an Israeli state, which is armed with nuclear weapons, alongside effectively a reservation for Palestinians.

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Israel consistently refused to allow a right of return for those Palestinians driven out of their homes since 1947. Israelis claim this would undermine racial the nature of the Jewish state. A two state solution would therefore involve Palestinian acceptance of the ethnic cleansing undertaken by the Zionists over the past fifty years.

Any lasting solution has to be based on a single state in Palestine in which Jew, Muslim, Christian and others all enjoy equal rights. This of course implies the right of return for Palestinians and shutting Israel's military machine.

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Incinerators to be built across Northern Ireland

ACT NOW TO STOP THE POISON PLANTS

UPTO three incinerators could be built across Northern Ireland if there is not a massive campaign to stop them and to reject the draft waste management plans that have been produced.

The Northern Ireland "Wake up to Waste" strategy or the plans produced by the three regional groups of councils accepts that incinerators are inevitable.

While incinerators—or as they call them "energy to waste facilities"—are carefully hidden in the North and South West plans, the Eastern one is quite open that the Belfast area is to have an incinerator in four to five years time.

This openness is due to the absence of an anti-incinerator campaign in that region.

With only 3 percent of waste currently being recycled, North Ireland has one of the worst records in Europe.

This is the legacy of neglect by local councils down the years.

But the solution does not involve rocket science or incineration.

Most towns and cities throughout Europe and North America recycle between 30 and 50 per cent of household waste.

Countries like Switzerland and Germany recycle up to 80 percent of glass, aluminium and steel.

What we need is a determined, publicly-funded strategy to reduce, reuse and recycle waste.

Instead, we have politi-



Protesting to defeat incinerators.

cians that accept that "the current trend is for a rise in the production of waste", that the "benefits" of incineration outweigh its "dis-benefits", that the EU targets cannot be met by reducing, recycling and reusing waste and that all solutions have to be "market driven" and "economically viable".

But we do not have to accept that the growth in waste being generated by local businesses and supermarkets through unnecessary packaging is unstoppable.

McDonalds

In many countries, McDonald's are forced to wrap their burgers only in greaseproof paper, greatly reducing the amount of polystyrene waste.

Large supermarkets create much unnecessary waste in the average home waste bin—because it's good for profits.

Cooked ham is a good

example. Four slices of pre-packed cooked ham in a large supermarket costs around £2.19.

The same four slices cost LESS if cut fresh plus it means more workers are involved in getting it to the public.

It takes a few minutes more and the shops employ too few workers so encourage people to buy the pre-packed stuff.

This is because one worker on a production line can pack the ham in a tenth of the time it takes in the shop.

In other words, the profits of the large supermarkets are made at the expense of creating a mountain of waste packaging and cutting jobs.

The vast majority of waste comes from big business and industry—they should be forced to pay for recycling rather than building dangerous incinerators.

And why must recycling be "economically viable"?

Landfill already costs us, environmentally, eco-

nomically and socially. Incinerators will be more expensive still on every front, particularly in relation to the health of babies and children.

Subsidy

So why cannot the same kind of subsidy be devoted to publicly fund recycling?

It is clear that the very-well-paid consultants have not taken account of the extra jobs that could be created through a recycling strategy.

Nor have they included the health, environmental and social benefits.

The need to recycle much of our waste has long been known.

Yet we are still waiting for simple kerbside collections.

An organised fight against incinerators across the North can stop the atmosphere being filled with poisonous gas and be the start of a campaign for real recycling facilities.

SAY NO TO THE WATER CHARGES

NORTHERN MINISTER for Finance, Sean Farren, is threatening to introduce water charges.

Speaking at a dinner for the Confederation of British Industry, he said the money allocated to Northern Ireland in this year's Budget would not be enough—particularly for the health service.

While English spending would rise by 10 per cent a year, Northern Ireland's share would provide for only a 7.5 per cent average increase in health spending.

"While it may be unpalatable, we may also have to accept that if we want better public services here we will have to pay more for them," he

told the gathering of businessmen.

However, Mr Farren said "sensitive issues" such as industrial de-rating or domestic water charging would be the subject of full public consultation, with the aim of completing the review by October.

Link

This link between "industrial de-rating" and "domestic water charging" means that families will be charged for every bath or shower they take in order to subsidise businesses that have been complaining about the rates they pay.

