

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

50p

inside

**Italy swings right —
Can workers beat
Berlusconi again?**

—PAGE 4

**Israel declares
war on
Palestine**

Solidarity price £1

- **NO military superstate**
- **NO corporate Europe**

NO TO NICE

A Europe for people not profits

HEALTH CRISIS NORTH AND SOUTH

—PAGE 2

**A cruel rush
for profit —
HOW BIG
OIL IS
KILLING
OUR
WORLD**

—PAGE 8

**Socialist
candidates
in local
elections**

—PAGE 5

**Government's
racist lies
exposed**

—PAGES 6&7

Film review:

**Ken Loach's
new film
Bread and
Roses**

Liars, cheats and thieves

THE OFFICE of Public Works is selling of houses worth hundreds off millions ro rich developers and businesses.

The OPW claim they can't afford the up-keep of the Georgian property they own.

They wouldn't think of using them for housing of course.

BILL CLINTON came to Ireland again and picked up a few dollars.

The bomber of Baghdad is on a speaking tour where he "earns" £100,000 for each appearance.

Globalise Resistance organised protests against his visit in Belfast, Derry and

GUINNESSS and Mahon the bank at the centre of the Ansbacher scam has closed.

Now owned by Irish Life and Permanent.

Perhaps the Irish Life board will release the names of the Ansbacher depositors and confirm all that outstanding taxes have been paid.

THE BANK of Ireland have found another way of avoid-ing tax.

They own a company called Merrion.

They then rent the properties of their own company.

The rent for just one of the six properties, the bank on St Stephens Green is £1.715,000.

This way the bank avoids tens of thousands in tax.

As if a 10 per-cent tax rate and the DIRT scam wasn't enough they have found a new way to top up their £2 million a day in profits.

Fat cat pay out



● Anti-union Ryanair boss Michael O'Leary made £37.2 million last year.



● Michael Smurfit CEO Smurfit Jefferson Group got £13.4 million last year.



● Tony O'Reilly media baron grabbed £11 million in just one year.

North and South health in crisis

Money for tax cuts but not for health

NO MONEY for the Health service. That was the message from the failed public relations stunt Fianna Fail and the PDs held at the beginning of the month to reform the health service.

An elderly woman in Dún Laoghaire with gangrene in both feet is told she will have to wait six weeks for a hospital bed. Her GP tells her to take a taxi to the outpatients' department and sit there waiting for admission.

A woman with a medical card waits 18 months for a hysterectomy.

In spite of developing an infection she is discharged after six days and is offered no after-care. Another

woman with private health insurance has the same operation, develops no infection, but is allowed to recover in hospital for three weeks.

A young woman goes to casualty with severe abdominal pain.

She is told she will have to wait six weeks for a scan. If she has £250, however, she can have it done immediately.

There are nearly 40,000 people on hospital waiting lists. Some 43 per cent of those people were waiting for more than 12 months.

Of 29 countries in the OECD, Ireland ranks eighth from the bottom in spending on health.

In 1998, only 5.34 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product was spent on health compared to a EU norm of 8 percent of GDP.

Ireland now holds the

record for closing more acute hospital beds per head of the population than any other country in the EU.

The result is a health service that is not tackling people's desperate needs.

Nurses and hospital staff often dedicate themselves to their jobs with a passion. But because they do not get the resources our health suffers.

The Celtic Tiger has the highest death rate from heart disease in Europe, almost twice the EU average.

The mortality rate for cancer is in the top three in Europe.

Ireland has the eight lowest life expectancy of all the 29 OECD countries.

These scandalous figures are the price that working people pay for the policies of subsidising the rich with tax cuts.

Burke's builders

RAY "I deal in cash" Burke has been caught out again. He and his friends Brennan and McGowan used off-shore accounts for property deals to avoid tax.

The disgraced government minister, Ray Burke, broke the law when he ignored exchange control regulations in the 1980s and transferred money to his offshore accounts in Jersey.

He lied in the Dail when he said he didn't have any offshore accounts and he claimed he was not "flush" with money, when there was £127,000 in one of his bank accounts.

In 1989, the building company Brennan and McGowan received £1.9 million of public money when Dublin County Council was forced to pay them compensation.

The cheque was signed

by the then assistant Dublin city and county manager George Redmond.

Brennan and McGowan had paid £50,000 over to Redmond.

Brennan and McGowan bankrolled Ray Burke since the 1970s.

Their architect, John Keenan, even designed his

house.

Later Burke appointed Keenan to An Bord Pleanala, where he mysteriously turned down the planning permission for Brennan and McGowan.

This was the pretext for Redmond giving over £1.9 million in compensation.

Freedom not to pay tax Pro-choice challenge

LIMERICK City Council awarded its highest honour, the Freedom of the City, to racehorse owner and gambler J.P. McManus as a person who, in the words of the official regulation governing these matters, has "brought credit to Limerick by their contribution to the common good."

John McMahon came to public notice in the purchase by Telecom

Éireann of the old Johnston, Mooney and O'Brien site in Ballsbridge, Dublin.

Earned

As far as the common good is concerned, all that needs to be remembered is that the owners of Telecom, the Irish public, ended up paying £9.4 million for a site which had been bought less than a year earlier for £4 million.

The Fianna Fail backer's contributions to the common good include minimal

tax revenues to the Exchequer.

Thanks to generous changes in the residency laws, he is able to live in Switzerland while, according to the *Limerick Leader*, spending "most weekends" at his Irish home on "the magnificent Martinstown Stud."

Receiving the honour last week, McManus remarked that according to friends its advantages included "Not taxing your car, parking it where you like, staying in the pub as long as you like and not paying service charges."

Poverty kills—official

TWO THOUSAND people die each year in Northern Ireland due to poverty, according to new figures from the Department of Health.

Their statistics make grim reading.

They show that people from the richest backgrounds live five years longer than those in the lowest income brackets.

Poorest

Most travellers die decades earlier than settled people.

Overall life expectancy is three years less than in Europe.

● A child in the poorest group of the population is 16 times more likely to die in a house fire than a child from the richest family background.

● A child from a poor

family is five times more likely to be injured as a pedestrian than a child from a rich family.

● Travellers die 20 years sooner on average than members of the settled population.

Only 10 per cent of travellers are over the age of 40 and only 1 per cent live beyond the age of 65.

● Traveller children are 10 times more likely to die than settled children.

● Unskilled workers are three times more likely to die before they reach the age of 65 than professionals.

● 2,000 premature deaths could be prevented in poor electoral wards like Derry if living standards were raised to those of North Down and Cookstown.

● Deaths from coronary heart disease and women's lung cancer rates are twice the European average.

Yet the assembly has done nothing to tackle poverty in Northern Ireland.

They could have voted for a £5 an hour minimum wage, or to raise benefits for those out of work.

They could have ploughed millions of pounds into NHS services, rather than subsidising big business.

Lure

Earlier this month, the Industrial Development Board boasted that it had spent £85 million in subsidies to lure foreign investors to Northern Ireland.

These companies have merely promised 7,000 jobs, they haven't actually created them.

This money has been paid in taxes by working class people.

It should be spent on hospitals and schools instead of lining the pockets of big business.

Deaths

At least five deaths have occurred due to back street abortions in Northern Ireland, there have been no access in England where abortion is legal and accessible.

A survey found that 11 percent of general practitioners had treated women suffering from the results of amateur abortions.

what we think

NO to a Corporate Europe NO to Militarisation

'IT'S JUST about enlargement. We want to give the people of Eastern Europe the same chance that we had.'

This is the message that all the main parties promote about the Nice Treaty. But they are hiding the real implications of the treaty.

Ireland has no need to vote on the treaty for at least a year. The political establishment are rushing through the vote to play down any real debate.

They have not made the treaty widely available but only distributed a government White Paper.

They called three referenda on the one day in order that the Referendum Commission could not devote resources to explaining the case for and against.

Pretend

No wonder only one in ten people say that they had a good knowledge of what the Nice treaty contains.

Enlargement could happen even without the Nice Treaty. And the provisions of the Nice Treaty will take effect even if no Eastern European country decides to join the EU.

The same governments who pretend they care for the people of Eastern Europe operate a fortress Europe policy to keep out migrants. The German government wants a seven year delay on the free movement of labour.

The only enlargement the EU wants is one that gives the multi-nationals a free hand to scour Eastern Europe for cheap labour.

The Corporate Agenda

ARTICLE 133 of the Nice Treaty is a direct result of lobbying by corporate interests grouped around the European Round Table of Industrialists. This organises 47 European based multi-nationals such as Nestle, Renault and ICI.

It calls for 'the achievement of uniformity in measures of liberalisation'. This is code for more privatisation.

The EU has a policy of cutting back on public spending. It has

criticised the Swedish government, for example, for having 'far too generous and unconditional unemployment benefit.'

The multi-nationals want to use the cutbacks in public spending to grab as many public services as possible so that they become new sources of profits.

The Nice Treaty also allows the EU bureaucracy to open negotiations with the WTO in areas such as the General Agreement on Trade in Services. This is another charter to force open services - which includes nearly all human activity except prayer and the military — for privatisation.

A vote against the establishment

THE NICE Treaty is backed by the whole of the political establishment, including the Labour Party and the leaders of the ICTU who have not consulted their members.

A tiny right wing fringe around the former High Court Judge Rory O'Hanlon and Youth Defence oppose the Treaty because they see Europe as the

source of liberalisation.

These grouping pretend that the pressure for facing up to the reality of abortion, divorce and abortion did not come from Irish people but from 'outside'.

