

Socialist Worker

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For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

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JAIL THE ANSBACHER GANG

THE ANSBACHER gang should already be in jail. Revelations about their tax dodging and corruption have been known for many years.

Yet Justice Minister Michael McDowell says it is going to be difficult to prosecute them.

Would McDowell be saying this if they were poor or were refugees who were caught shop lifting?

When anti-capitalist protestors dared to protest at a conference on privatisation in the Burlington Hotel, they were met with snatch squads and mass arrests.

But this government wants to let the Ansbacher

gang off with a rap on the knuckles because they include the top capitalists in Ireland.

The Inspector's report into the Ansbacher account shows that the boards of companies such as Cement Roadstone, *The Irish Independent*, Fyffes, *The Irish Times* and Doyles Hotels are stuffed full of crooks who robbed resources from the public sector.

Working class people suffered because of their tax dodging, putting up with rotten health services, poor schooling and a shortage of local authority houses.

Instead of doing deals with this rotten government over benchmarking, the trade union movement should be calling its members out on to the streets to ensure these crooks are jailed.

CE still under attack

THE GOVERNMENT has indicated that it will continue with its cuts in community employment schemes.

No official confirmation of cuts on specific schemes has been received but instead there is an unofficial embargo on recruitment, replacement and extensions.

Gus Worth, who is involved in the community employment area, calls them "cuts by stealth".

embargo on recruitment is the same as shutting you down. A scheme may have an average of 10 to 15 CE workers. If you're in a situation where five, six or seven are due for replacement over three or four months your scheme will be unviable in six months."

The government's plan is to push the 'social economy', which as Gus points out, is completely different to community employment.

"The government is trying to push everyone towards it. They have said that they will support community-based businesses for three years.

After that the businesses will get nothing and must be viable themselves as no more funding will be made available.

This is not an option for most CE schemes. They aren't businesses. They provide services and worthwhile jobs in the community. They provide training opportunities.

The social economy option only makes sense if you are trading in some way or another."

The campaign against the cuts is continuing and the pressure needs to be kept up on a nationwide basis.



The future is orange

MOBILE PHONE companies in Belfast are rushing to take advantage of a legal loophole before time runs out, to install several phone masts.

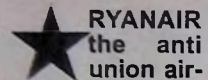
Permission

Currently no planning permission is required for installations of masts under 15m.

On the Ormeau Road they erected five in a week. Local residents are up in arms about their plans. Resident's groups, parent's and community groups have all stated that they don't want the masts, and have even threatened sabotage.

So how have the companies responded to these threats of sabotage? In a cynical move they are have decided to take advantage of the sectarian marching season.

They are disguising the masts as flagpoles.



RYANAIR the anti union airline, has disobeyed instructions issued by air traffic controllers, potentially compromising the safety of its passengers, according to official safety reports.

They reveal how the airline's jets have approached airports too low.

The reports, held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) at Gatwick, contains allegations which include:

- Flying too low into airports. In two incidents jets approached at 1,000 ft too low.

- Misleading controllers about flying at high altitudes. On more than six occasions the airline filed flight plans saying its planes were equipped to fly close to other jets at high altitude, only for the pilots to inform controllers that they were not qualified to use the equipment once they were in the air.

G8's sick insult to Africa

THE G8 – the group of eight most industrialised economies – met in June. From their hideaway in the Canadian Rockies the G8 Summit delivered a stunning blow to the prospects for Africa's recovery.

Their ironically named "Action Plan for Africa" was a humiliating slap in the face to the four African leaders who were summoned to the feast.

It was a cynical betrayal of the 300 million people who are living on less than \$1 per day (nearly half of Africa's people), the 28 million who are HIV positive and the one third of Africa's children who are malnourished.

vide up to \$1 billion. Yet Africa pays \$15 billion each year to the rich nations in debt payments.

Half of the African nations spend more on their foreign debts than on health care.

Included in the statement are a call for African nations to regulate illicit arms sales, ignoring the fact that the G8 supply 80 percent of the arms to developing world; a call for the "use of tried and tested new technology, including biotechnology"; and, of course, the usual calls for Africa to open its markets and restructure its economies for the benefit of foreign multinationals.

Staging

The \$1 billion promised is less than the G8 have spent on staging their last five meetings and contrasts starkly with the \$40 billion allocated by the US for the "war on terror".



Inaction

A week before the G8 Summit, a UN report described how further inaction will consign into absolute poverty 100 million more people in the world's poorest countries, most of them in Africa.

The G8 applied a sticking plaster on a gaping wound.

They promised to pro-

● **JARVIS IS** the company the government has handed over a contract to run schools in Ireland as part of the Public Private Partnerships.

In England, Jarvis-run schools use pupils to

clean their own schools. Jarvis holds the repair and maintenance contract for 20 schools in Kirklees in Yorkshire.

Jarvis has subcontracted some of the work to a firm called Trident.

Trident is employing sixth formers to clean the corridors in the schools where they are students.

Ansbacher racists

THE MINISTER for Justice, Michael McDowell, is using the pages of the *Sunday Independent* to write articles attacking refugees.

The paper, owned by Tony O'Reilly who lives in the Bahamas to avoid paying

any tax, has a long history of scapegoating refugees as "scroungers".

Directors of *Independent Newspapers*, Jim McCarthy and Vincent Ferguson both used the Ansbacher accounts.

Church PR over sex abuse

SEX abuse victims dubbed the Catholic Church's clerical abuse inquiry a PR exercise.

They argue that priests won't fully co-operate with the Commission, that it will never be truly

independent, and will result in no new prosecutions.

Father Fortune victim Colm O'Gorman, from the One-in-Four organisation, said the only true independent inquiry could be one that did not involve the Catholic Church.

"It's hard to see this as anything more than a PR exercise. They have refused to answer questions for so long it is difficult to believe that they could make a complete turnaround," he said.

Concerned

Colm is concerned with Archbishop Sean Brady's comments that priests could invoke Canon Law to preserve confidentiality.

"The Church really needs to look at its own

laws, if that is the case. This inquiry has to be independent of Canon Law if it is to have any credence. A lot of trust has to be built up and the Church has a lot of work to do if it is to convince the victims they are serious about getting to the truth," said O'Gorman.

John Kelly of Survivors of Child Abuse (SOCA) also described the inquiry as a "PR exercise".

"It gives the perception that it is a judicial inquiry and has powers. Judge Hussey has no power to compel those accused of abuse or those who sheltered them and covered up the abuse of children to produce documents."

The Commission will not be formally established until September and would not produce its final report until 2004 at the earliest.

Victory against incinerators

CAMPAIGNERS AGAINST a proposed incinerator in North County Dublin won a major battle after the local council refused the plant's go-ahead.

Probably the largest number of residents' objections, some 1,600, were received against a 'waste recycling and treatment plant' for Lusk, several miles south of Balbriggan, near the M1.

The incinerator, by German company Herhof, was introduced into Germany five years ago is unlike other 'mass-burn' incinerators, in that some materials, such as metals and ceramics,

are taken out before incineration.

The end product, known as Stablat, is dried and burned to run the plant and produce extra power.

In response to the lodging of the planning permission by Herhof International, a joint venture with Herhof and Treasury Holdings, a public meeting in Balbriggan, chaired by Green Party Leader Trevor Sargent, formed Zero Waste Fingal to object and point out that alternatives to incineration existed.

The county manager's order considered the "EIS inadequate to evaluate the potential impact on the environment of the operation of the Stablat plant and the Power Plant".

Although not stated, part

impact would relate to the emission of dioxins, cancer-causing chemical compounds released after burning certain materials.

Dioxins are highly toxic and attach to body fat and so accumulate in the food chain.

The controversial proposal was also rejected on grounds including the height of the plant (one chimney was over 40 metres high) and an insufficient road network to serve the amount of trucks which would transport waste to the site.

"Because of the scale, design, height and material finish" the proposal would "be visually obtrusive and out of character" with both the rural landscape and future development on the

Planning permission has already been given for a major fruit and vegetable warehouse beside it and an adjacent motorway service station, to include a hotel.

Chairperson of ZWF, Alan Kinsella, was reported as saying the decision was "very pleasing with all credit going to everyone who put in the hard work".

"I imagine Herhof will appeal it to An Bord Pleanála and assuming they will there will be a lot more hard work.

Obviously we'd have preferred that the Government and the local authority took recycling more seriously," he said.

Another campaign member said that it was "people power" that did it in the end

✦ **Protests forced Ryanair to disassociate themselves from Austrian Nazi Jorg Haider.** Protests in London and Dublin called by the Anti Nazi League made the company disown a press launch of its flights to Austria which included the far right politician.

Jail the Ansbacher gang

THE RICH in this country believe that "taxes are for the little people". Some 200 of the Irish rich hived off their ill-gotten gains in an illegal bank in the Cayman Islands for one simple reason - to avoid tax.

The Ansbacher account is only the tip of the iceberg. According to business journalist, Des Crowley, there were as many as twenty similar accounts in operation.

Some of the Ansbacher crooks have already made settlements that average out at 250,000 euros each. But settlements from people in the other accounts are three times higher on average.

The whole affair amounted to a criminal conspiracy.

The largest company in the country, Cement Roadstone, set up a special private bank to launder the Ansbacher funds.

Some of the funds which went into the account came from drug dealers who were represented by one John Furze.

Many of the key figures involved held high positions in the banking industry.

The major accountancy firm in the country, Stokes Kennedy Crowley, which is now part of the KPMG group helped to organise the conspiracy. Significantly, the same company also advised Goodman International to keep a system of false accounts.

Every criminal conspiracy tries to make a transition from illegality to respectability. The Mafia are past masters at taking the money from crime and laundering into 'respectable' businesses.

The Ansbacher gang are no different. Instead of salting their money away in off shore accounts, they bribed politicians

These politicians then brought in the lowest rates of corporation tax in the industrialised world. They slashed property taxes, cut taxes on dividends and created a host of other tax allowances for the rich.

Today Ireland has become one large tax haven for the rich - thanks to the Ansbacher gang. Now they can dodge taxes legally.

Working people help to subsidise these fat cats by putting up with some of the lowest levels of spending on pub-



TENS OF thousands of Argentinian workers took strike action to protest the murder of Dario Santillan and Maximiliano Costeki last month. At least 90 people were injured and 160 arrested when police attacked protesters.