For some time now, politicians from every party in the Executive have seen copying the South by ending business rates and reducing corporate tax as something they are all agreed should be

done.

It looks like they expect us to pick up the tab for the money they will lose in the process.

Water charges were introduced in Scotland in the 1990s.

They quickly increased from about £60 a year to over £200 a year.

One study found that in some areas of Scotland, families were paying as much as £20 a week for their water!

Refusing

Campaigners in the South stopped the water charges by refusing to pay them.

Trade unions and community groups in the North need to let Farren know that the same will happen here if he tries to make us pay for the Fat Cats' profits.

Sectarianism in North Belfast... Facing up to the gangsters

IN RECENT months violence has continued in North Belfast.

Both Catholics and Protestants living in the area blame the UDA for organising and controlling the violence.

Socialist Worker spoke to a health worker in the area.

"I live in what could be described as a nationalist area, and work in a loyalist area. Last week the violence stirred up

again and Translink removed their services. I had to walk through some of the worst rioting that I have witnessed just to get home after a long shift at work.

"I have spoken to several bus drivers who have had their buses hijacked before for no reason, except they were driving a good barricade.

"All my colleagues and myself walked out for the day of action in January, and because we have to live with this we are prepared to do it again.

"Everyone up here in North Belfast is fed up with the violence perpetrated by a

few gangsters."

The brigade commander for the UDA in north Belfast has warned that he was "prepared to bring in extra units to protect loyalist areas like Tigers Bay", but the truth is that the UDA are behind most of the violence.

Strike

In January the violence culminated in the murder of postal worker Daniel McColgan.

As soon as they heard this, workers at the Mullusk sorting office and in Derry walked out and didn't return to work until all threats against workers were lifted.

The action of the postal workers forced the ICTU to act by calling a half-day general strike.

Actions like that works, and it is needed again.

Immediately after the postal workers strike the UDA withdrew the threat against all workers in north Belfast and also started to discipline its own units for "stepping out of line".

Now is the time for the trade unions to finally smash the face of sectarianism in the North and to bring attention to the real issues that affect the working class like the threatened closure of the Mater Hospital on the Crumlin road.

Derry kicks out the marines

ANTI WAR protesters in Derry are claiming a significant victory after the US army Marines Band withdrew from a planned concert in the city's Millennium Forum.

Speaking after the Marines' announcement of their withdrawal, spokesperson for the Derry Anti-War Coalition, Colm Bryce said "whatever the stated reason for cancellation of the Marines'

appearance, we have no doubt that the decision was influenced by the strength of opposition in Derry and across Ireland to the US war machine."

Assault

"Horror at the role played by the US army in the humanitarian disasters in Afghanistan and Iraq" says Bryce, "and in particular at present the US government's support for Israel's assault on innocent Palestinians, mean

that no part of the US army, even a band, can appear in any part of this island without mass protests.

"So, the Anti-War Coalition calls on the Jazz Festival organisers to stop attempts to find another US military band to play at the jazz festival".

While the Festival organisers at first said they would get another US army band, the idea was quietly dropped when it was clear that anti-war feeling would disrupt any such concert.

*Anti-war protestors: 1
War-mongers: 0*

Eamonn McCann

Keeping the ranks busy

HOWLS OF anger have rent the air since the story broke that the IRA was still collecting security information and updating its target list.

This proves the Provos aren't committed to the peace process, bawled British Tories. Sinn Fein must be dumped out of the Assembly, ranted the DUP. Or debarred from the North-South bodies, suggested followers of Trimble. A vote for the Shinners is a vote for evil and anarchy, raved Cruise O'Brien and Kevin Myers.

Are these people knaves or fools or just plain ignorant? Whatever the truth about Castlereagh raid (all explanations seem equally implausible: maybe it was the Farc), it's not a surprise that the IRA will have been collecting "intelligence" information—although why anybody would want to know which restaurants Norman Lamont guzzles in, apart from making sure to book in somewhere else, must remain a mystery.

To sustain the ceasefire, IRA chiefs have to maintain the organisation in good order. The collection of information, even updating its arsenal, is necessary routine activity if the structure isn't to fall apart.

Put simply, if the rank and file are to be kept in line, they have to be given something to do. All this should be unremarkable to anyone who has made even a cursory study of Republican history. So why the brouhaha?

Opportunism

To some extent, it's simply crude opportunism. The Paisleyites, for reasons of sectarian bigotry, have never wanted truck with any nationalist party. Trimble and his followers have been half-hearted about the Agreement from the outset.