Forced

They want to forget the 10,000 people who marched during the X case in 1992 and forced the High Court to grant a 14-year-old rape victim the right to travel.

Socialists have nothing

to do with "defending the values of the Irish constitution" and do not co-operate with these fringe right-wingers.

Instead the campaign led by the Socialist Alliance — a grouping which links the SWP and other socialists groups — has focussed on opposition to militarisation and privatisation.

Most of the vote against the Nice Treaty will come from these left wing concerns. And the bigger the vote, the greater the blow against the political establishment.

Mexico rebels



Thousands of teachers march in Chiapas as part of Mexico-wide strike for better pay.

Building a military Empire

THE REAL purpose of Nice is to create the legal basis for a military super-power.

The Brussels bureaucracy has already created a 60,000 Rapid Reaction Force, which is capable of operating up to 4,000 kilometres away from the continent in Africa and the Middle East.

The Nice Treaty gives the legal ratification to this force.

It established a "Political and Security Committee to monitor the international situation in areas covered by the common foreign and security policy"

It states that this committee should take "political control and strategic direction of crisis management operations"

This is code for wars. The political elite use language like "humanitarian intervention" and "peace enforcing missions" to hide their colonial ambitions.

The EU bureaucracy believes that European multi-national have lost out to their US counterparts because they do not have a the military muscle to carve out markets. They are par-

ticularly worried about losing out on the scramble for oil in the Caspian Sea.

This is also why they are promoting a European arms industry. European countries control a third of world arms sales at the moment and the EU political elite wants to increase

their share.

The Nice Treaty calls explicitly for "co-operation between EU states in the field of armaments".

They want "common user requirements" so that all EU countries increase their military budgets and buy weapons from

companies like the giant European Airspace and Defence Systems Ltd.

If the Nice Treaty goes though it will end the last vestiges of Irish neutrality and increase the likelihood that Irish soldiers will fight "resource wars in the future".

NO to Nice Treaty rallies

Dublin

Rialto, Wed 23rd May 8pm St Andrews Comm Centre

Ringsend, Wed 23rd May 8pm Ringsend Comm. Centre

Dublin Central Rally Thurs 24th May 8pm ATGWU Hall, Middle Abbey St

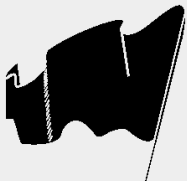
Cabra, Tue 29th 8pm Augrim St Parish Hall, 13 Augrim St

Artane, Tue 29th 8pm, Hollybrook Hotel

Waterford, Thurs 24th May 8pm The Tower Hotel

Thurles, Wed 30th May 8pm, Hayes Hotel

Roscrea, Thurs 24 8pm The Grand Hotel, Roscrea



Join the anti capitalists...

JOIN THE Socialist Workers Party

(PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS)

Name ☐ I want to join the SWP
Address ☐ I want more information
Tel ☐ I want to get Socialist Worker fortnightly
Union
E-mail.....

Subscribe to Socialist Worker:

12 issues £6—24 issues £12 (Ireland only). For multiple copies multiply rate (postage is free)

I want _____ copies of Socialist Worker to sell each fortnight

Make cheques / PO's payable to Socialist Worker. Return to SWP, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8. Tel: (01) 872 2682.



news of the world

Workers can break Berlusconi again

RIGHT WING Thatcher-loving businessman Silvio Berlusconi swept to power in the Italian elections.

Berlusconi's Forza Italia (Go Italy) increased its share of the vote. It will now form a coalition government with two extreme right wing parties, the Northern League and the National Alliance.

Berlusconi is a multi-millionaire who controls a vast media empire. He wants to push through more privatisation, deregulation and tax cuts for businesses. He also wants to force workers to move around the country to find jobs, and to "modernise" the public sector. But while Berlusconi's victory is undoubtedly a blow, Italian workers have already shown they can stand up to him and beat him.

It is not the first time Berlusconi has been prime minister. His last government in 1994 provoked a huge wave of workers' struggle that saw him resign after only nine months in

office. And there are signs that the militancy of Italian workers which brought Berlusconi down then has not gone away.

Around 100,000 people demonstrated in Milan in April this year to commemorate liberation from the fascist government during the Second World War.

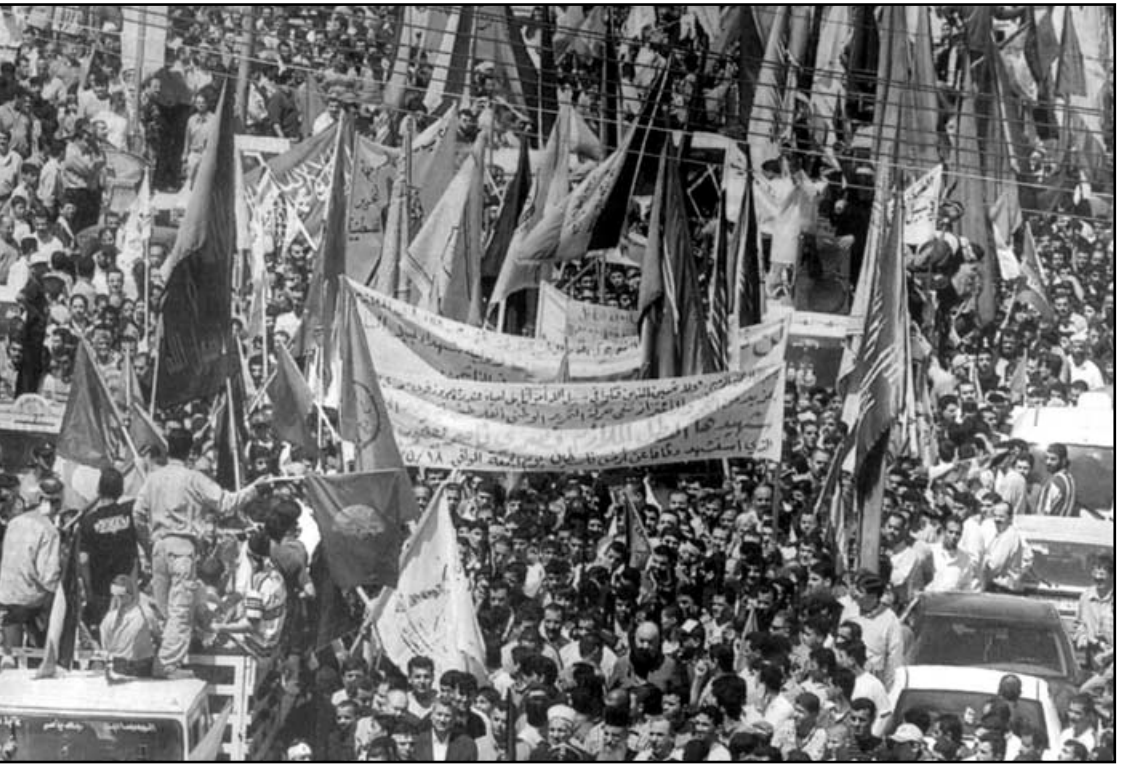
Gathered

There were 200 May Day protests across Italy this year, and at a concert in Rome 800,000 people gathered to hear popular left wing bands. Even before the election trade union leaders threatened a "hot summer" if Berlusconi's attacks on job security and wages go through.

And only last week thousands of metal workers in Turin struck and 10,000 people marched in solidarity with a worker who suffered an industrial injury.

Struggles like this will be needed to stop attacks from Italy's new hard right government.

Israel declares war on a people



As Socialist Worker went press Israel launched a series of vicious attacks on the Palestinian people. Fighters and helicopters bombed and machine gunned areas on the West bank and Gaza Strip. But thousands tool to the streets in protest(above).

Allies on the right

BERLUSCONI'S COALITION allies have extreme right wing policies.

The National Alliance (AN), whose leader is Gianfranco Fini, describes itself as post-fascist. Fini has tried to distance the AN from its fascist past and become more respectable in an attempt to enter government. But up until a year

before the 1994 election Fini was leading parades of goose-stepping thugs.

The AN changed its name from the MSI in the early 1990s. The MSI was an outright fascist party. It openly stood in the tradition of the 1930s Italian Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini. Despite his "respectability", Fini described Mussolini as the "greatest statesman" of the last century just after the 1994 election.

Umberto Bossi leads the right wing populist Northern League. The league whips up hatred of people from the poorer south of the country. It has also led a huge witch-hunt against immigrants, blaming them for poverty, crime and unemployment.

And it has organised demonstrations, rallies and strikes against the building of mosques and immigration into Italy. Both parties also work closely with fascist groups on a local level.

Lessons of last time

BERLUSCONI last came to office in March 1994 after a political crisis led to the collapse of the

old ruling parties.

Berlusconi and his Forza Italia formed a coalition government with the Northern

League and the National Alliance.

They promised an end to corruption.

Instead Berlusconi issued a decree that would have freed 2,000 politicians and businessmen held in jail for questioning on corruption charges.

Only protests by tens of thousands of people then stopped the decree from becoming law.

Berlusconi's cabinet proposed to slash public spending by £15 billion, and to take away the pension rights of millions of workers.

Workers responded with a huge wave of strikes.

In October 1994 over ten million workers struck and three million demonstrated during a one-day general strike.

The following month a trade union demonstration saw one and a half million people on the streets of Rome.

The resistance produced splits in the governing coalition and soon Berlusconi was forced to resign only nine months after he had been elected.

Olive tree withers

IT IS the failure of the "Third Way" left in government that has allowed Berlusconi and his allies to come back from the dead.

The Olive Tree centre-left coalition came to

power in 1996. Italians had huge hopes for change as it was the first time there had been a clearly left government since the Second World War.