Demonstrations of unemployed groups and human rights campaigners broke out

across the country. In a country where one in four of the workforce is out of a job, unemployed groups have gained increasing support for peaceful blockades of highways across the country to demand government help for food and medicine.

The government is clamping down on protests as it pushes through IMF imposed cuts that have left half the population below the poverty line.

lic services in Europe.

There should be a mass outcry against this criminal conspiracy. The key companies who helped organise this - principally Cement Roadstone and the KPMG accountancy group - should be taken over by the state.

The crooks who were involved should be behind bars.

And the organised trade union movement should be calling for a mass stoppage to get some real action on all of this.

PAY BATTLE COMMENCES

IF THE Ansbacher gang paid their taxes, there would be no problem paying public sector workers the wages they deserve. But this government is trying to pull off a massive con through the Benchmarking report.

This report offers key public sector workers paltry increases in return for giving up relativity claims indefinitely.

The report gives big rises to the top earners and low rises to those who work hardest. A Director of Nursing gets a 16% pay rise - but a staff nurse only gets 8%.

With inflation devouring our wages and salaries, the fight for decent pay is all the more urgent.

The average cost of a sample range

of 25 everyday essentials has spiralled by 15% over the six months since the introduction of the euro.

That is three times the official inflation rate forecast for the whole year - which at 4.7% is already double that of most other European countries.

Ireland is the second most expensive place in Europe. In 1995 it was the twelfth most expensive.

Allowed

Workers voted for a partnership agreement that allowed for a wage increase of 5 percent a year. They were told that inflation would not rise above 3 percent by the government, the ESRI and the union leaders. The promises were a con.

Now the benchmarking promises have proved to be worthless.

Joe O'Toole claimed benchmarking would be an ATM machine for low-paid

public sector workers. The problem is the machine is out of cash.

The rises offered - which are already far less than were expected - are all going to be tied to further productivity.

Productivity levels of workers already increased a record 5.2% a year under partnership. Now they want more productivity for already agreed increases.

The benchmarking report should be thrown out completely.

If the ICTU manage to manoeuvre and fix a vote to get it accepted, socialists should give full backing to any group of workers who want to defy it.

No union leader, from the nurses, civil servants, or teachers should be allowed to shelter behind the ICTU and say they can do nothing.

It is time to put in decent pay claims - and to coordinate the fight of those who are sick and tired of the ICTU manoeuvres.

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socialist forums

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Saturday 13th July, 3.30 pm

Sidewalk Cafe, Cathal Brugha St - contact Grace at 086 4098186

Corporate Crashes and the crisis of the Global Economy.

Saturday 13th July, 3.30, Smyths Pub, Dun Laolghre

Contact Donal 0876838746

Are we facing a Global Slump?

City Centre - contact Aoife at 087 7955013

Comment

Their whole system is corrupt

SHOCK WAVES rocked the key institutions of global capitalism at the end of last month. The huge telecommunications company WorldCom collapsed among revelations that it had made up its profits.

Preceded by Enron and followed by Xerox, WorldCom is one in an apparently never-ending line of household corporate names sinking into a mire of sleaze and corruption. During the Enron collapse US Treasury secretary Paul O'Neill said, "Companies come and go. It's part of the genius of capitalism." But the reality is far more serious than that.

Financial papers openly speculate about other companies collapsing and setting off a "domino effect" that could plunge a global system already in recession into a devastating slump.

WorldCom moved into the bubble around selling communications bandwidth, gambling on a continuing growth in internet and similar traffic. But as a wave of corporations all took the same gamble, far too much bandwidth was around to be sold profitably. So they made up the figures as the bubble burst.

One serious analysis of US telecoms companies undertaken before the WorldCom scandal predicted that 24 of the 29 telecoms that had not yet filed for bankruptcy would do so in the coming months.

Celebrating

Until a few weeks ago the corporate media were stridently celebrating the ease with which they had shaken off the slowdown that hit both stockmarkets and the real economy in 2000.

When the stockmarkets bounced back remarkably quickly after September 11, there was much establishment boasting about how the US had weathered the weakest recession in decades. Karl Marx identified this in his writings over 150 years ago, "Business always appears thoroughly sound until suddenly the debacle takes place," he said.

The reality of the weakness of the global economy is coming through. US manufacturing output was more or less flat in May. The US dollar has dropped to its lowest level against the euro for months.

The boom in the US did keep the world economy afloat in the late 1990s, while Japan and continental Europe stagnated.

Between 1996 and 2000 the US economy generated 40 percent of the growth of the global markets. The trouble is that this boom had weak foundations.

At the height of the euphoria over the high-tech "new economy", firms sunk gigantic amounts of money into investments they couldn't hope to make a decent profit on.

Wealthy households, seeing their share prices apparently endlessly rise, borrowed heavily so they could shop until they dropped.

The surge in investment and consumption sucked in huge quantities of imports. The US's balance of payments deficit rose to 4.5% of national income.

Inflows

Massive inflows of capital from the rest of the world allowed US corporations to live beyond their means.

The recession that developed during the year 2000 represented economic realities beginning to reassert themselves. Corporate America could no longer afford to ignore the fact that the rate of profit had actually been falling since late 1997.

Writing in *The Financial Times*, Martin Wolf said "the conventional wisdom" that economic recovery is under way "may turn out to be no more than a fairy story for frightened children". It looks like the fairy story doesn't have a happy ending.

Over-investment is a classic feature of speculative booms. So is large-scale swindling, legal and illegal. The greed for profit means that companies poured money into computers and telecommunications at the height of the boom.

They expected that markets and profits would grow and they would get a high rate of return. These firms are now saddled with so much investment that they cannot make a high enough level of profit.

Investment in telecommunications rose between 1997 and 2000 by about 20 percent in the US and 50 percent in Western Europe. According to one estimate, about \$1,000 billion was wasted in the global telecommunications industry over the past four years. The problem is that workers will be expected to pay for the madness of their system. For instance WorldCom announced the immediate sacking of 17,000 employees. We shouldn't have to foot the bill for the corruption chaos of their system.

by SIMON BASKETTER

Striking Belfast Airport workers speak out

'It's about the two souls of Northern Ireland'

Socialist Worker spoke with three ICTS shop stewards during the ATGWU Biennial Conference in Newcastle last month.

SW What is the cause of the strike?

"We were forced into a situation where we had to challenge low pay. This is a real problem in Northern Ireland and particularly in the security industry.

It is actually getting worse instead of better over the last few years. Before the minimum wage was enforced some security workers were earning as little as £1.80 per hour.

Of course it is better with the minimum wage but some of our people were earning as little as £4.75 per hour. So we went on strike for £6 an hour.

Some have argued that we should be allowed to work all the overtime we want instead of being restricted to a 48 hour week.

But it is inhuman to work more than that. And the employer would love us to work ourselves into the ground for lousy pay.

To see blokes working 50 and 60 hours a week is a tragedy. They have no lives. In Northern Ireland we have to tackle the issue of low pay and strike action is the only way to do it. The bosses are not going to give decent pay unless they are forced to."

SW How has the response of the ATGWU been?

"The outcome we achieved today at the conference gives us great hope. We felt very let down by the union up until now. We weren't getting any backing. It was very important for us to be here to meet other T&G members and to bring home to the union leadership that we are serious. And the support of other socialists was paramount in getting results today. The SWP members in the ATGWU were fantastic in helping us out."

SW What do you want the union to do now?

"First of all, Bill Morris asked us if we were going political or industrial. We said to him that we were forced to go political because we had no support from the union and ICTS had sacked the most militant of us.

In this situation we need our union 100% behind us. We need justice and if we have to challenge the employer politically to get justice then that is what we have to do.

Secondly, the company want to get the union out and that is why they sacked us. So whatever it takes we are prepared to fight all the way. We want the union to give us full financial and legal backing. We want all T&G branches to know about our struggle and to support us. And most importantly we want the union to back our campaign of demonstrations at the Airport. This will show all employers in the North of Ireland that they cannot treat their workers this way and that the union is a force to be reckoned with. And it will give hope to the workers still inside in the airport."

SW Do you think that other workers are watching what is happening with your strike?

"They certainly are. We know of a group of security workers in Lame who are waiting to see how we get on before they act. We can show what can be done to win. But we will reserve judgement on the union's commitments. It is up to us to make sure that they follow through. We have to keep on the pressure and build the protests and demonstrations ourselves along with other rank and file workers."

SW How significant protests at the airport protests be?

"Well the first one will be on 6th July - that's the busiest weekend of the year for the airport when Northern Ireland sees an exodus, which comes before the 12th marching season. And it will be very significant.

It's about the two souls of Northern Ireland because it comes bang in the middle of the marching season. We have sec-



Dublin Airport workers on strike

tarian street battles taking place in Belfast every night.

We are facing another Drumcree standoff and here at the airport we will see magnificent unity between workers, Protestant and Catholic, black and white, in a struggle for a common cause.

In ICTS we are a mixed workforce and get on with each other but the strike has forged a unity that we have never known before.

It cuts across all the nonsense about which side of the community you are on. It shows that religious divide goes out the window when workers are focussed on the real issues and are fighting a common enemy."

SW Can you see this being repeated in Northern Ireland with other workers?

"We certainly hope so - it's the way forward. Workers all over the world are taking a stand against the system and it gives us heart to see it.

When you live in a world where 80% of wealth is controlled by about 8% of people you have to stand up and be counted. The anti-capitalist movement gives hope to lots of people who work under multinationals like ICTS. They heap on the pressure and we have to fight back."

SW How has the privatisation of the airport changed your working conditions?

"About 10 years ago the airport was under public control and when they privatised it six directors made about £6 million between them in shares. We got lower pay and worse conditions. So yes, privatisation has changed our lives and has us out now fighting for our jobs."

SW What message would you send to other workers

"If you stand up and be counted there is a chance of winning. If you don't you will get kicked in the teeth. We need each other and we want every worker to stand behind this struggle. As the saying goes - an injury to one is an injury to all.

We would call on all workers to come out and show solidarity and make this an issue on the streets and in the workplaces. The employers are getting away with murder while the politicians squabble about nothing.

We need real leadership that cuts across division and stops the employers plundering and pillaging our communities."