The snooty tendency within the Southern establishment is nery about a rough element with Northern accents among them muscling in on their comfortable, semi-detached democracy.

None of this lot has been much concerned about aspects of IRA activity since the ceasefire which socialists and others have found objectionable—violent attacks on "dissidents", the intimidation of youngsters accused of "anti-social" activity, the whipping up of drugs scares and then the use of terror against "pushers", including pushers of nothing more harmful than cannabis.

When it's working-class people who are on the receiving end, the likes of Peter Robinson and Cruise O'Brien have little to say about IRA "breaches".

Committed

The fact is that Gerry Adams and his close associates are as firmly committed to the Belfast Agreement and to constitutional methods as any faction or group in Irish politics.

More than any others, they need the Agreement to work. If it collapses, their strategy of the last 20 years will collapse with it.

They need to become ever more deeply involved in conventional politics in the South: if they lose political momentum their ability to continue leading their movement away from the armed struggle tradition will be damaged.

Not even the most demented of the anti-Provo factions is able to claim that Martin McGuinness and Bairbre de Brun are less than wholly committed to their Ministerial duties at Stormont.

Far from being half-hearted about constitutional politics, this is a leadership impatiently anxious for a place at the top table in the constitutional arena.

This was confirmed by last month's swank dinner in Dublin for the families of IRA members. The piece of Celtic kitsch presented to each family was the equivalent of a gold watch marking retirement. The erection in the last few years of dozens of monuments across the North to the IRA dead reflects the same reality. Campaign medals are distributed and memorials built when a conflict has ended.

Only soothsayers and fools claim to be able to predict the future. Nobody can say with certainty that the IRA's war is over. What can certainly be said is that Adams and those around him want it over.

The socialist argument is that, because of their nationalist politics, when the Republican leadership departed from the path of armed struggle they veered to the Right and not to the Left.

interview

Digesting our food industry

FAST Food Nation is a revealing book about the US fast food industry. It has just been republished with an extra chapter. Its author, ERIC SCHLOSSER, spoke to HELEN SHOOTER.

WHY DID you write *Fast Food Nation*?

THE BOOK is a very straightforward description of how one industry works.

But it is also a history of the US over the last 20 to 25 years.

The election of Ronald Reagan had a profound effect on US history and the whole conservative ideology.

One of the most important chapters is about the lives of meat packing workers, and the effect of the government's politics and ideology on them.

It used to be one of the highest paid jobs. Today it is one of the lowest paid, with mainly migrant workers.

I wrote a piece before on migrant farm workers in California, so I knew the working conditions were terrible.

But the meat packing industry really shocked me. Most people in the US have no idea this is occurring.

The free market has meant that a few companies gained power over the food industry. The concentration is immense.

It is what happens when there is market deregulation.

I had no idea McDonald's had this much power over the food economy.

McDonald's forms marketing alliances with other big companies. There are now 1,300 McDonald's in the US!

WHY DID you add information about BSE?

IF I was writing the whole book again now I would do much more on BSE.

When I was writing it four years ago it wasn't seen as pertinent in the US.

But BSE has had a massive impact on McDonald's in Europe



Food glorious profit

and Japan. I think it is an apt symbol of industrial agriculture gone mad.

McDonald's is called the most anti-

union firm on the planet.

When McDonald's workers in one US town voted for a union the company just shut

the restaurant down.

DOES THE popularity of your book reflect anti-capitalism?

I COULD have written

the same book ten years ago, but I don't think it would have got the same reception.

It is a reflection of things starting to change. I think it is part of the anti-globalisation movement, particularly in Europe.

It is also disaffection with the fast food industry in the US.

Company growth imperatives often lead to their own downfall.

McDonald's is expanding so quickly overseas because sales in the US are pretty flat.

I am even more optimistic now than when I finished the book. People over here shouldn't be deceived by Bush's popularity.

When you look at his social policies, he is not popular. The Enron scandal has created a very strong popular mood against corporate greed and misbehaviour.

Fast food companies depend on a lack of popular awareness. I think we are seeing a whole new awareness and interest in change.

● *Fast Food Nation* is available for £6.99 (UK)

film

Kicking out for equality

BEND IT Like Beckham is a funny and entertaining look at the world of life and football.

Jess Bhamra is a young Sikh woman who is football obsessed—better than the male mates she plays with in the local park, she is recruited to the local women's football team by her friend Jules.