The main coalition party was the PDS, the ex-Communists, who have

become more and more like Britain's New Labour.

From the beginning the Olive Tree was committed to the same cuts and privatisations that Berlusconi had failed to force through.

It immediately pushed through an austerity budget which allowed Italy to qualify for the euro single cur-

rency. It cut pensions, scapegoated and attacked immigrants, and supported the 1999 NATO bombing of the Balkans.

Workers' wages have been held down since 1993. Local Olive Tree councils have pushed through cuts and the privatisation of public services.

Even the Olive Tree's manifesto in the run-up to the election was largely the same as that of Berlusconi's coalition.

Promised

Both promised lower taxes, and more jobs, public works, and crackdowns on crime and immigration.

"After Berlusconi fell last time his neo-liberal policies were adopted by the centre-left," says a socialist from Salerno.

"They got the blame for the failures. Rutelli, the centre-left leader, was saying that people would be getting more of the same, which gave Berlusconi the opportunity to say he was for change.

It's hardly surprising the centre-left lost."

Euro worries

ONE REASON Berlusconi's government is likely to be weak is that it made promises to get elected that conflict with the demands of European business.

So he promised to spend more on public services.

That is the real reason why right wing publications like the *Economist* European business magazine have attacked Berlusconi.

In doing so they have also pointed out his record of corruption and

highlighted allegations that he is linked to the mafia.

The *Economist* warned Italians not to elect Berlusconi, saying he was "unfit to lead Italy".

He has been under investigation by Italian magistrates over numerous charges of corruption, including the bribery of judges, politicians and the financial police.

He denounces these charges and claims he is linked to the Mafia as part of a "Communist plot", and plans to pass laws which mean that he and his allies will no longer be investigated.

Giving Genoa a sharper edge

BEFORE the election some commentators said that the hard left Communist Refoundation, which split away from the centre-left government in 1998, would split the left wing vote and allow the right into power.

The PDS, the ex-Communists, only got 16.1 percent of votes in the elections. It has moved

sharply to the right over the last two decades in an effort to appear respectable and win more votes.

Opposition

In 1976, before it had moved so far to the right, the PDS's predecessor, the PCI, got 34.4 percent of votes.

Communist Refoundation got 5 percent of the vote. "The night of the election Bertinotti, the leader of Communist Refoundation,

appeared on national TV," says a socialist from Salerno.

"He said, 'The Olive Tree's policies have led to the disillusionment of its base and there is a mood for change in civic society.'"

"People are against the way that the system is going. We have to build on that for the protests in Genoa against the G8 countries in July."

"We can make the Genoa protest the first big opposition to Berlusconi."

Socialist Environment Alliance challenge ...

Time for a SEA change



BARBARA MULDOON, Laganside Ward, Belfast

Barbara Muldoon, who is standing in Laganside in South Belfast, says: “The fragility of the peace process is an alibi for the politicians here.

“They say we have to wait to tackle the day to day issues that concern ordinary people, like health, housing, education and low pay. I’m sure Tony Blair would love to have a similar excuse.

“But the multinationals don’t have to wait.

“Companies like BT, Prudential and Halifax are all rushing in here to take advantage of corporate tax breaks and desperately low wages.

“The alternative we are talking about is not just about raising these issues, it is about saying we need to fight back.”



BILL WEBSTER, 59, Waterside, Derry.

Bill has been a socialist and fighter for workers’ rights for almost 40 years.

He stood for election in the past with the Derry Labour Party, but thinks the name and traditions of the Labour Party have been disgraced by New Labour in government.

“For the first time working class people have something to vote for, that speaks to their concerns, both locally and globally.

“The young people involved are so aware of global issues. They have so much indignation at US imperialism and capitalism.

“We want to translate that into votes if we can, but more importantly, we want to have bigger grassroots campaigns in the future.

Bill is chairman of the local branch of the MSF union, and recently topped the poll in elections to the Irish Executive of MSF.

He is currently chairman of Derry Trades Council.



SHAUNA DEERY, 24, standing in the Cityside ward in Derry.

Shauna worked for seven years in the Hawkesbay jeans factory before it was closed.

She says “People talk about sweatshops in the Third World, but they don’t always realise there are sweatshops here too.

These places where workers are treated like dirt, paid little and expected to be grateful for it”.

Shauna has worked with marginalised young people in Creggan since a teenager.

She is now a youth worker for a community health initiative in Creggan, still working with young people who have been let down by the system.



COLM BRYCE, 35 Northland ward in Derry.

Colm was a full-time trade union organiser in Australia before returning to Derry in 1996.

He has since been involved in the Socialist Workers’ Party.

Over the past five years, Colm has been prominent in campaigns against university fees, for the abolition of selection in education and to raise the minimum wage.

He is a member of the Foyle Ethical Investment Campaign and the anti-incinerator group, Ban the Burn.

“The SEA is a really exciting initiative,” says Colm. “The major parties here, despite their differences, share a pro-business agenda.

“For years we have been told there is no alternative.

“Now the left is getting together to say that there is, and it starts with challenging the idea that everything, wages, the environment, public services, decent education, all have to be sacrificed to the multinationals.”

Eamonn McCann

Line dancing with the Devil

THE STORIES about Ian Paisley denouncing line-dancing as the devil’s work provided light entertainment for a brief moment.

How could you react other than with a guffaw to the po-faced pronouncement by a big bull of a man that the god of the Old Testament had specifically, and a few thousand years in advance, declared line-dancing anathema? (Galatians, Chapter five, verses 19 to 23, for the pedantically minded.)

Line-dancing was “the latest manifestation of worldliness amongst professing Christians”, Paisley warned the faithful in a statement which he “ordered to be read in all Free Presbyterian Churches on Lord’s Day, 29th April”.

Traumatic

It appears that he had been prompted to issue his pronouncement by a traumatic experience at a recent Free Presbyterian wedding which he’d performed himself in Broughshane, outside Ballymena. Local reports say that all had gone according to plan as the prayerful throng made its demure passage from the church to the hotel and polished off a traditional breakfast of soda bread, salted butter, weak tea and (for the more adventurous) lashings of orange juice. Paisley beamed with contentment as he contemplated the beginnings of another fecund Free Presbyterian family to frustrate popish designs on Protestant Ulster.

And then, consternation. From a set of speakers in the adjacent lounge came the whoops and twang of yee-haw music. In response to which, a considerable section of the wedding party hit the floor with stomping feet and proceeded to line-dance in the very presence of the militant Moderator himself.

It was then that Paisley realised, no doubt with a sudden shudder, just how far along the road to perdition even bible-believing Protestants had allowed themselves to be lured.

This is the explanation of the curious passage in his pronouncement to the effect that “Line-dancing is now freely indulged in by professing Christians at wedding receptions and other social occasions”, and why he had to insist that “Line-dancing is as sinful as any other type of dancing, with its sexual gestures and touchings. It is sensual, not a crucifying of lust but an excitement to lust”.

This description will come as something of a surprise to those of us who have gazed with awe on serried ranks of cowpokes from Cloonfad twirling the night away at Big Sam’s Rodeo Bar with jangling spurs and their thumbs in the loops of their freshly-pressed jeans. Never occurred to some of us that they were barn-dancing towards damnation to the Beelzebub beat.

Decline

But then, what would we know who don’t have doctorates in dance demonology from the Bob Jones University of South Carolina?

There is at least prima face evidence that Paisley is concerned at a decline in biblical standards on the part not just of members but of ministers of his church. Why else would he feel the need to spell out in a press statement that: “At ordination, all the ministers of the Free Presbyterian Church vow to denounce dancing, drinking, gambling and the crazes of the present evil world”. And to add that the “line-dancing craze” (eh?) represents “war against the soul...It defiles the Christian’s body, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and those who defile it God will destroy.”

So god doesn’t just tut-tut at the sight of line-dancers. He marks down the miscreants for destruction..

The blithe irrationality of this stuff is certainly deserving of a snigger.

But we have to remember, too, that what Paisley represents in the real world is no laughing matter.

The daft, laughable analysis of dancing sits alongside a daft, lethal line on Northern politics. Paisley believes that the cause of “Ulster” and the cause of bible-Protestantism are one and the same. So, to give an inch to Catholics is to go against god. Unionists who do give an inch are damnable traitors.

And thugs who put petrol bombs through Catholic windows can believe they are doing the Lord’s work.

THE SEA STANDS FOR

- PUBLIC SERVICES IN PUBLIC HANDS-END PFI SCHEMES
- FULL TRADE UNION RIGHTS
- FOR A £7.40 AN HOUR MINIMUM WAGE 35 hour week
- SAVE THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE.
- EDUCATION FOR ALL. End student fees. Abolish the 11 plus. End selection.
- POLICE THE POLICE. Defend the people against abuses by police forces, either state or ‘community’.
- MORE MONEY FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR A CLEAN AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT.
- NO INCINERATORS
- NO TO MULTI-NATIONAL ARMS COMPANIES

Raytheon brings Star Wars to Derry

RAYTHEON, THE arms company that has opened a plant in Derry, is building missiles and “kill vehicles” for a U.S. Star Wars missile defence system.

The project could spark a new arms race with Russia and China.

The National Missile Defence system will fire missiles at any object the U.S. military deems a threat.

The U.S. Department of Defence says it needs the system because “rogue nations” are developing their own weapons systems.

Its NMD fact sheet argues: “The U.S. has traditionally relied on the wide expanses of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans to keep our homeland at arms’ length from the turmoil of global conflict .