"Welcome to the airport of shame"

AROUND ONE hundred people marched to Belfast International Airport in solidarity with twenty-four sacked airport workers.

The action, which was called by the sacked workers union, the T&G, demanded the immediate

reinstatement of the 24 workers. Workers from various unions from around the North managed to join the demonstration, including members of the Derry Trades Council, the Belfast Trades Council, the FBU and Nipsa among others.

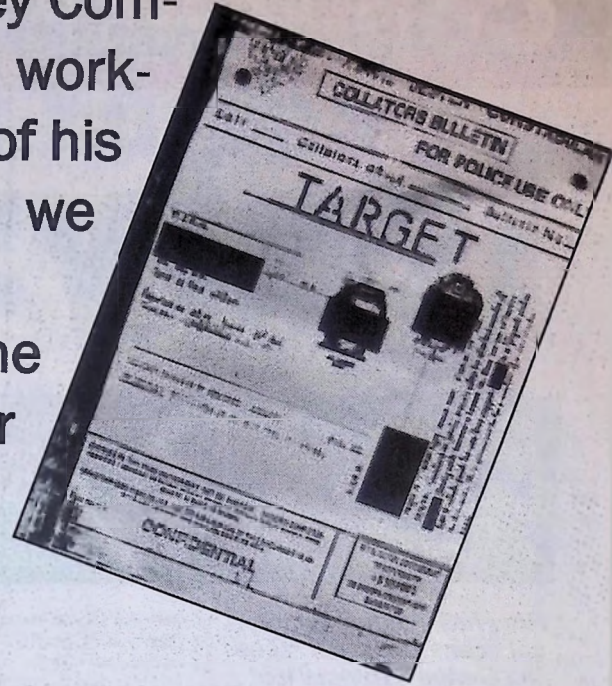
Sacked worker and shop steward, Gordon

McNeill, told the demonstration, "It's great to see such solidarity like this during what is usually a time when society is divided by sectarianism."

He continued by saying, "From now on there will be an official picket outside the airport, we are urging all unions to observe that picket until we win our battle here"

"It's about Trimble's submission to the Quigley Commission [the commission set up to review the workings of the Parades Commission]. I got a copy of his submission from UUP headquarters because we are doing submissions as well.

When I read it, I was horrified because the cases that he cited in his favour were either Nazi cases or Ku Klux Klan cases and the legislation he approved of was stuff brought in by Mussolini and the fascists.



Solicitor speaks out on collusion

FOLLOWING THE *Panorama* programme that revealed massive collusion between the police, Special Branch and other secret services in the North with loyalists in the murder of human rights lawyer, Pat Finucane, *Socialist Worker* spoke to Pádraigín Drinan.

PADRAIGÍN WAS involved in the civil rights movement and, like many human rights lawyers, has provided legal support to those working for the rights of women and other oppressed groups.

Following the death of Rosemary Nelson, she took over much of Rosemary's

work and is legal representative for the Garvahy Road residents.

"I believe that instead of concentrating on Pat himself, we ought to be talking about what he was working on when he died - which was shoot-to-kill".

"People say it was because he represented republicans, but lots of lawyers do that. I believe it was his work on shoot-to-kill. The Stalker shoot-to-kill cases were in the same area as the Dublin-Mon-

aghan bombs were planned. That whole Armagh-Portadown-Lurgan area, and the Sam Marshall case which is another collusion case, they all happened around Lurgan police station and that Mid-Ulster area".

"When Pat Finucane became involved in that area, that's when he died. I know that as a result of all the court cases surrounding Sean McPhelim's book *The Committee* people are afraid to mention it anymore, but that whole area would have been the area Pat Finucane was involved in when he was killed".

"Finucane was acting for the people in the shed. That was the incident where two teenagers, Michael Tighe and Martin McAuley were shot. Tighe was killed and McAuley, now in Columbia, injured and later charged with possession of illegal weapons - although the gun in the shed was an antique".

"You know, people understand how Palestinian young people end up supporting violence. Martin McAuley had never been involved in anything before that incident in the shed".

Taped

Everything that went on was taped by the security forces, but Stalker was never allowed to hear it since it would have shown that it was shoot-to-kill and that the young fellows were innocent. It's not hard to see why McAuley would have ended up in Columbia when every lawyer who ever dealt with his friend's death ended up dead themselves.

"You see, when Pat was murdered, Rosemary Nelson took over that work. That would have been what pulled Rosemary into that whole area of things. Rosemary wasn't really as political as Pat Finucane, she just gradually got brought into things, not against her will, but she didn't expect to find all the things that

she found.

"I think the first one that she did was Sam Marshall. [Sam Marshall died in March 1990, shot by loyalists as he signed to his bail at Lurgan RUC station. The times when he was required to sign the bail book were known only to himself and two co-defendants, their lawyers, and the RUC.] And it was when she did Sam Marshall, around about then that she became very active in trying to get an inquiry into Pat's death".

Bombing

"Then after everyone was afraid to mention anything that had been in *The Committee*, she decided that she was going to use an invitation she had to address the US Congress to read into the record of Congress the affidavit of RUC Sergeant Weir. The affidavit gave names of RUC officers who had been involved in collusion in Mid-Ulster, including in planning the Dublin-Monaghan bombing".

"This was all supposed to be kept quiet, for her own safety. But she was killed before she got to the States, before she was able to put that affidavit on the record. And there was lots of evidence of collusion in her death also, helicopters flying over the area and so on. But we've had no answers to any of that either".

Attacked

"Now this is off the issue of collusion, but I think it's important to get it out there because it's about Trimble and his attitude to truth and what he chooses to see as the truth. Like, at the moment, he goes on and on about republicans not going the peaceful path when nationalists are being attacked day in, day out but no mention of loyalist violence from him".



Documents showing systematic collusion (top). Pat Finucane (above) was a victim of Secret services working with Loyalists

"It's about Trimble's submission to the Quigley Commission [the commission set up to review the workings of the Parades Commission]. I got a copy of his submission from UUP headquarters because we are doing submissions as well".

"When I read it, I was horrified because the cases that he cited in his favour were either Nazi cases or Ku Klux Klan cases and the legislation he approved of was stuff brought in by Mussolini and the fascists".

"Susan McKay did do three very good articles in the Sunday Tribune quoting it. But you have

to ask why did all the journalists, when they saw all the stuff saying that good legislation was stuff brought in by Mussolini and the fascists, why did they not write and tell people about that?

"So, what should happen now about collusion and the murders of Pat and Rosemary? Well, we've all seen the way the secret services have obstructed the Saville Tribunal into Bloody Sunday. So I would call for an independent international inquiry but it would have to have different rules that wouldn't allow that kind of obstruction by the very people who are being investigated".

We think

SOCIALISTS HAVE always argued that the Northern state is built on sectarianism, so the fact that the police force, the defence force for the state, is sectarian comes as no surprise. It could not be otherwise.

Similarly, it has been clear that the involvement of the British state in the North has not been that of honest broker but a defender of the status quo. Nonetheless, the recent

revelations of the extent of British army involvement in the active targeting of individuals and its acquiescence in the random murder of many more Catholics were shocking.

They not only ran agents like Brian Nelson, they approved of his involvement in numerous murders and failed, the Stevens Inquiry team said, to stop a single one.

The Good Friday Agreement, which was supposed to deliver us from all this, cannot do anything to change it. For all the talk of a new police force the institutions of the Northern Ireland state are still based on sectarianism and violence.

Italy: Building a

SINCE THE Genoa protest last year, Italy has seen a extraordinary growth in the anti-capitalist movement and of workers' resistance to neo-liberalism. *Socialist Worker* spoke to LUCIANO MUHLBAUER from Rifondazione Comunista about the left and the anti-capitalist movement and the build-up to the European Social Forum.

How has the Italian political scene changed since the Genoa Protests last July?

THE PROTESTS in Genoa last year hailed a new beginning. After decades of defeat and retreat a broad, diverse and young movement against the neo-liberal consensus exploded onto the streets.

The ideological wall came crashing down. In other words, from below and from the left a new political space opened up which needed a new type of response. It is obviously not just a matter of rehashing the hackneyed responses of the traditional left. It would be naive to think that. It is a matter of building something entirely new.

That there are real new possibilities is proven by the actual change in the political scene in Italy since Genoa. A few months before Genoa the centre left government had lost the election and Berlusconi's government had come to power.

But it had been the centre left government and not that of Berlusconi that had brought the G8 meeting to Genoa, and wore this fact like a badge of political honour. It was they who, in March of last year attacked with unprecedented brutality the first significant anti globalisation protests in Naples.

As a result of this those involved in the organisation of the counter summit in Genoa were gathered from beyond the traditional left.

It was the first time in recent Italian his-

tory that such an extraordinary mobilisation happened without the backing of (and in actual fact with the open hostility of) the old left. And that mobilisation was extraordinary - before Genoa, during Genoa and after Genoa.

After 11 September - the anti globalisation movement did not shut up shop and go home as many predicted but instead it became an anti war movement.

It joined up with the traditional pacifist groups at the annual Perugia-Assisi March and organised the 150,000 "no ifs and no buts" march against the war on 10 November. That was the same day that Berlusconi had declared "USA Day" calling a demonstration in favour of the war - no more than 30,000 showed up.

On that day the political scene consisted only of the government and the movement.

In January 2002 it was the anti capitalist movement that called and mobilised the largest ever demonstration of immigrants - 100,000 in Rome - at least half of them immigrants!

Could you say a little about the response to the government attacks on workers in the last few months?

THE CENTRE right government under the direction of the bosses launched an attack on the most basic workers' rights.

The objective was to up the ante on the

workers' movement undermining workers' condition and attempting to gain a victory over the union movement like the way Thatcher and Reagan went on in their day.

The actual attack was on article 18 of the Statute of Workers Rights, which establishes that no one can be sacked without just cause, but the aim of the attack was a lot broader.

The mobilisation of workers in response to this was massive culminating in a general strike on 16 April, which involved an extraordinary amount of people.

But this government would not stop. They had succeeded in one of their objectives - they managed to divide the old trade union movements - opening separate negotiations with CISL and UIL. CGIL (a third trade union) announced a general strike for the autumn offering endless opportunities to the government to negotiate.

The vast majority of the independent trade unions are completely against any negotiation and are dedicated to the campaign for more rights.