The two dream about getting a scholarship to play football professionally in the USA, despite the opposition of their parents.

One of the strengths of the film is they way in which issues such as racism and family expectations are explored.

Jess's family despair of a daughter who is not interested in knowing how to cook a full Indian dinner, while Jules' mother cannot understand why her daughter prefers sports bras and tracksuits, tartly reminding her that "there's a reason why Sporty Spice is the



Obsessed with football

only one without a fella."

Reality

The film also shows the reality of multiculturalism and racism.

The Hounslow Harriers are multiracial and while there is curiosity about Jess's way of life from her black and white teammates this is mostly good-

natured.

This contrasts with one of the reasons that Jess's father doesn't want her playing football—he was taunted about his turban when he first arrived in Britain and went to play cricket with his local club.

When Jess is sent off the pitch during one match, for pushing a white woman who called her "Paki", she angrily tells her coach after the match that he does not know what it is like to be called racist names, to which he replies, "Jess, I'm Irish".

While parts of the film are somewhat clunky (the subplot in which members of Jess and Jules' family believe they are lesbians, based on a few mistaken incidents is one), *Bend It Like Beckham* is an enjoyable feel-good movie which is not afraid to tackle bigger issues.

Definitely worth the price of a cinema ticket.

— GINA HAY

**Teachers****Fighting religious segregation**

by **CREA RYDER**,
INTO member
Dublin City North

A BATTLE is raging over the teaching of religion in an inter-denominational Gaelscoil, which caters for children of both Protestant and Catholic religions.

Tomas O'Dulaing, the principal of Gaelscoil Thulach na nOg in county Meath, was first suspended on full pay, and is now facing the sack.

His "crime" was to protect the interests of the minority of children from Protestant backgrounds who attend the school.

He argued that religious instruction specific to one denomination—in this case Communion preparation—should take place after school hours.

This would avoid a situation where some children would be sent out of the class.

As a result children in the school would be educated in a more open, pluralist environment.

Courageously Tomas O'Dulaing opposed the Board of Management decision not to allow this system to operate.

Parents Against Religious Segregation, was set up to support him.

It believes that an important principle is at stake.

Imposed

Michael Dungan, a spokesperson for the group, said the board was not listening to the vast majority of parents who believed a policy of segregating children was being imposed on them against their will.

An Foras Patrunacha, the patron body of gaelscoileanna will have the final decision on removing the principal.

It has only one member who is not a Catholic.

The recent annual congress of the primary teachers union—INTO—gave unanimous support

for Tomas O'Dulaing. But the leadership of the INTO needs to be more pro-active.

It is not just an issue for this school, it has wider implications.

If Tomas O'Dulaing wins this case it will be a victory for a more open system of education.

The Catholic Church has dominated education for too long, and both teachers and children have suffered as a result.

The fact that legislation outlawing discrimination on the grounds of

gender, sexual orientation, race and religion does not apply to schools—or hospitals—leaves teachers very vulnerable to dismissal in cases like this.

It is a disgrace that 90 percent of schools are in the hands of the churches despite the fact that we, the tax payers, provide almost all the money to run.

We need a secular school system, where children of all religions and no religion can be educated together.

Kerry County Museum**Action reaches peak**

THE STAFF at Kerry County Museum in Tralee have been on official strike since the 10th of April in a dispute over parity with other Urban District Council staff.

All 13 museum staff are members of Mandate and were

forced to take strike action as their claims for parity on pay and conditions have been ignored for the last three years.

The strikers received an enormous boost when the delegates attending the Mandate Bi-annual Conference gave financial support and solidarity on the

ATGWU**Exposed: Bertie Ahern's plot against Mick O'Reilly**

AT THE time of Mick O'Reilly's suspension from the ATGWU, Socialist Worker was the only paper to report Bertie Ahern's role in the victimisation.

Documents have recently come to light that show how the government lobbied in Britain against O'Reilly.

A series of e-mails were sent from Ahern's office to the Irish

Embassy in London, from the ILDA dispute last year onwards. While the e-mails have been released under the Freedom of Information Act, Ahern's office has blacked out text due to its sensitive nature.

But all the subjects of the mails refer to the ILDA dispute, the ATGWU and the ILDA dispute.

Attack

An unholy alliance of Fianna Fail and elements close to the ICTU worked together to attack Mick O'Reilly.