“At present only a few countries possess missiles that can strike the U.S., but the possibility that this number will increase cannot be ignored.”

A consortium of three arms manufacturers: Raytheon, Lockheed Martin and TRW is now developing the technology, under the name United Missile Defense Company.

Raytheon’s Exoatmospheric Kill Vehicle (EKV) transports the missile into space.

It is supposed to hit and destroy an incoming missile in mid-flight above the earth’s atmosphere.

So far, things have not quite gone to plan. In tests, the EKV failed to discriminate between a real missile and a dummy — or simply missed the incoming object.

The Union of Concerned Scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology says devices like bomblets and balloons would render the NMD system useless.

But President Bush has enthusiastically

taken up where Bill Clinton left off, ploughing billions of dollars into NMD and stoking international tensions.

New Labour could play a part in stopping this crazy system, or at least keep its technology out of Britain.

Early warning radar systems — also made by Raytheon — are located in Britain as well as the U.S.

Yet instead of telling Bush to close them down, Tony Blair has said he thinks the system is “a good idea in principle”.

Loopier

And in one of his loopier moments, the Ulster Unionist M.P. for East Londonderry, William Ross, has demanded that “any United States-led anti-ballistic missile defence system will include protection for the United Kingdom.”

Anti-Raytheon campaigners have long argued that it is obscene for any company to make profits out of death and destruction.

But Raytheon is helping to spark off a new arms race which could put the entire world’s population at risk from nuclear war.

There is no clearer argument as to why Raytheon should not be allowed to operate in Derry.

Whether or not Raytheon are working on military systems in Derry just now, the company told the *Derry Journal* only weeks ago that it may well make military software there soon.

“We’re a defence company, after all,” said a spokeswoman.

Raytheon is risking a new arms race for the sake of its directors’ salaries and its shareholders’ dividends.

No one in Derry, Durban or Detroit needs a new cold war.

Let’s kick the death merchants out of Derry!

Protests and violence

Can we ignore power of state?

NAOMI KLEIN, the author of No Logo, is one of the key figures in the anti-capitalist movement. She used her column in the Guardian to write about the Zapatistas in Mexico and their recent triumphant march into Mexico City.

The article raised important questions, “The Zapatistas’ journey is filled with culture clashes. The road they chose to enter the capital by is the same one travelled by agrarian revolutionary Emiliano Zapata almost a century ago.

But is it really possible to demand ‘land and liberty’, as Zapata did, on what is now a strip of asphalt lined with KFC outlets and L’Oéal billboards? It seems that it is.”

In an earlier article she wrote that “Zapatistas aren’t interested in overthrowing the state.

Seize

Their goal is not to win control but to seize and to build autonomous spaces” which will “eventually create counter-powers to the state simply by existing as alternatives”.

The history of the struggles led by Emiliano Zapata, from who the Zapatistas took their name, suggests we draw a very different lesson today.

Zapata was one of the leaders of the revolutionary movement which swept Mexico between 1910 and 1919, and which went far further than the Zapatistas in Chiapas have so far gone today.

At the time the owners of the big farms, or haciendas, were taking ever greater control of peasant land-with government approval.

The peasants used the land to grow corn to eat. The landowners wanted the land to grow sugar cane for export because prices were high on the world market at the time.

To confiscate the land, the big landowners often hired thugs to patrol the haciendas and keep local peasants out.

Zapata was arrested, aged 18, for taking part in a protest with other peasants against a landowner who was taking away tracts of land in his home region of Morelos, south of Mexico City.

Some years later, in 1909, Zapata and a group of peasants occupied the land that had been appropriated by the haciendas and distributed it between themselves. By 1910 Zapata was the leader of a rebel army fighting to win more control of the land for those who worked it.

He developed a programme for agrarian reform that would take one third of the land back from the haciendas and give it to local councils to distribute to the people.

He said, “It is better to die on your feet than live on your knees.” Zapata’s army grew so that at one point it was 25,000 strong.

A man called Pancho

by SAM ASHMAN

Villa led a similar rebel army in the north of Mexico.

One million ordinary Mexicans were to die fighting for land as part of these armies.

Together Zapata and Villa entered Mexico City, the capital. They pledged to fight together.

But what were Zapata and Villa to do? They did not have a fully worked out view of how the peasants-united with the growing Mexican working class-could take over state power, expropriate the land and the factories, and build a different sort of world.

Instead, they waited, hesitated and eventually withdrew from the city-allowing another regime to take power.

Zapata concentrated on reforms in his home region of Morelos. Large estates were broken up and the land redistributed.

Sugar mills and a paper factory were taken over. A credit agency was set up for peasants.

Schools were established both for children and for adults who had not had the benefit of education. It was a genuine social revolution.

But the old state was still intact. Government forces still sought victory. Government forces eventually succeeded in defeating Pancho Villa’s army in the north.

The Morelos commune was then isolated and gradually encircled. In April 1919 government soldiers tricked Zapata into a meeting where they ambushed him and shot him dead.

Claimed

Mexican society did not go back to exactly where it was before. The revolution-

ary years produced a new regime which talked in the language of the revolution and claimed to stand in its tradition.

But land was taken away from the peasants in Morelos. Activists were murdered. Future land reform was superficial.

But the name of Zapata lived on, however, in the minds of ordinary Mexicans.

The Zapatistas took his name precisely because it has such a deep resonance, symbolising a heroic resistance which will not waver from its principles.

The questions confronted by the Zapatistas and addressed by Naomi Klein today are not new ones.

The best way to honour Zapata is to learn from his experience and not make the same mistakes again.

So called “autonomous spaces” are not enough. The state must be confronted and

Stop Deportations

The racism behind the Government’s rhetoric

BUILD THE ANTI -RACIST MOVEMENT

A MASSIVE anti-racist demonstration will take place on June 16th to call for an end to deportations and an amnesty for asylum seekers who are here.

All major anti-racist organisations and refugee groups are supporting the demonstration.

Over the past year nearly 60-refugee support group have sprung up around the country, often in areas to which refugees have been dispersed.

In Donegal, for example, the local support group intervened

when a Moldavian man was instructed to turn up at the Garda station and face deportation. They ensured that he got legal support.

“The Gardai often play on the language difficulties and lack of knowledge of the asylum seekers.

“If it were not for the local support groups many more would be fast tracked out of the country.” Marnie Holborow from the Stop Deportations Campaign said.

Maggie Heneghan works with the Galway support group. She said, “We are supporting the June 16th demonstration because we do not want deportations to be part of the process of seeking asylum.

The Irish were accepted as economic migrants in the US and we do not see why we cannot do the same for others in the Celtic Tiger.

PROTEST Stop Deportations Saturday June 7th Assemble 2pm Dept. Justice St. Stephens Green dublin 2

Speakers

Suresh Grover (Stephen Lawrence Campaign), Jack O’Connor (SIPTU), Michael D Higgins (Labour TD), Global usic, Gabriel Ohkila (pan African org.), nigerian Support Group, Comhlamh, Seamus Dooley (NUJ), patt Guerin (ARC), keiran Allen (SWP), Congo Solidarity Group, Anton McCabe (Meath Trades Council & Socialist Party, Sinn Fein, Amnesty International, ARASI, Community of Romanians in Ireland, Clr Finian McGrath (IND.), Anti-Nazi League

ORGANISED BY STOP DEPORTATIONS CAMPAIGN Tel. 087 9889244 E-mail stop.deportations@Ireland.com donations to TSB Grafton St. acc. 71238010

Living with racism in the Celtic Tiger

VICTOR IS a Nigerian, living in West Dublin and working in Tallaght. He moved to Ireland some 11 months ago after living and working in Germany and Britain before.

He describes his experience here in Ireland as ‘mixed’ although he has friends who have had to face more vicious forms of racism.

“I have been called ‘nigger’ and told ‘to go back to Africa’ by people walking down the other side of the street, in the daytime.

“But I have been living in the same place for a number of months now and I don’t really get much abuse around where I live.

“I have been on a bus coming out of Dublin at night, and myself and my friend were yelled at by a group at the back of the bus. That was a bit threatening okay, because there was a group of them.

“I would not feel completely safe in the city centre late at night anyway.

“But a lot of people have also made me feel very welcome, and I have not really got much problems at work.

Aggressive

“I know from living in Germany and Britain that there are certain places in the cities in those countries that I just would not go.

“I think the racism that I saw from some people in Germany was much more aggressive than here in Ireland.

“I would hope that Ireland would not get like that, because I do like living here and I would like to stay for a while anyway.”

Victor also said that himself and friends had been turned away from pubs in Dublin, because they were black.

Double penalty for refugees

REFUGEES suffer a double penalty from the global capitalist system.

Nigeria has recently negotiated a \$75 million dollar loan from the IMF and in February signed a Trade and Investment agreement with the US.

The Bank of Nigeria wrote a thank you letter to the IMF where they pledged to introduce public sector cuts as a condition for receiving he loan.

The result of IMF inspired cuts is poverty on a mass scale. Nigeria is the richest country in Africa but 90 percent of its population earn less than \$2 a day. 20 percent of its graduates are unemployed.

Most of the population of a country with the sixth largest reservoirs of oil can’t afford to buy oil.

Scapegoated

This poverty drives tens of thousands of Nigerians to migrate. But when they get to countries like Ireland or Britain they are scapegoated by right wing politicians who want to implement similar neo-liberal policies, which also leads to a run down of public services there.

Suffering economic hardship and racism, they get a double penalty from the global capitalist system.

IN FEBRUARY 2000 the government accepted a recommendation to run a national anti-racism public awareness campaign.