In the actual process of class struggle a new and independent voice has started to emerge within the trade union movement.

Hence the urgent need to build on this voice so as to be able to influence future levels of struggle.

Has there been an overlap between the struggle of workers against the government and the anti-capitalist and anti-war movements?

IN GENOA we argued tirelessly in the movement that workers had to be key to the anti globalisation movement. It was symptomatic that the debate about whether the international demo of the 21 July should involve the striking Danone workers from France was endless.

Not because people were hostile to the idea but more because people did not understand the significance of it.

It obviously did not help that the trade union bureaucracy is often hostile to new movements and are instead constantly trying to appease capitalism.

These arguments happened despite the fact that a number of left unions were integral to GSF.

Today the movement supports the strikes and workers' demonstrations without hesitation and does not concede to the criticisms of the TU bureaucracy.

The massive eruption of workers on to the scene has also posed new problems. The movement had gotten used to being the only kids on the block.

Now we needed to allow for new social forces and for the social conflict that is emerging. At first the movement did not know how to be guided by the unity of the demonstrations of February and March.

This is a problem especially if we consider the fact that in the last few months the reformist left is starting to take initiatives around workers' mobilisations.

Today, one year after Genoa a debate is opening up. I would like to stress one thing, we would be making a huge mistake if we looked at the movement like a type of political organisation the parameters of which need to be defended at all costs. The movement is above all a political space, a type of fertiliser, which has without a doubt contributed to the new workers' militancy.

Your organisation, Rifondazione Comunista, gained a higher profile internationally in the last twelve months. What has been the most important part of the organisation's work in the last year?

YES, RIFONDAZIONE is now much better known because we understood how to read what happened in Genoa.

We have been involved in the movement from the beginning, we avoided reproducing the traditional links between communist parties and movements and we changed our own organisation in the process. The vast majority of the party understood that we were facing a new opportunity to build an anti-capitalist

movement.

This seems to me to be the most important work that Rifondazione did in the last year.

Obviously we still have a long way to go but the road opening up is the right one. This is clear because we are now the most significant voice in the fight for workers' rights and now we are speaking for the majority of workers.

Why is the European Social Forum important?

THE ESF is extraordinarily important in my opinion.

This movement, I mean these movements, are not only new, they express both a new conflict and a new inclusion. This movement with all its contradictions has one important advantage - internationalism.

In Porto Alegre in 2001 social movements from different countries came together and decided there was a need to build an alternative to capitalist globalisation.

After the big demonstrations like Genoa, we started to discuss the kinds of alternatives and it was agreed to launch regional social forums.

It is a concrete way of beginning to build, or more modestly to plan the coordinates, of the possible new world.

The ESF is important because it is an opportunity for the European movement to get itself in gear, to discuss together and to take leadership of future European wide struggles.

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Capital and its representatives act at least at a European level. The EU gives coordination to the implementation of neo liberal politics, like G8 and the WTO. The alternative has to have a European character.

What do you hope to see come out of the ESF?

THE ESF will not only be an event but a process that begins to establish networks and European wide mobilisations that establish another Europe. A Europe of social rights and citizenship, of peoples, of the expulsion of war from the horizon and of a Europe open to the South and the East

Fight the EU in Poland

The government argues that to be opposed to the NICE treaty is to be posed to the people of Eastern Europe. We spoke to a member of Pracownicza Demokracja/Workers' Democracy (Socialist Worker's sister organisation in Poland) about what they think about EU enlargement.

What sort of conditions face the working class in Eastern Europe? Has preparing for EU accession made this worse?

Workers democracy: The Eastern European working class was told a lot of nonsense about the market in the years following 1989. Unemployment shot up in all countries, levels of poverty grew sharply.

The shock therapy in Poland at the beginning of the 1990s was supposed to involve 2 percent unemployment -- today there is officially 18 percent unemployment in Poland, over three million people, and over 50 percent are under the official "welfare minimum" poverty indicator. Some 80 percent of the unemployed don't have the right to unemployment benefit.

The government and the International Monetary Fund worked out the shock therapy jointly. The IMF gives "advice"

and applies pressure but successive governments have willingly accepted this.

Preparing for EU accession makes things worse because the government claims that there has to be restructuring (i.e. unemployment), acceleration of privatisation and liberalisation of labour laws in order to adapt to EU conditions. As in the EU the key word is "flexibility".

Successive governments have also boasted that they have managed to hermetically seal Poland's borders in line with EU demands.

Why do Polish bosses want to join the EU? What would it spell for the Polish working class?

The Polish ruling class wants to integrate with its more powerful western neighbours.

Already the biggest Polish capitalists are partners in global

capitalism. The richest is a dollar billionaire, is partly based in Holland and has close links with France Telecom. Poland's economic and political rulers want to use the EU to help "restructure" the economy, in other words make workers pay even more for capitalism's failures.

Adaptation to the EU is a convenient pretext for them to intensify attacks on workers.

For the workers it means that big business, whether Polish, European, Japanese or whatever will demand more rights and restrict workers' rights.

At the same time as there were mass strikes in Italy and India in April against liberalisation of the labour laws, there were trade union protests in Poland on the same issue.

The government cannot any more simply argue that in the West these things are done so we have to do them also in Poland - many people are not

convinced by this after the experience of the last few years.

The EU is used as a new version of the "West is best" argument but in case this is not enough there are also added promises that the EU will mean funding for Polish industry and farmers.

In reality of course the EU will strengthen the hand of the employers and speed the ruin of hundreds of thousands of small farmers.

What was said about Ireland voting down the Nice Treaty?

After the referendum result there were TV and press reports on the theme: "Why do they hate us?" This is because the only aspect that interests the Polish media is European Union enlargement.

We argued that this was bullshit because the campaign in Ireland was not dominated by

nationalist arguments pointed to other issues. European militarisation you had to search hard out about in the media.

Unfortunately here the leftists and far right are leading the anti-EU campaign.

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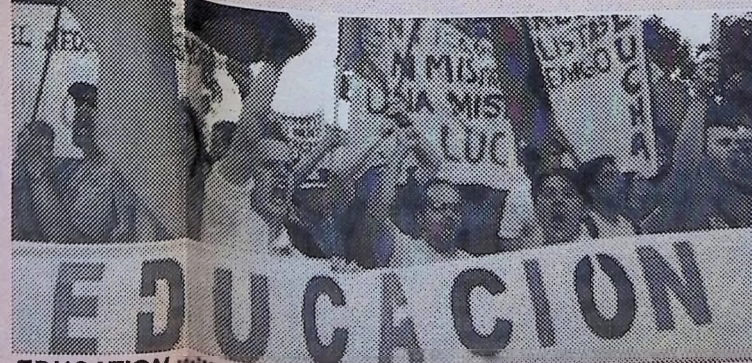
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Unfortunately here the nationalists and far right are dominating the anti-EU campaign.
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of the world.
The ESF will be a huge opportunity for debates and political disagreements where all the participants will be starting from the same point. But this is part of the dialectical process, which has to be open and involving - it has to be daring.

We are in the business of rebuilding not of closing down.

In this context the social movements must seize the opportunity to engage with each other, to start coordinating the fight back to produce the conflict at a Euro wide level, to build strong relationships with each other.

We are being ambitious but realistic. Since 1997, since that first mobilisation in Amsterdam to the next ones in Cologne, Nice and Brussels also organised under the banner of a network against unemployment and social exclusion we have developed to the massive mobilisations against Capital and War in Barcelona in May. The movement is growing both in both size and quality. Nice - 8,000, Brussels - 40,000 and Barcelona 300,000.

What Preparations for the forum are taking place?

RIFONDAZIONE IS part of the process of building for the Forum in two ways. First of all many of the militants and leaders of these social movement are also the militants of Rifondazione - like myself.

Secondly the party is part of the "Movement of Movements" Rifondazione today has the possibility of playing an original and experimental role. That of trying to build a secure bridge on a new basis, a bridge between the social and the political, between the social movements and the political organisation.

There is a lot of suspicion about the idea of a party. This is both understandable and justified. The traditional parties of the left have in the last decades abandoned all semblance of radicalism, becoming complicit if not the protagonists of neo-liberalism and war. The new movements have been outside of parties. The social movements have taken up the space that political parties abandoned.

Today in Europe and across the world there is not only a need for an international social movement but also a political alternative that is firmly anti-capitalist.

There is a need to build a left alternative at a Europe wide level that breaks the con-



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How do you view the current situation and prospects for the left across Europe?

TODAY IN Europe a worrying and strong wind is blowing from the right. It is being confirmed electorally with the centre right coalitions and the growth of xenophobic and racist movements. One after the other

the centre left governments are crumbling. I think this represents a crisis of the old left which is incapable of giving an alternative to the politics of capitalist globalisation, incapable of relating to the material conditions of more and more Europeans, incapable of offering any alternative.

I think, in the context of the new social movements it is possible to begin to build a new left without compromising our diversity or breaking existing organisations -- a left that combines the social and political.

A left that looks for an alternative to capitalism, taking anti-racism anti-war and anti-neo-liberalism as its departure point. This might seem a small beginning but I think it would be of huge significance.

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What do Poles feel about being part of a military alliance that includes Western Europe and the US?

Unfortunately most Poles support NATO membership. We are constantly being told that NATO brings security and many believe this. This has a lot to do with a history of being sandwiched between Hitler and Stalin and in the nineteenth century being divided up between Germany, Russia and Austria-Hungary.

However over the past couple of years anti-war and anti-NATO protest have grown in number. When Bush came to Warsaw last year the anti-Bush cam-

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What socialists say

Is Europe Progressive?

One of the interesting features of the last Nice Referendum was that while every left-of-Labour political party, NGO and campaign was urging people to vote no, the trade union movement in Ireland was encouraging a 'yes' vote.

the EU. The actual European Parliament has very little influence over the business of the EU, and in any case is so far removed from the majority of Europeans that it is in no way a representative organisation.

words, "strengthen Europe's economy and improve its global competitiveness".

Its members are the senior board members of the continent's largest multinationals, including oil companies Shell, TotalFinaElf and BP - represented by Peter Sutherland, Bayer Pharmaceuticals, Unilever and Nestlé.

Ireland's multimillionaire Michael Smurfit is also a member.