T&G assistant general secretary Ray Collins held a secret meeting in Dublin with the Irish Congress of

Trade Unions' outgoing secretary, Peter Cassells. This was during the three-day rail disruption over ILDA-ATGWU recognition.

Behind the scenes, as the emails now confirm Bertie Ahern got on to the Labour Party in Britain to send the message to T&G leader Bill Morris to rein O'Reilly in.

At the same time the ICTU leaders told the London based leadership of the ATGWU that they would be thrown out of the ICTU unless they broke with the train drivers.

This type of pressure was enough for Morris.

Social Partnership in action meant the leader of Fianna Fail conspiring with New Labour in Britain and the union leaders to try and hold back any sign of militancy from workers.

IMPACT

THREATENED industrial action by technical and professional staff in the State's forensic science laboratory has been lifted following the intervention of the National Implementation Body (NIB).

The union threatened

industrial action when the Department of Justice refused to guarantee payments that would give forensic scientists the same as scientists in other parts of the civil service.

This would mean pay increases ranging between four and ten per cent.

The Department commissioned a consultants report which agreed with the unions claim but is refusing to implement it.

But rather than push for action IMPACT has moved to yet another review of the wage discrepancy.

for compensation.

Nurses are still waiting for the results of the Task Force into overcrowding in hospitals that saw nurses take action across A&E departments last month.

Cork Palestine protest

TWO HUNDRED people turned out in Cork in April to hear the Palestinian delegate general to Ireland Allieh Halimeh. The audience included many from Cork's Muslim community. Following the meeting a protest was organised by the Cork Muslim doctors community and the UCC Muslim students union the following Saturday.

Over 100 people joined the march through the city centre. The protest organisers appealed to Cork people to help them in the fight for justice for the Palestinians.

Dun Laoghaire**Outrage at rent increases**

ALL COUNCIL tenants in the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown area have experienced rent increases of between 25 per cent and 65 per cent in the last rent review.

The Socialist Workers Party branch in Dun Laoghaire contacted the council and was told that the

increases were due to the fact that there had been two budgets, both of which delivered increases in household incomes, in the period since the last review.

However a comparison of the tables on which rents are calculated shows that even where income remained static, rents have increased.

It is clear that the council has made a policy

decision to increase the proportion of income that they are taking off tenants in rent.

Socialist Worker also discovered that rents in the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown area are on average 8 per week higher than in other Dublin council areas.

It is clear that the Council is engaged in a policy of "benchmarking" against the private sector.

Property and accommodation costs in the area are often higher than some other areas in Dublin.

However that should have no bearing on the cost of providing public housing to people on low incomes.

A protest took place outside the Town Hall in Dun Laoghaire on April 22 to highlight the issue.

Nurses

Nurses have again been pulled back from action—this time over assaults on staff.

The Psychiatric Nurses Association (PNA) has suspended its industrial action pending the establishment of a task force to examine compensation for staff who are assaulted in the course of their duties.

The Adelaide & Meath Hospital had been called to force the Minister for Health to respond to claims

Issues for the Labour Movement**SHOULD THE UNIONS RESCUE PARTNERSHIP?**

IN RECENT weeks the bosses' organisation IBEC and Charlie McCreevey have both announced that they see no need for another Partnership deal.

The response of the union leaders has been somewhat confused.

On one hand Partnership "has delivered the goods", according to the president of the 8,000-strong Public Service Executive Union (PSEU), John Rossiter.

He says that any alternative to Partnership is "far-fetched".

But David Beggs, head of the ICTU, didn't seem quite so confident.

"The Partnership model has worked well and should be continued if possible."

He talked of the possibility of local bargaining coming back on the agenda.

Partnership didn't deliver. The reality is that after 15 years of Partnership, Ireland is the most unequal country in Europe, after Portugal.

Throughout the boom workers were told we had to accept pay restraint under Partnership or "we will have inflation and the Celtic Tiger will

be ruined. The only thing which stands between us and total anarchy is Social Partnership."

Yet the Celtic Tiger wasn't ended by workers receiving large pay rises, but by international recession.

Ditching Partnership isn't a return to dog eat dog capitalism as Des Geraghty has argued and Charlie McCreevey hopes.

The fact that with the slowdown in the economy the bosses hope to stick the boot shouldn't tie the union movement to another debilitating wage agreement.

Irish workers gave huge increases in productivity but we were not rewarded for it.