Almost a year and a half later the government has yet to give a firm date as to when any campaign will be launched.

It is typical of their hypocritical attitude to racism.

Now Amnesty International has launched a major campaign to highlight the level of racist abuse in Ireland.

Blame

A poll conducted by the organisation shows that 75 percent of the population blame the government for inaction on the issue.

Bertie Ahern told the Dail this month that there was “no alarming rise” in racism in Ireland, and that recent Garda figures regarding racist attacks appear to show that

“Irish people are officially the least racist in Europe”.

At present no official statistics of racial incidents are kept, and it is left in the whole, to voluntary bodies to gather and record racist incidents.

If the RUC behaved like this, they would be denounced for ignoring sectarian attacks.

Much of the racism is inspired by attitudes which are cultivated at the very top of Irish society.

Justice Minister John O’Donoghue has claimed that 75 percent of asylum seekers should be deported.

He has boasted that he cut numbers seeking refuge in Ireland by 22 percent, mainly by closing off the shipping link to Rossclare.

Dublin airport now resembles Heathrow during the worst days of the Prevention of Terrorism Act when Irish people were monitored by British police.

Recently 10 Pakistani businessmen and 19 Moldavian migrants with work permits were imprisoned because of their nationality or skin colour..

Since April 2000, about four thousand asylum seekers have been subject to the dispersal policy.

They are sent to rural areas where they receive no back up, no translation or legal facilities.

They are denied any access to social welfare and are humiliated by being subject to ‘direct provision’.

Local business people who often show little concern for their taste in food are paid to provide meals for them. Adults receive £15 a week and children get only £7.50.

All asylum seekers are fingerprinted. Those who refuse can be automatically detained.

The Government’s official policy of making life as difficult as possible for refugees is one of the major factors stoking up racism.

CHEAP LABOUR FOR EMPLOYERS

The employers claim there is a major labour shortage in the Celtic Tiger and Mary Harney has suggested that over 200,000 new workers will be needed in the next decade.

Yet asylum seekers who are waiting for their applications to be processed are not allowed to work.

Instead the government has opened a special immi-

gration system that plays directly into the hands of the employers.

Described as an ‘indentured labour system’, immigrants can only get a work permit from an individual employer.

If they do anything to upset that employer they can be thrown out of the country.

This is a direct incentive to use cheap labour and this

system is now becoming wide spread on building sites.

Many of the work permits are agreed with ‘middle men’ who take a cut of about 10 percent from the poverty wages.

Despite all the talk of IBEC and the unions working together to combat racism, it shows that the employers have a direct interest in using racism to get cheap labour.

What socialists say

Capitalism: how it works

LOCKHEED Martin, the biggest arms manufacturer in the world. GlaxoSmithKline, the most profitable drug company. Exxon, the leading oil giant.

These multinationals are the modern day horsemen of the apocalypse — merchants of death, profiteers from disease, polluters on a global scale.

They and the 200 or so other giant corporations are the pride of the capitalist system.And they express all that is wrong with it.

Capitalism is not as simple as a greedy state of mind.

It is a particular way of organising society that developed in northern Europe two centuries ago and now dominates the world.

Produce

Every society needs to produce the wherewithal for people to live and sustain the next generation.

Capitalism separates the people involved in that production process from the technologies, offices, factories and other “means of production” that are needed for it to take place.

It creates a majority class, the working class, who collectively do the work, and a minority, the capitalists, who own or control the means of production. That happened at the birth of capitalism.

The early capitalists forced peasants off the land into cities where they had no way of surviving other than selling their ability to work to someone else.

Today laws and repressive institutions like the police defend the capitalists’ monopoly of the means of production.

It is perfectly legal to shut a factory, but illegal for workers to occupy one. Capitalists even slap patents on scientific techniques and ideas.

They are like kidnappers, seizing what society needs and allowing it to be used only if they can make a profit from it.

That profit comes from exploitation, paying workers for just a fraction of the work they are forced to do. The capitalists as a whole exploit workers.They are also in cut-throat competition with one another.

There is no overall plan of production. So in the car industry, for example, companies such as GM, Ford and Nissan each try to grab a larger share of the market at the expense of the others. Competition means capitalists cannot sit back at the end of the year after making a profit.

They must reinvest again and again in new plants and expanded production in order not to fall behind. This pressure to “accumulate capital”, as Karl Marx put it, is relentless.

He described in the Communist Manifesto in 1848

how “the need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere.”

He saw how capitalism ripped up other forms of production, such as peasant agriculture.

Capitalism has created huge concentrations of new technologies and means of production through re-investing the profits it gets from exploiting more and more workers.

But that has come at a terrible price.

More areas of our lives are subordinated to this drive for profit and accumulation than ever before.

That’s why we see multinationals invading education, health and other services.

Choices in our personal lives are corrupted by the multibillion pound advertising industry. And increasing exploitation means workers everywhere face longer hours, and attacks on pay and conditions.

So new “labour-saving machines” mean workers get sacked, and those who remain must work harder. At its most obscene, capitalism brings an undreamt of capacity to feed the world alongside famine.

Companies pump out goods in competition with one another, rather than in a planned way to meet people’s needs.

The result, most obviously in the mobile phone industry today, is more goods produced than can be bought. They go unsold because people cannot afford them. The economy lurches from boom to slump.

The whole world becomes a prisoner of capitalism’s crazy logic.

Scientists

Capitalists employ scientists who warn them about global warming. But none of them can pull back from the precipice for fear of handing an advantage to competitors using polluting techniques.

Two centuries of accumulation and competition have produced today’s multinational juggernauts.

Alongside them stand powerful states, which extend capitalist competition to the arms race and wars as they try to secure areas of the world for their firms. The multinationals, states and institutions such as the IMF, World Bank and WTO are all aspects of capitalism.

In opposing them, we need to link each particular struggle into a powerful movement, based on the exploited mass of the world’s population, against a system which was created by human beings but which now threatens to destroy them.

by KEVIN OVENDEN

The real cost of the oil industry

by SIMON BASKETTER

Wrecking lives and destroying the planet



The power in front of White House

Destroying lives

Shell
Despite being Africa’s biggest producer of oil, Nigeria’s people are still among the poorest in the continent.
In the early 1990s the oil-rich Niger delta became the scene of violent confrontations between the local ethnic minorities and the Nigerian security forces who had orders to protect the oil installations.
The protestors accused Shell of damaging their environment and their culture..
In 1993 the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, led by writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, mobilised tens of thousands of people against Shell. The pressure was enough to force the world’s leading oil company to stop production.
To get the oil — and the profits — flowing again, General Sani Abacha’s government

unleashed a murderous repression.
Hundreds of Ogoni were arrested, imprisoned and sometimes summarily executed. Two years later Saro-Wiwa and eight Ogoni activists were executed.
The company has admitted that it had paid the Nigerian security forces directly.
British Petroleum (BP)
BP signed agreements with the Colombian army to protect its installations.
Its security arm, Defence Systems of Colombia (DSC), imported weapons and trains the Colombian police.
Mobil
Mobil worked with the Indonesian armed forces in massacres perpetrated close to

the US company’s installations in Aceh province.
Since 1980, when separatists began attacking Mobil’s installations and martial law was imposed, there have been constant rumours of disappearances and mass executions.
Following the fall of the Suharto regime in 1999, the Indonesian Human Rights Committee uncovered a dozen mass graves containing hundreds of bodies.
Many had been tortured.
The company admits having supplied food, fuel and equipment to the soldiers protecting its installations.
Some of that equipment was used to dig the graves.

Total
Total are profiting from human rights violations committed by the Burmese military in a dozen villages.
NGOs have reported population displacements by the military, forced labour and even summary executions.
Nobel peace laureate and opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi says that Total is the mainstay of the military regime.

Enron (Exxon)
Human Rights Watch accuse the Enron (Exxon) conglomerate of complicity in serious human rights violations in India.
The Dabhol Power Corporation, which is 50 percent Enron owned, “employs security forces who routinely beat and harass people demonstrating peacefully against the power plant”
Dabhol is a joint venture between two of America’s largest companies, Enron and General Electric.

GEORGE BUSH recently announced his alternative to the Kyoto Protocols on Global Warming. Bush, a former oil boss, argued his plan will “light the way to a brighter future” for the United States.
One commentator said of Bush’s plan, “It looks like an Exxon Mobil annual report, and maybe that’s what it is.”
Drilling for oil and gas will be encouraged in the Alaskan wilderness and the Bush Administration will open up other designated federal land for exploration and lift environmental requirements.
Yet again the oil conglomerates are calling the shots. The oil industry is enormous, but it is also rotten to the core.
It is destroying lives across the planet and is even putting the planet itself at risk.

Global warming

GLOBAL WARMING is already affecting the climate and its effects are set to worsen dramatically.
Severe drought in already dry areas will lead to lower agricultural production which in turn will increase the likelihood of famines;
A rise in sea levels will cause floods threatening infrastructure on coastlines.
The threat posed by forest fires will increase dramatically.

The spread of serious infectious diseases and parasites, particularly those carried or caused by low quality water supplies, will also increase.
While our environment is at the mercy of the capitalist market carbon emissions will continue unabated.