Trade liberalisation is the main objective of the ERTI.

At home, that means getting their hands on the 15 percent of European GDP spent on health and education.

But their ambitions don't end at the Mediterranean shore. The ERTI lobbies the European Commission to ensure that no concessions on debt are given to Third World countries unless they are prepared to throw open their markets to privatisation and foreign investment.

The European Union is every bit as committed as the United States to the implementation of the General Agreement on Trade and Services, which involves the wholesale privatisation of the public sector.

The Nice Treaty would end any power of veto on decisions taken by the Commission on GATS. This would provide the excuse for every government across Europe to accelerate sell-offs of state assets, contracting out of services and deteriorating public services as the privateers make a killing.

No amount of memorandums can make that palatable. That is why we need to oppose the Nice Treaty.

by PAUL MCCARTHY

This is not just because the union bureaucracy is out of touch with the growing movement against capitalism.

It comes from a political idea that has dominated the debate on Europe for much of the Irish left for years.

It has long been argued that because European countries like France, Germany or Sweden had progressive welfare states and strong trade union power, that further European integration was the best way to win gains for Irish workers.

This argument was echoed from the liberal left, who, having given up on the idea of mass action, saw European multiculturalism as the only opposition to the conservative Catholic-dominated Irish political and cultural scene.

In fact, these aspirations for decent labour standards or a multicultural society are completely at odds with the agenda of the European ruling class and its institutions in the EU.

One of the main reasons people voted against Nice is the lack of any accountability or democracy in the workings of

Real power in the EU lies with the un-elected Commission and its sub-committees.

Each country appoints a certain number of commissioners - and even this is set to become even less representative under the Nice Treaty. These commissioners are usually cronies of the government of the day. The Commission makes the strategic policy decisions of the Union and its civil service prepares whatever legislation is necessary for their implementation.

However, most European legislation is put into effect through various quango regulatory bodies. Although this system may appear to be just an out of control, in fact the EU operates, like any government, for the interests of a distinct class.

There is no reason to believe that if you put all the ruling class governments of Europe together, then they somehow become a progressive force.

The agenda the European Union is pushing is that of the major industrialists and financiers who want to create a single market in Europe that would be able to rival the United States as an economic and military power.

Far more powerful than the European Parliament, or any number of friendly-sounding policy initiatives, is the secretive European Round Table of Industrialists. This is a group founded in the 1980s to, in its own



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ple associate the pro-EU position with the left. The two biggest trade union federations support the EU.

But when we talk to protesting workers they have a healthy mistrust of the EU as a club for big business without being hostile to foreigners.

Unfortunately also many people to the left of the government parties have similar illusions in the EU as people had in the

market changes introduced with a vengeance in the 1990s. They think that the EU may be a kind of life-line despite its negative aspects. We argue for a left wing campaign against the EU.

What do Poles feel about being part of a military alliance that includes Western Europe and the US?

Unfortunately most Poles support NATO membership. We are constantly being told that NATO brings security and many believe this. This has a lot to do with a history of being sandwiched between Hitler and Stalin and in the nineteenth century being divided up between Germany, Russia and Austria-Hungary.

However over the past couple of years anti-war and anti-NATO protest have grown in number. When Bush came to Warsaw last year the anti-Bush cam-

campaign covered the city in Bush STOP! posters.

Over ten years since the collapse of Stalinism, what is the position of the far left in Poland? Is there, for example, an anti-capitalist movement?

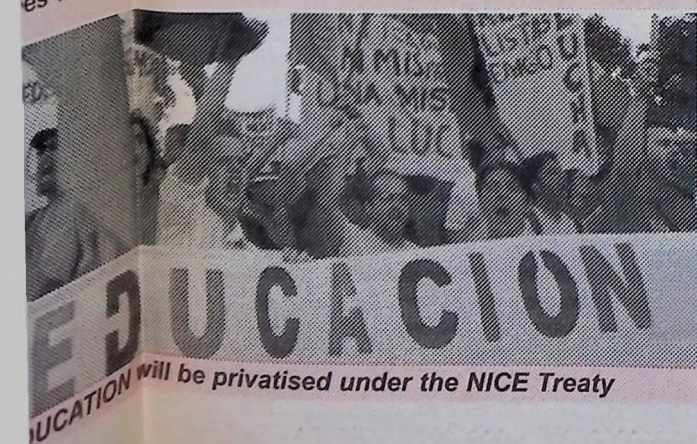
The far left is made up of small groups. In Poland the biggest far left group is Workers' Democracy with a couple of hundred members, so that shows how numerically weak the far left is.

However there is a growing anti-capitalist awareness. Already in 1999 before the big Seattle protests 50 percent of people in Poland according to one poll had a negative connotation for the word "capitalism". In the last couple of years the media have talked about "anti-capitalist protestors" and even "Polish anti-capitalist protestors". There has been a massive

shift in opinion on privatisation. People believed that privatisation would make Poland like the West (not including the poverty and unemployment of course).

At the beginning of June an opinion survey found that for 74 percent of people in Poland privatisation means "theft" and that public property has been "sold up". 78 percent said that too much had been sold and 87 percent thought that the economy had "done badly" out of privatisation.

We think there is a wide-spread anti-capitalist mood and a small but growing movement -- for instance hundreds travelled to the anti-capitalist demos in Prague, Gothenburg and Genoa. We have also seen in the last couple of weeks a growing number of bitter protests, strikes and demonstrations of workers faced with redundancy, many of whom have not been paid for months.





Bush backs Israeli murder

THE US president George Bush's plan for "reform" in the Middle East has brought more destruction on the Palestinians. He gave his complete backing to Israel and its brutal repression of the Palestinians.

Right wing prime minister Ariel Sharon sent his troops and tanks to "indefinitely" reoccupy the main Palestinian areas in the West Bank.



Swept

Israeli soldiers and tanks killed ten Palestinians as they swept through Jenin, Nablus, Bethlehem, Tulkarm, Qalqilya and Ramallah. But Bush said nothing. He was also silent about the Israeli settlers who control almost half of the West Bank. This is land that is supposed to belong to the Palestinians. Instead Bush denounced the Palestinian "terrorists", echoing Ariel Sharon's excuse for killing Palestinian men, women and children.

Over 1,500 Palestinians have been killed since the beginning of the new intifada (or uprising) in September 2000, compared to 500

Israelis who have died. Bush also directed his fire towards the Palestinian state, which he claimed is "corrupt".

But he doesn't mention that its police force was set up under the guidance of his own CIA. Bush had the nerve to demand that the Palestinians have to appoint a new leader. "When the Palestinians have new leaders, the United States of America will support the creation of a Palestinian state," he commanded. No wonder his speech was cheered by the Israeli government. They

have long wanted to get rid of Arafat, who they blame for not clamping down on Palestinian militants. They used it as an excuse to bombard Palestinian Authority buildings.

Robbery

It is yet another example of a "peace plan" that enshrines Israel's robbery of Palestinian land. Israel was set up on 78 percent of the land that the Palestinians owned in 1948.

It kicked out 750,000 Palestinians into the West

Bank and Gaza Strip. Then Israel occupied these territories in 1967. There was supposed to be a peace plan drawn up in Oslo in 1993. The Oslo peace accords did not bring justice and peace for the Palestinians. They consolidated Israel's control over the Palestinians.

The number of illegal Israeli settlers living in the Occupied Territories doubled during the peace process. This is despite the Oslo peace accords giving Palestinians limited control over their own areas.

Yasser Arafat responded to Bush's speech, calling it

"a serious contribution to pushing the peace process forward".

This shows the tremendous pressure he is under from the combined political and military weight of the US and Israel.

And he is in danger of once again becoming their instrument, imposing what they want to use against his own people.

This will isolate him further from the mass of Palestinians who are sick of being crushed by Israel. The Palestinians deserve their land back, to live without brutal repression, and nothing less.



More Palestinians are gunned down

IN ONE incident Israeli soldiers deliberately fired on a group of Palestinian children who were shopping in Jenin, killing three of them. But there hasn't been a cry of outrage from press and politicians about this.

The Israeli government has also begun constructing a 225-mile "security" fence to wall off Palestinians in the West Bank from Israel.

Israeli settlers have stepped up their violent attacks. They ran rampant near Nablus, terrorising an Arab village and shooting a Palestinian man dead. The Israeli army controls 42 percent of the West Bank to protect the settlers. It has divided the Palestinian areas up into eight separate "cantons".

Israel controls the roads in between these

areas, and constantly punishes the whole Palestinian people by closing them and not allowing Arabs through. For instance, Awda Abd-Allah, a 54 year old Palestinian, died at a roadblock north of Ramallah.

Israeli soldiers would not allow the ambulance carrying him to pass the checkpoint. Awda Abd-Allah was the 66th Palestinian to die during the intifada because of being denied access to medical treatment.

Devastation

When the Israelis close off the Palestinian areas they have a devastating effect - food, medical supplies and other essentials cannot get through. The economy has been destroyed - three quarters of Palestinians are living on less than \$2 a day.

Over 7,000 Palestinian men are held in Israeli prisons just because they are "suspected" of being involved with militant Palestinian groups.

there is enough land in Palestine for every single Palestinian refugee to return without a single Israeli having to leave. Far more importantly, Jews and Arabs lived in peace for centuries throughout the Middle East before the First World War.

Both the Palestinian and Jewish peoples have a long tradition of solidarity and internationalism.

We stand with the Palestinians. They have the right to defend themselves and fight back against Israeli oppression. Israeli troops armed with the most

advanced US-supplied guns, helicopters, tanks and fighter jets are killing children armed with rocks.

The solution, however, will not come from the Palestinians alone. It means looking to the power of the broader Middle Eastern working class, a force which is strong enough to defeat Zionism and Imperialism.

That is a force which is powerful enough to bring real peace and justice in the Middle East with a democratic secular state of Palestine where Jews and Arabs can live together in peace.

Why there is no two state solution

THERE IS a remarkable consensus about one aspect of the Palestinian crisis.

From George Bush, through to sections of the left there is agreement that a solution to Palestine is what is called a "two State solution". The various peace plans from the Oslo agreement are based on the idea of separate states for Israel and Palestine.

The state of Israel was founded by an act of theft and brutality - the expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians from their homeland by Jewish militias in 1948.