What we have seen is a feeding frenzy by the rich on the back of pay moderation.

Just compare the tax gains workers got to those given to the rich or the banks.

Where workers made gains—and they were minimal—they have happened despite Partnership, rather than because of it.

The early 1980s were a miserable time not because there was too much militancy but not enough.

The alternative to partnership is free collective bargaining.

It means a return to the right of workers to put in claims, returning to workers the right to make decisions.

And it should be used to push for a return to a decent fighting trade union movement capable of fighting for the rights of its members.

Alternative

But that alternative has to be built. While as a consequence of Partnership official statistics indicate the lowest level of strike activity

since 1917, large numbers of workers are threatening action, and balloting for strike action.

But the workers are usually then taken to conciliation before the action takes place.

While even the threat of action can be enough to win results, free collective bargaining relies on a confident rank and file pushing for action and using solidarity to bring forward weaker sections of workers.

That means not just a return to strikes, but a recruitment drive in non-unionised workplaces, and breaking

the industrial relations act over picketing.

Defending jobs against redundancies or pressure to increase productivity means organising.

The union leaders are unlikely to do any of this, what we need is a strong rank and file movement across the unions.

After 15 years of having our hands tied behind our back, we need to firmly reject any moves to another Partnership agreement.

It's time to build the rank and file to organise to fight.

— SIMON BASKETTER

Socialist Worker

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AFTER THE JENIN MASSACRE . . .

RAGE AT ISRAELI TERROR

“A TERRIBLE crime has been committed by Israel in Jenin refugee camp, and the world is turning a blind eye.” That was how journalist Justin Huggler, writing in the *Independent*, described what happened in Jenin.

Jenin is a refugee camp in the West Bank. It was created when Israel drove Palestinians from their homes in the huge ethnic cleansing that marked the foundation of Israel in what had been Palestine in 1948.

Generations of Palestinians have lived in exile in camps like Jenin ever since. In 1967 Israel went to war to seize and occupy the West Bank.

Israel tried to destroy the town and its people, bombing and bulldozing, killing anyone who got in its way.

One report described, “a woman with her leg all but ripped off by a helicopter rocket, the mangled remains hanging on by a thread of skin as she slowly bleeds to death.

“A ten year old boy lying dead in the street, his arm blown off and a great hole in his side. The wounded left to die slowly, in horrible agony, because the ambulances were not allowed in to treat them.

“We saw the helicopter rockets rain down on desperately crowded areas—civilian casualties could not have been prevented. The Israeli army sealed off the entire area around Jenin.

Bodies

“That is because they have something to hide—the bodies. For days Jenin camp became a slaughterhouse. Thousands of terrified civilians, women and children cowered inside their homes while the Israeli helicopters rained down rockets on them and tanks fired shells into the camp.

“The Red Cross has publicly said people have died because Israel blocked ambulances. Yusra Ahma, a mentally disabled woman, was killed by a helicopter rocket in her home. Munir Washabi bled to death over several hours after a helicopter round came through the wall of his home. Munir's mother, Maryam, ran into the street screaming for help for her son and was shot in the head by Israeli soldiers.”

WHO PAID FOR THE GUNS AND BULLETS?

THE JENIN massacre was carried out on the orders of Israel's prime minister, the war criminal Ariel Sharon. But equally guilty are US president George W Bush and his Secretary of State, Colin Powell.

George Bush had been forced by a wave of anger across the Arab world to

make the gesture of calling on Israel to pull back its forces. Bush was also forced to say that Powell would travel to the Middle East on a “peace mission”.

Yet instead of going directly there Powell spent a week travelling the globe, giving the Israeli regime the green light to continue its killing.

And when he eventually arrived, Powell was pictured smiling and laugh-

ing with Sharon while the Jenin killing continued.

Powell was pictured joking about the Israeli leader's plans to take over the whole of Jerusalem and drive Arabs out of the occupied east of the city.

The US Secretary of State refused to meet Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat until he condemned the latest suicide attack.

That attack, carried out in desperation

by a young Palestinian driven to despair by Israel's terror, killed six people.

Powell did not denounce Sharon for the hundreds of Palestinians he has killed.

Sharon knew the US's attitude meant he could carry on his massacres. He simply ignored Bush's call for him to withdraw his forces, carried on the killing in Jenin, and then invaded six more Palestinian towns.

BUILD THE ANTI WAR MOVEMENT