Culprits
The culprits are the fossil fuel industry and the biggest criminals of them all are the oil companies.
Scientists have warned that carbon emissions must be cut by at least 80 percent by 2050 if we are to begin to address

the damage done to the earth.
But western governments have even refused to implement the more modest targets agreed by the international Kyoto summit in 1997.
The US, under pressure from big business, has pulled out of even that.
The US is responsible for one quarter of all carbon emissions even though it only has 4 percent of the world’s population.
George W Bush has said, “I’m not going to let the United States carry the burden for cleaning up the world’s air, like the Kyoto treaty would have done.”
The US government claims that any reductions in pollution would put it at an economic disadvantage to those countries without such controls.
But greater investment in alternative energy production through wind, wave and solar power would create real alternatives to burning fossil fuel.
Rather than fund such pollution-free alternatives, some governments actually want nuclear energy and large hydroelectric dams to be classified as “alternative” or clean energies!

The drive to war

The importance of oil to the world economy has means war.
The Middle East was carved up at the beginning of the century by the imperial powers at the demand of the oil industry.
Oil interests have cost millions of lives.
Oil profits are behind sanctions on Iraq.
Defending the Oil companies meant three gulf wars.
Oil interests were partially behind war in the Balkans and Chechnya.
US intervention in the politics of Middle East aims to shore up oil interests.
The US has poured huge resources into Israel as its ‘watchdog’ in the Middle East and has treated regimes which did not share its interests as pariahs — witness its treatment of Iran and Iraq for most of the past 20 years.
The presence of the oil giants ensures that the Middle East will remain a cockpit of war as long as the West wants to control the region.

Logo

As for the oil companies, BP has adopted a new “green” image, yet it spent more on the new logo last year than it did on renewable energy in 1998.
The US-based Global Climate Coalition, which is funded by the big oil companies, has spent \$1 million every year since 1994 downplaying the threat of global warming.
Unless forced, big business will continue to demand the right to make money unfettered by controls regardless of the consequences.
It is up to us to build a movement strong enough to challenge those priorities.

THE PROFITS

★ TEXACO made profits of \$1.19 billion in six months last year. Peter Bijur, Texaco chief executive, grabbed \$4.2 million in pay and exercised \$2.9 million share options last year. Texaco have a deal with the Revenue which means they can write off petrol sales against exploration costs off the Irish coast.

★ EXXON MOBIL profits were \$7.03 billion for first six months of this year, over double the same period a year earlier.

★ BP profits in 1999 were \$6.206 billion, and it is now the world’s biggest petrol seller after a series of mergers. BP has made over \$4 billion profit every year for the last five years.

★ SHELL made \$6.27 billion profit in the first half of last year.

★ TOTALFINAELF made \$3 billion profit in 1999, up 93 percent on the year before.

Lee Raymond, the company’s chief executive, pocketed a huge \$24.7 million last year.

in my view

O'Malley, Stalin and Twink

I ALMOST felt sorry for Charlie Haughey, almost. The recent documentary series on Progressive Democrat founder Des O'Malley was that bad.

O'Malley the sainted statesman of Irish politics tried to save Ireland from the troubles, corruption, Haughey and then walked on water. It was of course toss and nonsense.

On the arms trial, O'Malley doctored a document in a criminal case. The fact that he was Minister of Justice when he passed a request from Haughey as to whether a witness in the Arms Trial, Peter Berry, then secretary in the Department of Justice, could be "induced" or "directed" or "intimidated" into not giving evidence or changing his evidence says much about the man.

On tackling corruption, the beef scandal was exposed by journalists not O'Malley. One of the journalists, Susan O'Keefe, nearly went to jail. And what did Larry Goodman think of O'Malley?

"We all know the current state of the nation. The challenge is great but so is the potential.

"I have every confidence in your ability to recognise what needs to be done and to get on with it.

"I enclose my personal cheque, which I hope will be of some assistance..." So beef baron Larry Goodman wrote to Des O'Malley the scourge of the Irish Beef industry.

And where exactly the Progressive Democrats got its money from when it was founded has yet to be explained—and it is still getting lots of cash from big business today.

By the way O'Malley spent the 1970s opposing any liberalisation of the laws on contraception and divorce. The PDs were formed because they wanted to replace Fianna Fail's Thatcherism-by-stealth with a more direct variety.

Politics

But enough, it is one of strange features of Irish politics that nobody likes the Progressive Democrats.

Labour use the PD's to argue for coalition for Fianna Fail, saying if they don't go in with FF then the PDs will. Even Fianna Fail occasionally hint that they wouldn't be privatising everything that they can't cut the funding of if only it wasn't for the nasty PDs. Even the Catholic Church seems a bit miffed with Liz O'Donnell at the minute.

But there is one group who like Ireland's Thatcherites. Not the Small Business Association, who are more like the party's military wing. But rather a strange group of ex-Workers Party supporters.

The television program was made by a man called Gregg who is, to use an appropriate term, an apparatchik of media guru Eoghan Harris. The program was made by Harris's production company.

That's why the arms trial was so important in the series. Because their political past is from a split in the IRA they believed the biggest threat to socialism came from the republicans. The arms crisis provides the proof that the Provos were just a Fianna Fail front, determined to break the left.

Now there is a certain amount of truth it this. Fianna Fail's grubby hands were involved in the split in republican ranks at the start of the troubles. Jack Lynch probably sent troops to the border thinking to himself "That'll make sure that civil rights nonsense doesn't start down here."

While some in Fianna Fail started to believe there own rhetoric most were trying to keep control of what was happening in the North and that meant a nationalist rather than left opposition to the Northern state was preferable.

Now this could have lead to activists deciding that what was needed was revolutionary socialism rather than republicanism.

However, most of what became the Workers Party came up with a sort of Stalinism-lite, which bizarrely argued that anybody was better than the republicans including Twink to sing at the Fine Gael Ard Fheis.

They came to prominence during the broadcasting ban on Sinn Fein in the 1980s. These guys ran the only the only NUJ branch in these islands not to oppose the ban on Sinn Fein.

The branch in question was RTE—the people who enforced what was pointless and repressive censorship.

Perhaps Harris' most radical achievement was convincing Twink to sing at the Fine Gael Ard Fheis.

He now writes the bits of Irish coverage in the *Sunday Times* not produced by British Intelligence and is an advisor to that left critic of republicanism David Trimble. From Stalinism via Fine Gael to Unionism. To be honest he and O'Malley deserve each other.

by SIMON BASKETTER

film

Real life inspiration

by PETER
MORGAN

KEN LOACH'S marvellous new film, *Bread and Roses*, is based upon the Justice for Janitors campaign in the US which is attempting to organise low paid immigrant workers.

The film starts with a number of Mexican immigrants being smuggled across the border with two "coyotes" as guides.

Lucrative

They are part of the lucrative trade in human traffic, and money is exchanged as the immigrants are introduced to their new "owner".

The immigrants form part of the cheap labour in the city of LA, and in exchange for money they are guaranteed cleaning work.

Maya (superbly played by Pilar Padilla) is one of the immigrants, and she comes to LA to join her sister Rosa (Elpidia Carrillo).

Through them we are introduced to the world of the "invisible" community—the mainly Latin American immigrants who do the worst jobs and get the worst wages.

They are subjected to long hours, they have poor pay, and they are under a foreman who derives pleasure in humiliating them, well aware there is a constant threat of unemployment or deportation.

Yet all this changes when Maya meets Justice for Janitors organiser Sam (Adrien Brody).

He's a full time union organiser, but is not high up in the bureaucracy and clearly derives his energy from his belief in the campaign and successful attempts to force concessions from the bosses.

Sam visits Maya, and passionately explains why it is necessary to be organised and fight back.

Only then, he says, will the wages be better and the healthcare forthcoming.

True to the style of Loach, the power and conviction of the cause is established by the passion of the acting.

What also makes it so convincing is the fact that this is based on a true, successful method of organising that has made real gains for workers in the US.

So we see how the cleaners invade a corporate wine and cheese

party and declare them the winners of the worst paying boss in town.

Activists also decide to interrupt a bosses' lunch and humiliate them in public.

This is combined with a series of marches and demonstrations that culminate in an occupation of one of the major offices downtown.

In *Bread and Roses* Loach captures the contradictions that are present in any dispute: that between the union organiser who identifies with the low paid workers and the full time union officials; the possibility that some of the cleaners are bought off by the foreman with the promise of promotion and better wages; the pressures of the family and the fear of insecurity if the strike goes down; and the power that workers feel when they take action.

Militancy

Today there is clearly a new mood of militancy present among US workers.

It is a tribute to his skills as a director, and the power and conviction of the actors, that the film is able to capture this.

Hopefully this film will give confidence to those who often have to fight in the most difficult of circumstances that when you organise you can win.



Fighting back

Theatre

The red badge of courage

MOTHER COURAGE and her Children by Bertolt Brecht is coming to the Dublin stage soon.

It was written more than 60 years ago but is more jolting and provocative than most of the drama being performed today. Brecht set out to make his audience uncomfortable, to unsettle them.

If you saw the recent production of *Man is Man* at the Abbey then you will understand how his plays can exhilarate by their exuberance and wit while having the power to shock by their profound and unrelenting cynicism about society.

Mother Courage is set in the 17th century, during the Thirty Years War, in Sweden.

The play was written at the start of the World War II in 1939 when Brecht himself was escaping the Nazis, fleeing first to Switzerland in 1933,

moving to Denmark and then Stockholm in 1939.

Mother Courage follows the army with her wagon, selling to the soldiers.

She has no time for heroism or morality, seeking only to make money and yet, in the course of the play, all her three children die.

She has survived but has lost everything in the meantime.

Brecht likened the character of Mother Courage to a rabbit in a scientific experiment.

She, like the rabbit, does not learn from her misfortune, but the spectators should.

Overthrown

One could conclude that the only choice is to compromise or die. Or more positively, one decide that the whole system is rotten and should be overthrown.