A Zionist, exclusively Jewish state cannot be part of any solution in the region.

Its existence means tragedy for the peoples of the Middle East, especially

the Palestinians but also the Jews. As Palestinian writer Edward Said says, "Palestine is and always has been a land of many histories. It is a radical simplification to think of it as principally, or exclusively, Jewish or Arab. Palestine is an irreducibly mixed place."

The Zionist view is the opposite, as Joseph Weitz, head of the Jewish Agency's Colonisation Department, put it in 1940: "There is no room for both peoples together in this country.... We shall not achieve our goal of being an independent people with the Arabs in this small country.... And there is no other way than to transfer the Arabs from here to the neighbouring countries.

To transfer all of them; not one village, not one tribe should be left."

Palestinians have long demanded the right to return - a right which Israel refuses to concede because

it would undermine the Jewish nature of Israel.

The US bankrolls the state of Israel with over \$3 billion in direct aid each year. With other subsidies and loans US aid represents nearly \$1,400 per Israeli citizen. The close relation between the U.S. and Israel ensures that the Israeli military arsenal is the most advanced and deadly in the region.

Following the Six Day War in 1967, Israel occupied further territory including the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

In the West Bank, 55 percent of the land and 70 percent of the water were seized for the benefit of Jewish settlers who constituted only a tiny fraction of the population.

In Gaza, 2,200 settlers were given more than 40 percent of the land while 500,000 Palestinians were confined to crowded camps and slums.

In 1993 talks between

Yasser Arafat's PLO and Israel resulted in the Oslo Accords which provided for a Palestinian Authority within parts of the West Bank and Gaza. Nonetheless more Jewish settlements were built since the start of the Oslo process than at any other period in the past.

Dominated

In reality any Palestinian statelet envisaged emerging from the Palestinian Authority would be militarily and economically dominated by Israel. Before the latest Israeli re-occupations PA-controlled cities and towns existed as 227 islands surrounded by Israeli settlements and military outposts.

Any Palestinians state alongside Israel would consist of territorially separated Bantustans, encircled by and controlled through a network of Israeli settle-

ments, roads and military checkpoints, and subject to repressive PA security forces.

The establishment of a two state solution would mean over three million Palestinian refugees being denied their human right to return to their lands within Israel.

Palestinians would be separated from Israel politically and geographically, linked only economically in the form of cheap labour and captive markets.

To imagine that this intensification of oppression would stem Palestinian resistance is too far fetched for words.

Two state proposals offer nothing for the Arabs within Israel's borders. Either it means creating more Bantustans or the expulsions of Arabs.

A solution of one secular state is often attacked as meaning the expulsion of the Jews from Palestine - this is nonsense. First,

Eamonn McCann

Observe the sons of Erin marching to the Somme

AROUND 5,500 men of the 36th Ulster Division perished in the first two days of the Battle of the Somme in July 1916. Most were Northern Ireland Protestants, many of them members of the UVF who had joined up en masse at the outbreak of war. It was this slaughter, which made the annual Somme commemoration a sacred event in Unionist tradition.

And thus the dilemma for Alex Maskey when he became Lord Mayor of Belfast, pledged both to represent Nationalism and also to try to reconcile "the two traditions". Should he follow the precedent set during the Unionist years and lay a wreath at the City Hall war memorial? Or follow the long-standing Sinn Fein line of dismissing the Somme ceremony as a celebration of British militarism?

In the end, Maskey laid a wreath, but not as part of the formal ceremony where the symbols of British militarism would predominate. The consensus in the political mainstream was that represented a significant and generous gesture to Unionism. Some Unionists paid public tribute to Maskey.

This, in turn, heightened the dismay of some Sinn Fein supporters who saw no reason for magnanimity to Unionists who had for years refused to acknowledge Sinn Fein's entitlement to the Lord Mayor's position and had bitterly opposed Maskey's own election.

Accepted

However, most Sinn Feiners accepted the Party leadership's initiative. The veteran Republican Martin Meehan recalled that his own grandfather had been among many thousands of Nationalists had also joined up in 1914 and died in the War. He said: "My grandfather joined the Enniskillen Fusiliers to provide for his family and to fight for small nations. No-one has a monopoly on suffering and maybe if Unionism hadn't hijacked the whole thing, then Nationalists could have taken part. At the end of the day the most important thing to remember is what these people died for, and if we can create a situation where no-one feels alienated that has to be a good thing."

There is a basic decency to the desire for reconciliation which comes through in these remarks. But many people, certainly many socialists, will be disturbed at the suggestion of a non-sectarian duty to show reverence for the huge loss of working class lives in the 1914-18 war.

But the suggestion of such a duty flowed directly from the conventional analysis of Northern Ireland which underpins the Belfast Agreement. This takes "the two traditions" as given, and, logically enough, assumes that the solution to sectarianism is for each side to respect the other's "tradition". Since pride in having served Britain's interests is an element in the Unionist tradition, Nationalists should respect expressions of this pride in the interests of ending sectarian hatred.

The problem with this is that it requires ditching opposition to imperialism. The First World War was a trial of military strength between competing groups of robber barons as to which would have the "right" to plunder the world. On all sides, young working-class men were recruited to do the fighting and the dying. Unionists were rallied by direct appeals to British patriotism.

Nationalists were told that if they fought "for the freedom of small nations" like Belgium, then, surely, Britain would concede freedom to the small nation of Ireland...Across Europe and beyond, these lies led millions to their doom.

The Unionists and Nationalists who perished certainly had something in common which should be invoked now. They were cruelly conned and sent uncaringly to their deaths.

They should, of course, be remembered - with rage against the generals, the politicians and the bankers who brought about the slaughter and with determination to ensure that the ruling class is never allowed to get away with it again - whether under a European Rapid Reaction Force or in any other guise.

There's a message there that Alex Maskey could have sent out across the sectarian divide, but the Nationalist politics of Sinn Fein didn't permit it.

film

Healing relations in stormy deep south

by KERRI
PARKE

THE MEDIA claimed racism was over in Hollywood when Halle Berry won the Oscar for best actress for her role in *Monster's Ball*.

But, just as in the film, the story isn't that simple. *Monster's Ball* is set in America's Deep South. It is presented as a film about racism, violence and also how the spiral of violence can be broken.

Absorbed

Honest accounts of the brutality of institutions and the family are presented. Hank Grotowski is a white racist prison guard working on death row. He follows in the footsteps of his cantankerous father, Buck. At first it seems Hank has absorbed all his father's bad qualities. Hank's son, Sonny, is the one person who could stop the cycle of hatred in this family.

Tested

The relationship between father and son is tragically tested to the limit when Lawrence Musgrove, played by Sean Coombs, is sent to the electric chair. By chance Hank meets Lawrence's widow, Leticia, played by Halle Berry. Neither one is



aware at first that they are connected by Lawrence. They are slowly drawn closer together by the tragedy of their circumstances.

While this is a good film, it fails to deal satisfactorily with all the questions that it raises. Hank's sudden conversion from an intolerant bigot to someone capable of having an intimate relationship with a black woman is unconvincing. This is

partly because *Monster's Ball* doesn't deal with why people hold racist ideas, and how these ideas are influenced and changed.

Monster's Ball is an emotionally charged depiction of the issues of race and the intricacies of the family. The film is well made, with some engaging characters and dialogue. But don't mistake it for a hard-hitting anti-racist film.

journal

Tackling the myths and lies about racism

ARE YOU sick of the media and politicians poisoning the issue of race with claims of refugees "swamping" Ireland? Then read "Racism: Myths and Realities" by Hassan Mahamdallie, in the latest *International Socialist*.

Racism is a very real problem today. The recent election successes of far right parties across Europe have worried millions of people.

Distortions

"Racism: Myths and Realities" arms readers with the facts to challenge the media's distortions.

It explains the rise of racism by linking it to wider world events, like the fail-

ures of neo-liberalism and the "war on terrorism".

Hassan documents how these have been exploited to fuel alarming increases in anti-Asian and anti-Muslim racism.

Exposes

This shows how politicians with a Fortress Europe agenda whip up the "refugee crisis", and exposes where racism comes from.

The *Journal* also contains an important article by Jim Wolfreys analysing the recent French elections and the rise of the fascist Le Pen.

Copies available from *Socialist Worker* sellers or from:

SW books PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

music

A Socialist Worker you can dance to

SWEDISH BAND The (International) Noise Conspiracy say that "the sounds from the streets of Seattle, Prague, Quebec, Gothenburg and Genoa" are their main musical influences. In June 2001, during the recording of their new album *A New Morning, Changing Weather*, the band went to Gothenburg in Sweden.

They played a free gig for anti-capitalist protesters at the European Union summit. Tracks on the album

include "Up For Sale", which is about our lives being sold off to the highest bidder. "Capitalism Stole My Virginity" is about growing up in a world where you are promised everything and given nothing.

Manifesto

Every song on the album has a reading list. It includes books by Noam Chomsky, Pierre Bourdieu, George Orwell and other radical authors. The sleeve notes quote from revolutionaries Karl Marx and Rosa Luxemburg, and read like an anti-capitalist manifesto.

Despite music maga-

zine NME's description of the album as "*Socialist Worker* you can't quite dance to", this isn't dour, earnest music with no tunes. There is an incredible energy in every song. The band uses a blend of punk and soul to get their message across, whether they're singing about love or unemployment.

The founders of the band had the idea of being a mix of "Elvis and Che Guevara". However, they aren't one of those "radical" bands who think that political rock is going to overthrow capitalism.

They say, "It's just a record. It's not going to change the world. But still, it's a product of an ongoing struggle that, in the end, will change the world."



where
we
stand

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

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

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

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

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

FOR REAL SOCIALISM, EAST AND WEST

The SWP welcomed the break-up of the USSR and the end of the East European dictatorships. These states were not socialist but were run by a state-capitalist class.

We are against the domination of the globe by imperialist powers and we oppose their wars. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

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

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

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

FOR WORKERS' UNITY IN THE NORTH

Northern Ireland is a sectarian state, propped up by the British Army. Catholic workers are systematically discriminated against by the state. The division between Catholic and Protestant workers weakens the whole working class.

Workers' unity can only be won and maintained in a fight to smash both the Northern and Southern states.

We stand for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. Violence will only end when workers unite in the fight for a workers' republic.

FOR A FIGHTING TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

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

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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

Benchmarking Report analysed:

Fight for decent pay — with no strings

THE BENCHMARKING Report did not turn out to be the ATM machine that Joe O'Toole predicted. Teachers:

It has failed to deliver the kind of pay increases that workers in the public sector need to guarantee themselves a roof over their heads, access to decent health care and the ability to buy basic consumer goods in the second most expensive country in the euro zone.

Benchmarking was always little more than a cynical ploy to entice workers to accept inadequate pay awards under the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness when the Celtic Tiger was at its height. It is clear now, as Bertie Ahern calls the prospect of having to fund modest pay awards "horrendous", that the leadership of the trade union was wrong to go down the benchmarking road.

■ The awards are far lower than workers sought and payment of only 25% is guaranteed.

Nurses sought parity with paramedical grades (speech and language therapists, physiotherapists etc) and also expected to receive any additional increases that these grades were awarded. Hence nurses were expecting an increase of 30%. Benchmarking however gave staff nurses a mere 8% while the paramedics got up to 25%.

TEACHERS WANTED substantial increases — the TUI was demanding 34% while the INTO sought 20%. Both wanted a shortening of pay scale to 10 annual incremental points and two long service increments. This key demand has not been delivered and the pay rise is just 13%.

■ Benchmarking has widened the gap between management and workers in the public service by making the highest awards to those at the top.

■ We have no idea if and when these pay increases will actually be received.

Pressure from the ASTI during their strike led to the commitment to back-date 25% of the awards to December 2001 but we have not been given a date for payment as yet. The payment of the remaining 75% is even vaguer. The one thing that we do know is that we will only get it in the context of agreeing a successor to the PPF

■ The awarding of 75% of the claim will be linked to productivity.

The INTO told their members that they would be benchmarked on past productivity. That could not be further from the truth. The Benchmarking body recommends, in

bold print, that in order to receive 75% of the award "real outputs" should be delivered — the details of which will be agreed at the appropriate local bargaining levels.

We have no idea what is going to be demanded but the government's agenda is to squeeze more productivity out of workers for minimal increases.

Proposed

The last two partnership agreements have had productivity elements. Our final 4% under the PPF is dependent on meeting sectoral targets/performance indicators while the Fitzpatrick Report to the Taoiseach on Public Service Pay (1998) proposed the introduction of performance related pay into the public.

Embrace

Benchmarking brings the implementation of these recommendations a further step. Instead of opposing changes in work practices and conditions of employment our union leaders have talked about how willing they are to embrace flexibility in the workplace.

The Benchmarking Body makes a useful observation on page 40 — "Despite its rapid growth the Exchequer Pay and Pen-



Liberty hall — backing benchmarking

sions Bill declined as a percentage of GDP over the 1990 to 2000 period, down from 11.5% in 1989 to 9% in 2000".

We've been had. Lets throw out benchmarking and launch a united fight across the public sector for decent pay increases, no strings attached.

Reactions to Benchmarking

■ "We got what we sought which was the maintenance of parity with the gardai, but we are disappointed with the percentage, which is just 5%. The higher echelons of the public sector got the highest percentage increases out of benchmarking and we can't understand why this is the case.

We would have concerns that for such a small amount of money the report contains a wide range of topics of change and flexibility. How can they expect dramatic change for the remaining increases? Who'll change their working life for 3.5%?"

Tony MacDonald, convenor Dublin fire brigade

■ "The awards aren't big enough for a start and they are linked to productivity changes. When taken in tandem with the recommendations of the Public Service Commission on Pensions this report shows the serious implications of breaking parity. The proposed new index, which will transfer average public sector pay rises to pensioners, will see many of them lose out in comparison with their serving colleagues. In this instance for example teachers got a thirteen per cent increase but as the average increase is only nine per cent that is all that pensioners would see in their pensions under the new system."

Eddie Conlon, TUI (pers. capacity)

■ "I can't see how nurses could possibly accept this Report. It has delivered us nothing on pay or on the length of the working week which we wanted reduced to 35 hours in line with others in the health service. Instead of reducing the differential between nurses and paramedics it has extended it.

One of the big outstanding issues from our strike was the issue of increases in promotional grade pay. This was to be sorted out in benchmarking but I see that some clinical nurse managers have only been given 8%. Its unbelievable."

Jo Tully, Irish Nurses Organisation

■ "This report is a sham. Nothing is guaranteed and whatever is on offer is tied to all kinds of things. Benchmarking was just a cost cutting exercise that will sow more discontent among workers in the public sector. Most cynically of all the politicians will benefit most from it. The Buckley Report on higher remuneration gave them immediately implemented awards with no strings attached of between 18% and 33%. Benchmarking is smashing relativities but Buckley retained it for politicians and now because of their pay link with principal officers in the civil service they will get another 11.7% on top of last years increases."

Pat Cahill, vice president ASTI.

■ "Benchmarking has delivered nothing for low paid grades in the local authorities and civil service. Given the pressure that we are under because of lack of staff and the failure to recruit clerical officers, the idea of being expected to give extra productivity makes me very angry.

We've agreed lunch time opening under P2000 and cooperated with the introduction of new computer systems that has led to an even greater workload. I actually thought that benchmarking would have to deliver something for us given the degree to which the IMPACT leadership are tied into promoting it but I was wrong."

Union rep, IMPACT Local Authorities

■ "I'm looking at these awards in the context of the crisis that exists in our health service. The crisis of staffing has meant the discharging of the unwell - sick people — just not being taken care of. Psychiatric nursing is an aging profession.

We're losing people to management grades and there are no increases in staffing on the ground. This pay rise is completely inadequate and will mean even less incentive for young people to see it as a career option."

Psychiatric Nurses Association (PNA) member

Ardagh Glass

IGB workers occupy for fair deal

IRISH GLASS Bottle workers have staged a sit-in at the plant in Dublin's Ringsend.

The workers occupied after management refused to abide by a Labour Court recommendation on a redundancy package for 375 workers. The Labour Court recommended that Ardagh Glass, who own the Irish Glass Bottle plant, pay five weeks redundancy per year of service.

The workers accepted this but now the management have thrown this back in their faces and are offering only half a week per year's service.

Originally workers accepted a viability plan to save the plant. They agreed to more flexibility, poorer working conditions and some redundancies. It is now clear that management had a different agenda.

All along they wanted to close the plant despite the

fact that the company made profits of £49 million sterling for last year.

CEO Eddie Kielty even had his pension fund increased by €319,000. This is the same Eddie Kielty who is infamous for the hatchet job he did in the Irish Sweepstakes in Ballsbridge.

The company wants to stop production at the plant but it will remain in existence as a distribution warehouse centre. Production is being moved to England where the company has invested substantially over the last six years.

Work practices in the English plants are in line with those proposed in the now defunct viability plan including no demarcation, annualised hours and contract work.

The company currently has a lease on warehouses on the docks that cost them just €50 per week. However workers believe that this 100 year lease was awarded specifically for bottle manu-

facturing.

The company should lose access to these buildings and be forced to pay the going rate for storage facilities.

Workers went on official strike from July 1. However, management started winding down the plant a week before it was due for closure. Workers got wind of this and quickly took action. The 2.30 pm, A shift walked out and blockaded the entrance after ensuring that all machinery was made safe.

SIPTU shop steward Harry Philips told Socialist Worker, "The only people in the plant are management. We have 100 percent support from all workers here."

"Cleaners, clerical staff and canteen staff are all refusing to work as well. We're all sick of how we've been treated by this company."

The only response so far from management accord-

ing to John - who has worked in the plant for years - has been to send a letter accusing the strikers of costing the company €200,000 through their action.

Workers are continuing their pickets at the plant and will also picket the company warehouses on the Docks and at the old Semperit tyre factory in Ballyfermot.

The workers have received strong support from the local community.

A large local demonstration in support of the workers could add to the pressure on the company and force them to abide by the Labour Court recommendations.

Workers are determined to fight to the end to ensure they get a fair deal.

IGB worker Pat Dunne said, "If management here get away with this other bosses will refuse to acknowledge Labour Court rulings and they'll do it again and again attacking other groups of workers."

Firefighters

Fight for 40%

SOME 100 firefighters from Northern Ireland took part in a 10,000-strong mass demonstration in London last month to launch a national union campaign for a 40 percent wage increase.

Fire Brigade Union leader Jim Barbour told Socialist Worker, "We are demanding a minimum wage of £30,000 a year for all firefighters. Many people would be surprised how badly paid many firefighters and control room staff are."

"Many full-timers still receive working-families tax credit, after years in the service. We haven't had any major change in our pay arrangements for 25 years."

We are getting a lot of support for our claim. People, especially here in Northern Ireland, know that firefighters have been putting their lives on the line for the last 30 years."

Local fire authorities, the management in the fire service, have responded to the claim by demanding flexible working arrangements from the union in return for which increase, demands which have been rejected outright by the FBU.

Jim Barbour says, "The mood on the demonstration in London just shows the depth of feeling there is for this fight, in every region. We have no doubt that we would win almost unanimously, a ballot for strike action."

The FBU is now planning a recall of conference to launch a strike ballot, possibly as early as July, with industrial action planned for the autumn.

Waterford Against Racism

WATERFORD AGAINST Racism, held a public meeting in the town in late June. The meeting discussed how to fight deportation orders.

At the meeting Eddie, an asylum seeker and member of *Waterford Against Racism* told *Socialist Worker*. "We are all very worried. We hear of more and more cases being refused by the gov-

ernment. It is very important the asylum seekers be given a lot of support if they try to deport us. We know public campaigns have worked before in stopping deportations and they must be used again."

* Waterford Against Racism and several other anti-racist and refugee support groups are now discussing getting together to form an Anti-Deportation Alliance in the south-east.

Gaelscoil Thulach na nOg by INTO member

TOMAS O'DULAING is in threat of losing his job as principal of Gaelscoil Thulach na nOg, a school that caters for both protestant and catholic children.

At time of going to press, no decision was made about his dismissal.

The dispute is about the issue of teaching the sacraments of the Catholic Church in school hours. He is committed to protect the religious beliefs of the children in his school.

He believes First communion, which protestant children do not receive, should be taught outside of school hours in order that children would remain as a single group for religion class. The School Board suspended him on April 11th last.