Brecht was born in Bavaria in 1898, the son of a Catholic father and a Protestant mother (notice the role of the chaplain

in the play.)

He suffered from poor health as a child and had a heart attack at the age of twelve.

After Sweden he went to Los Angeles, was called to appear before the Committee for Un-American Activities and left for Switzerland the next day.

He died in 1956 in East Berlin of another heart attack, while working on a response to Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.

His plays are filled with a black view of humanity under capitalism but do not be put off.

The funniest comedians are depressives and Brecht makes full use of humour to put his message across.

Oh and by the way, the star of the piece is Tyne Daly, aka Mary Beth Lacey from the 1980s TV series, Cagney and Lacey, who won the award for Best Actress four times for her role.

—NUALA YORK



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.

news & reports/politics/industry/the unions (01) 8722682 /fax (01) 872 3838 e-mail swp@clubi.ie

PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS

Toll Bridge Strike

'We want £8 per hour'

"THIS STRIKE is about wages, hours and conditions. We earn £5.87 an hour working on the toll roads. We deserve £8 an hour.

"The company has brought in strike breakers, including directors' sons from Blackrock College, the posh private school.

"The scabs were getting £8 an hour and it is going up to £10". This is how one striker from the National Toll Roads explained their case to *Socialist Worker*.

"We work a 41 hour week on twelve hour shifts.

"The reports from the airline industry about deep vein thrombosis is worrying because we also have to sit for hours in a confined space.

"We are breathing in so many fumes that you often go home feeling dirty and grimy.

"The company has not been doing regular safety checks.

"They should measure all the stuff we are breathing in during the concentrated rush hour traffic.

"At the very least they should also concede our claim for a 37 and a half hour week and also increase the pay".

The strike has been made official by SIPTU but action will need to be stepped up to counter the company's tactic of using strikebreakers.

Traffic

At the moment traffic is flowing freely across the East Link Bridge.

If there were a convoy of trade union supporters who refused to be serviced by strikebreakers it could bring the bridges to a standstill.

These tactics will be necessary to defeat a company that symbolises the greed for profit that is at the heart of the Celtic Tiger.

Service charges

Anger at Cork jailing

CORK activists reacted angrily to the jailing in May of Joe Moore.

Joe served three days in prison for refusing to pay a fine in connection with the protest campaign against bin charges.

Joe is chair of the Trades Council and a well known campaigner in the city.

Protests

Protestors demonstrated outside the City Hall in Cork each evening.

At one point they were joined by a delegation of 20 dockers from Cork Harbour.

Waterford Trades Council came out in clear support of the protests and issued a statement condemning the jailing.

About 40 supporters met Joe on his release on the Saturday morning.

As *Socialist Worker* went to press two more anti bin-tax activists were set to be jailed and

transported to Limerick Women's Prison.

A number of their activists face jailing at the end of 28 days.

The Cork Trades Council would be in a good position to take the lead in taking the campaign against bin charges and the fight against these jailings to the unions and workplaces of the city and beyond.

This would stop this intimidation in its tracks.

Malahide Estuary

NOT CONTENT with spoiling one end of Malahide Estuary, there is now a proposal to fill in part of the Estuary at Bissett's Strand to be used as a car park. Undoubtedly, there is a parking problem in Malahide.

Bissett's Strand currently floods at high tides. Filling in part of the Estuary would accentuate the flooding problems.

This would lead to drains being backed up and could

lead to house flooding problems.

Because of its natural beauty, Malahide Estuary already attracts many visitors all year round but particularly in the summer months.

Problem

Residents have constantly been complaining of the speed of motorists on this road. Again, this problem would be aggravated by the current proposal.

Green County Councillor Heidi Bedell has suggested that what is really needed is a low-cost (I would suggest free)



Of

Crooked strike breakers

NATIONAL Toll Roads is owned by the Roche family, Standard Life and the Bank of Ireland.

The main shareholder is the Roche family who netted £2.5 million in profit in 1998—and that was before the money started to really pour in.

Tom Roche Senior was a founder of Cement Roadstone before he branched off to found National Toll Roads.

But he built the company up with the same corrupt practices that were pioneered in CRH, which used to be chaired by Des Traynor.

Just before he died Roche made a £15,000 donation to the notorious Dublin City manager George Redmond.

An acquaintance of Redmond, one Jim Kennedy, had his house taken over to make way for the East Link toll bridge.

Donations

National Toll Roads also made £74,000 in donations to Liam Lawlor during the 1990s.

One sign of National Toll Roads political influence was its failure to pay VAT on toll charges. In 1977 the EU ruled that VAT was applica-

ble on tolls but no tax was charged until the EU ruled against National Toll Roads in 2000.

The company then passed on a 20 percent hike in prices to commuters but the bill for the back taxes was picked up by the Irish government.

National Toll Roads have a 25-year lease on the East Link Bridge that allows them to collect nearly 60 percent of the charge.

They have literally been given a licence to print money by the state. Yet the sharks who glory on Celtic Tiger style greed want to keep their own workers on poverty wages.

Incinerators

PROTESTORS are stepping up their opposition to a planned incinerator in Ringaskiddy outside Cork City.

A number of protest meetings have been held in Carrigaline, Ringaskiddy and Cobh on the issue.

Recently Indervar, the company behind

the incinerator, has organised "consultation meetings" in the area to try to sell the plan. These have been picketed by anti incinerator campaigners.

As *Socialist Worker* went to press the company's planned four days of PR meetings in Crosshaven were facing concerted protests.

the winter in the Malahide Estuary, which is an important feeding area for these long-distance travellers.

"Wetland habitats such as the Malahide Estuary are coming under increasing pressure from development with the result that many species of wintering wildfowl and waders have nowhere left to go.

"The proposal to locate a car park alongside the estuary is ill conceived and will result in the loss of yet another important habitat for wildlife."

MARY RYAN

news & reports/politics/industry/the unions (01) 8722682 /fax (01) 872 3838 e-mail swp@clubi.ie / www.clubi.ie/swp

PHONE REPORTS ABOUT STRIKES/LOCAL CAMPAIGNS/PROTESTS

IARNROD EIREANN

Strike forces talks

IN EARLY May Iarnrod Eireann train drivers in the ILDA branch of the ATGWU began a series of one day strikes.

The dispute centred on the refusal of Iarnrod Eireann to permit train drivers to be represented by ILDA reps at disciplinary hearings and more generally over the right of drivers to be represented by the ILDA branch of the ATGWU.

The strike received huge support from drivers in the other two unions despite attempts by union leaders and management to demonise the ILDA drivers.

As one driver train driver told *Socialist Worker*, "All drivers, regardless of union showed they want this question resolved and supported our pickets."

"Drivers in all unions want to work together to get decent conditions."

"In supporting the ILDA pickets they sent a powerful message to the leaders of SIPTU and NBRU to co-operate with ILDA."

Proposals

After three days of action the ATGWU was approached by the National Implementation Body and the Labour Court with settlement proposals.

The drivers voted to suspend the strike as talks in the Labour Court got underway to investigate discrimination against ATGWU-ILDA drivers in disciplinary procedures.

At the same time SIPTU agreed to begin talks with the ATGWU to discuss the representation rights for ILDA-ATGWU drivers.

Agreement here would mean the company would be virtually bound to recognise

the ILDA branch of ATGWU. Disgracefully the leadership of SIPTU complained to ICTU that train drivers come under their "sphere of influence" and the drivers in the ILDA branch of ATGWU should be "handed back" to them.

One driver told *Socialist Worker*, "We are not going

to be 'handed back' like a parcel or handed anywhere without our consent."

"And SIPTU now knows from the degree of support its drivers gave our actions that they will have accept the right of drivers in ATGWU to be represented by the union of their choice."

Currently the strike action is only suspended and drivers in the ILDA branch of ATGWU are poised to take action again if their union is not included in negotiations over the introduction of new rosters in June.

IMPACT

Pay and health dominate annual conference

SIX HUNDRED delegates attended IMPACT's annual conference in Ennis recently.

IMPACT is the country's second largest union and represents public sector workers.

One of the major issues concerning many of the delegates was pay.

While the Central Executive Committee's focus was on the benchmarking process which IMPACT has just made a submission to.

Increases

It was clear from many of the speakers that real pay increases were urgently needed if workers are to be recruited and retained in the public service.

Low pay is a major issue within IMPACT, with clerical officers at the bottom of the scale starting on as little as £12,500 p.a.

by an IMPACT DELEGATE

Despite opposition from the union leadership the Conference passed a motion committing IMPACT to a ballot for industrial action in pursuit of a Dublin area living allowance.

The General Secretary Peter McLoone had argued that delegates should only vote in favour of the motion if they were confident that their members would be willing to take action of the issue.

The response made it clear that this was the feeling from many of the Dublin branches where low paid workers are faced with journeys every day from Meath, Kildare, Carlow and Louth because they can no longer afford to live in Dublin.

There were several motions which referred to tax avoid-

ance, including one which called on the government to "pursue with vigour all cases of undisclosed income lodged in bogus non-residence accounts".

Other motions expressed opposition to proposals to change state pension schemes contained in the report of the Commission on Public Service Pensions —among the measures proposed are an increase in retirement age from 60 to 65 and an increase in contributions.

Concern was expressed at the growth in racism in Ireland and a motion was unanimously passed committing the union to fighting against deportations.

At the Civil Service Divisional conference considerable opposition was expressed to social partnership during a discussion following a special address by Kieran Allen.

CPSU

Action for pay on the way

THE CIVIL and public service union conference in Galway promised industrial action in the autumn unless its members receive decent pay increases through benchmarking.