They now want him dismissed.

Seventy per cent of parents support O'Dulaing's stand. However, the

School Board is digging its heels in and is refusing to acknowledge the wishes of the majority of parents who want Tomas reinstated.

The staff in his school is one hundred per cent behind him. At the Annual Congress of the INTO in April, O'Dulaing got unanimous support for his stance.

But the motion that was passed at Congress was modified by the leadership to exclude any threat of industrial action on the issue, contrary to the feelings on the ground by members.

This will probably mean, at worst, that O'Dulaing will lose his job or, at best, reach a compromise situation.

It is important that O'Dulaing gets full reinstatement for a more secular and inclusive education system.

Belfast Telegraph

JOURNALISTS AT the Belfast Telegraph have voted for industrial action after the owners, Independent News and Media (INM) imposed a pay freeze.

The 100 workers have only just won their campaign for union recognition 15 years after the owners' union busting activities.

INM is claiming that the pay freeze is a response to the "worst advertising recession since the second world war".

However, they can hardly claim that they are in financial difficulties. Last year the Belfast Telegraph

made £20 million in profit for INM.

The pay freeze clearly doesn't extend to the top bosses. INM Chief Executive Brendan Hopkins recently received a 4 percent pay rise, taking his wages up to £428,000 plus a huge share options and "fees".

Gravin O'Reilly, son of the newspaper group's billionaire owner, grabbed an extra 5 percent bringing him up to £333,000 plus shares and fees.

As *Socialist Worker* goes to press print workers at the newspaper are also being balloted by the GPMU for strike action over pay.

NUJ officials have said that if they vote to strike then both unions would be seeking "coordinated action for maximum impact".

Noel Frisby Construction

FIFTEEN SIPTU workers at Noel Frisby Construction in Waterford have gone on strike at four separate building sites in a dispute over pay.

Following the issuing of a strike notice, five of the workers were laid off by the company, four block layers and a general operative. Frisby also refused to pay money owed to several of the workers.

Noel Frisby had verbally promised to pay agreed construction industry pay rates (at a comparable level to other construction companies), travel time pay to the workers and place all members on the pension scheme.

The company then reneged on this deal and Frisby went on holiday, denying the workers an opportunity for further negotiation.

Workers at Frisby Construction, one of the most successful property developers in the south-east, are amongst the worst paid and have to endure some of the worst conditions in the building trade in the region.

They have not received a pay increase for five years, they have no tool, travel or meal allowance.

Multi-millionaire, Frisby, was forced to pay £1.8m to the revenue commissioners last year in respect of unpaid taxes, interest and penalties.

Frisby and his wife, Stephanie Taheny (a former planning officer with Waterford Corporation) were the listed directors of Pineview

Construction Ltd. Which failed to make accurate tax returns for the period from the mid-eighties to 1997.

Frisby said afterwards it gave him, "great pleasure to be able to write a cheque of that size to the revenue commissioners".

The Construction Industry Federation have agreed to go before the Labour Court on July 11th, with the workers determined to remain out at least until then. John, one of the workers told *Socialist Worker*: "We're here for the long haul, we're going to dig in until we get a fair deal."

"Frisby shook hands on a deal for a wage increase in front of 17 people and then reneged on the deal, now the company is refusing to talk to us. All we asked for was a wage deal which would put us on parity with other builders".

NIPSA

FAMILY AND Child-care workers are continuing to fight for improved conditions by broadening their demands.

Previously a one-day strike in June called for increased resources.

Now, as *Socialist Worker* goes to press, industrial action called for 17 July will demand pay increases in line with other Public Sector workers.

Over 900 Family and Child Care workers across Northern Ireland held a one-day strike on Wednesday 19 June to demand increased resources for failing services.

A rally at Stormont was attended by 300 striking workers outraged at the intolerable lack of funding for vital services.

The strike, supported by NIPSA, is being followed by a work to rule until demands are met.

Current funding is gross-

ly inadequate. The Four Health Boards Report in September 2000 stated that £34 million would be needed to implement new legislation. Only half of this has been made available.

The goodwill and professionalism of the work force is being exploited as they struggle to sustain services starved of funding.

In a recent NIPSA ballot of Family and Child Care workers 84 percent voted for strike action and 94 percent voted to work to rule.

Speaking at the Stormont Rally, Eileen Webster a worker from Foyle Health and Social Services Trust, voiced the anger felt by her colleagues calling the lack of funding "criminal in 2002 in a civilised society".

Social workers are unable to fulfil their statutory duties, they are sick of prioritising and morale is low, making retention and recruitment of staff increasingly difficult.

One worker from North and West Health and Social

Services Trust described the strike action as a "pro-active step" arguing that it shouldn't take another death of a child to call attention to the deepening crisis in Family and Child Care services.

The North and West trust covers an area of the highest unemployment and teenage pregnancy rates in Europe.

Gerry Largey, a NIPSA branch chairperson, called Family and Child Care "the Cinderella service".

Caring is seen as a traditionally female occupation and is subsequently undervalued and under paid. Social Workers start on £16,000 per year while police officers start on £19,000.

Workers have rejected a 3 percent pay increase from NJC employers and are demanding a flat rate increase of 6 percent or £1,750 per year - whichever is greater.

Other NJC workers such as Housing Executive staff and council workers are joining NIPSA members in their action.

ATGWU

THE ATGWU'S biennial Irish conference held last week in Newcastle Co. Down restated the members' opposition to National wage deals.

This was important due to pro-Partnership noises being made by the leadership, which is temporarily in place of Mick O'Reilly and Eugene McGlone. The conference passed two motions referring to the existing anti partnership policy having

been the "democratic choice" of the Union's members, with one motion stating that it "can only be rescinded by that membership".

A number of motions on the dismissal of the two officers had been ruled out of order by the conference's Standing Orders Committee.

Within a few days of the Irish conference, 80% of the Unions officers across England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales have voted for industrial action in support of their dismissed colleagues Mick O'Reilly and Eugene McGlone.

Wexford Maternity care

THE DOMINO and Homebirth Maternity team in Wexford provides maternity care.

Currently a newly pregnant woman in Wexford could not avail of this service because it ceases (only begun in July 2002) to exist in December 2002. Funding is needed to maintain this service.

When you request the Domino service two midwives are assigned to you and they visit you in your home to carry out assessment and further antenatal checks so you have a prior relationship with them and know that they will be there for you for your whole labour and delivery. You may leave the hospital, bar-

ring complications, six hours after birth, if you choose.

It is medically proven that women under the Domino/Home Birth program experience fewer complications, less medical intervention, less stress and less pain relief is required.

It is also proven that Apgar scores on children are significantly higher.

Participate

Women need to know that this service exists and that it is their legal right to participate in their birth experience how they choose it to be and to rally together to prevent the Domino/Home Birth program's cessation now.

Please call Shannon for details 05358706

It is clear that families, children at risk and those working with them are far down the agenda of an Assembly committed to the

interests of business. However principled workers are prepared to continue to fight for an effective service.

Socialist Worker

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NEW PSNI



SAME OLD SECTARNIANISM

WHAT IS the difference between the RUC and the PSNI? Well, there IS the uniform – and the PSNI uses water cannons as well as plastic bullet – otherwise, the verdict has to be that there is little or no difference.

This is clear from the evidence of the way the PSNI has policed a range of events over the last month.

There was the rally in the Short Strand, called after residents had been stopped using the local health centre by a loyalist mob.

Barbara told *Socialist Worker*: "Despite the rally being ring-fenced by police landrovers, there was no tension, it was very positive. The

talk was of involving the unions, particularly the health unions, in trying to resolve the situation.

"Suddenly, I saw women grabbing children and running with them. When I looked around, there were loyalists throwing all kinds of things into the crowd. There was only one way they could have got in and that was through the police lines."

Throwing

"When the residents started to head for them, they ran back through the police lines. Has anyone ever seen a bunch of nationalist rioters being allowed through police lines to attack a loyalist rally?"

More recently, the policing of the Orange March through the Catholic Springfield Road really showed that the PSNI is

just the RUC under another name. The rioting following the march was presented in the media as just another set-piece riot. But everyone on the ground agrees that the PSNI created the riot.

On the night of Thursday June 27th, police knocked on every door taking names of residents and informing them that ID cards would be issued to everyone normally resident in the area.

Residents were warned to carry these ID cards otherwise, they would not be allowed into the area in the run-up to the march.

After the Committee on the Administration of Justice complained the ID cards were a denial of civil rights, they were withdrawn. Nonetheless, people in the area were understandably angry.

On Friday 28th, the day before the march, the Spring-

field Residents' Action Group (SPAG) announced that they would not be stewarding the protest against the march in protest at the Parade Commission imposing no route restrictions despite paramilitary displays last year.

Opened

On the Saturday, the 'peace line' gate was opened to let the Orange march, including 'respectable' politicians like Nigel Dodds and Nelson McCausland through onto the Catholic section of the Springfield Road.

This is the only time in the year that the gate is opened.

An observer from the Pat Finucane Human Rights Centre told *Socialist Worker* "there was a massive security presence with scores of British army and RUC/PSNI vehicles

and up to 1,500 personnel and fewer than 300 protestors".

After the march passed, the police did not withdraw their massive presence. There was very minor stone throwing but it was enough for them to bring in water cannon.

Plastic bullets were fired as well "from very early on" according to one of the monitors.

Although water cannon are seen as a 'safe' option for riot control, the manner in which it was used on the Springfield Road was far from safe. It was deliberately used to throw people off their feet and sweep them down the road.

All of this is in marked contrast to how RUC/PSNI responded in Derry when sinister elements from outside the Protestant Fountain estate, thought to be UDA, assembled there allegedly to 'defend' the area during the World Cup.

These people were not welcomed by the majority of the Fountain residents, who saw them for what they were - trouble makers. But there was no question of ID cards for them.

Instead, the police stood by while they attacked one person.

On the streets the new police are showing themselves to be the same old sectarianism and at the same time each week there are new revelations about collusion between the army police and loyalist paramilitaries.

The police won't stop sectarianism but will foster and encourage it, but workers action can halt the thugs with uniform and without. Workers brought Northern Ireland to halt after the murder of Danny McCloghlin earlier in the year. The same sort of trade union called action is needed today.