The union wants a 30 percent increase above the national pay deal. This would give clerical officers in the civil service a new pay scale of £16,000 to £27,000. Clerical officers have only received a tenth of the pay increases given to top civil servants since partnership deals began.

A CO is only £8,500 better off than previously, while the secretary general of a government department is £82,000 better off.

CPSU General Secretary, Blair Horan gave his most militant speech to date to the conference.

He pointed out that in the early 70's two clerical officers could buy a house together but today they would be about £100,000 short on capital.

"Either this unfair pay structure is fundamentally changed and low paid civil and public servants are brought back inside the tent of economic prosperity or we will have an industrial relations driven pay explosion with the inevitable disruption of public services."

★ Some 60 bus workers joined a protest outside Mary O'Rourke's office recently to voice their anger at her plans for privatisation.

The protest was organised by SIPTU shop stewards who were joined by their NRBUC colleagues.

The Busworkers Action Group played a prominent role in building support for the protest.

Recently, the NRBUC has issued excellent leaflet warning against the dangers of privatisation but many workers are now asking why they don't call official action on the issue. The protest was the first demonstration of workers against privatisation and shows there will be major resistance to O'Rourke's plans.

Executive member Cathal O Tairne referred to the 87 percent vote by CPSU members to reject the additional 2 percent awarded under the programme for Partnership and Prosperity

"We have an 87 percent mandate for strike action. Let's go back to our branches, let's mobilise and let's use it"

Meanwhile more action is likely from CPSU members in the Department of Agriculture whose work is being handed over to agencies like Teagasc.

★ Blair Horan warned of pay claims for CPSU members in Eircom, which is about to be sold off to new owners. Since Eircom is now in the private sector Horan said the union will seek the same flexibility on pay that exists in other private companies where increases have been won over and above the terms of partnership.

A motion from Eircom No. 4 branch was passed committing the Executive to ballot members before any change in conditions is agreed.

Changes have taken place in Eircom by agreement between partnership committees and management without members having a say.

SWP branch meetings — all welcome

□ **ATHLONE:** Contact 01-872 2682 for details

□ **BRAY:** Meets every Wednesday at the Mayfair Hotel at 8.30pm

□ **BELFAST CENTRAL:** Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Kitchen Bar, 16 Victoria Square, near Cornmarket

□ **BELFAST SOUTH:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Queens Students Union

□ **BELFAST WEST** ring for details

□ **BELFAST QUEENS UNIVERSITY** Wednesdays 1pm, Peter Froggatt Centre

□ **CORK:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in O'Donoghue's, Drawbridge St

□ **DERRY:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.15pm in Badgers Bar upstairs, Orchard St.

□ **DROGHEDA:** Meets Wednesdays 8.30pm in McHugh's Pub St, Lawrences Gate

□ **DUNDALK Meets** Wednesdays 8pm phone 01-8722682 for details

□ **DUN LAOGHAIRE:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in the Christian Institute

□ **DUBLIN ARTANE / COOLOCK:** Meets every Tuesday at 8.30pm in Artane / Beaumont Recreational Centre (opp. Artane Castle)

□ **DUBLIN NORTH CENTRAL:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Conways Pub, Parnell St

□ **DUBLIN KILLBARRACK:** Phone 01-8722682

□ **DUBLIN CABRA:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm in Aghrim St Parish Hall, 13 Prussia St

□ **DUBLIN BALLYMUN:** Meets every Wednesday at 6.30pm in Balcurris Road

Phone Kevin on for details

□ **DUBLIN DUNDRUM:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm in Dundrum Family Recreation Centre

□ **DUBLIN RIALTO:** Meets every Wednesday at 8.30pm St. Andrews Community Centre, SCR

□ **DUBLIN RATHMINES:** Meets every Thursday at 8.30pm downstairs J O'Connell's (Pub) Sth. Richmond Street Dublin 2.

□ **DUBLIN SOUTH CENTRAL:** Meets at 8.30pm every Tuesday upstairs Bowes (pub) Fleet Street Dublin 2

□ **DUBLIN TALLAGHT:** Meets every Tuesday at 8pm in Jobstown Community Centre

□ **ENNISKILLEN:** Phone 01 - 872 2682 for details

□ **GALWAY:** Meets every Wednesday in Currans Hotel, Eyre Square (beside Cuba) 8.30pm

□ **LIMERICK:** Phone 01 - 872 2682 for details

□ **MAYNOOTH** meets Thursday lunchtime ring (01)8722682 for details

□ **SLIGO** Phone

□ **SWORDS** Meets Tuesdays 8pm Senior Citizens Hall

□ **TRALEE:**

□ **TRINITY COLLEGE:** Meets Thursdays 7pm see posters for details

□ **UCD** meets Wednesdays 1pm see posters for details

□ **WATERFORD:** Meets every Thursday at 8pm in the ATGWU Hall, Keizer St.

Partnership

Pressure grows on Union leaders

"We are living in a strike ridden society' This is how the director general of the bosses' organisation, IBEC, has described the Celtic Tiger.

Turlough O'Sullivan was issuing a warning to the union leaders to hold the line or face the consequence that social partnership might break down.

Last December, the employers were persuaded to pay up an extra 2 per cent on wages to cover for inflation. In return the union leaders promised that industrial action would virtually cease.

But growing pressure from the rank and file has made this impossible.

O'Sullivan also argued

that "the trade unions are lodging pay claims that show a scant disregard for social partnership".

Meanwhile, SIPTU leader Jack O'Connor has described social partnership as a system whereby rewards are being distributed upwards.

But all of this only begs the question: why have SIPTU and the other union leaders colluded in a process which stopped workers getting their rightful share of the Celtic Tiger?

The growing conflicts show that social partnership is coming under severe pressure.

All the more reason why workers should step up their wage claims!

Globalise Resistance

Get on board for Genoa

20 - 22 July



Why I'm going to Genoa

John from Belfast Green Action told *Socialist Worker*, "I am convinced we need to organise big protests in Genoa in July and I am going. I've seen how patiently lobbying for change doesn't work. Governments would rather remain friendly to the big corporations than make any real attempt to meet the concerns of their citizens. I think this is about direct action and mobilising lots of people."

Sean a Belfast activist in Outrage, the gay rights group, agreed. "I think it's time people stopped putting up with being oppressed. I'm going to Genoa and I know there is a lot of interests among others involved in the gay community."

GLOBALISE Resistance in Ireland is organising a number of ways to get to Genoa.

Book your seat now.

Enquiries to Globalise resistance 086 4098186 or globalise_resistance@yahoo.com or write to Globalise Resistance 31 Whitworth Rd, Dublin 9.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

50p

inside

**WORKERS CAN
BREAK BERLUSCONI
AGAIN** —PAGES 5

**Time for a SEA
change** — PAGE 4

**A cruel rush for profit—
HOW BIG OIL IS KILLING
OUR WORLD** — page 8

Solidarity price £1

THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE VOTE Socialist Environmental Alliance

IN THE elections on June 7th there is an alternative. The new Socialist Environmental Alliance is standing candidates in local elections in Belfast and Derry.

They are offering a radical alternative to communal politics and the big business agenda of the four main political parties.

John Price is a teacher from West Belfast, who is campaigning for the SEA in Belfast.

"We've only formed recently, but there is great enthusiasm for this," says John.

"Northern Ireland is a divisive society, shackled by sectarianism.

"There are loads of people who want an alternative to that.

"We had 22 people out campaigning for the SEA last Saturday and so many people took our leaflets and agreed with the common sense issues that we are raising.

"We are arguing for a £7.40 an hour minimum wage. Some people asked if that is realistic, but at the same time they are disgusted at the

low level of minimum wage now.

"They know their families can't afford to buy a house and they are worried that their children won't be able to go to university because of fees."

The SEA is a coalition of socialists, environmentalists, trade unionists and other campaigners.

The candidates standing are Barbara Muldoon in Laganside in Belfast, and in Derry, Shauna Deery, a community worker and former textile worker in Cityside ward, Bill Webster, chair of the Derry Trades Council in Waterside and Colm Bryce, a local socialist, in Northlands Ward.

Education

"Many people know that Barbara Muldoon has been an active campaigner against student fees and for an end to selection in education and are willing to vote for her," says John.

Goretti Horgan who is campaigning in Derry, says "I think we've all been a bit surprised at the response we are getting.

"In every area we've gone canvassing and leafleting, we've met people

who are really enthusiastic about voting for us.

"There are a lot of people who haven't voted for ages who agree with what we are saying.

"There are others who are disillusioned with the main parties and are glad that we are taking a stand against Raytheon, the US arms company which set up in Derry last year."

The SEA has also brought together a wide range of people who have been active campaigners on other issues.

"The unity of the campaign is great," says John Price.

"We have people who are green activists, against global capitalism and for woman's right to choose. All of

these issues are linked. And this is about grassroots politics.

"It's miles away from what the Orange and Green parties are doing."

Goretti added that the hope is that a stronger left will come out of the election campaign.

"This is about what happens after the elections too. We want to be campaigning on these issues. We want to take a stand on principles.

"While the other parties are lining up shake hands with Bill Clinton, we'll be outside protesting about Clinton's bombing of Iraq.

"This campaign is about building a stronger force on the left in Northern Ireland."

Get involved with the SEA:

SEA in Belfast meets at 8pm every Wednesday night in the Peter Froggatt Centre at Queens University. Phone 07900 331607

SEA in Derry meets at 8pm every Wednesday at its office at 4 Strand Road. Phone 02871 283131 or 07771 781958