

# Militant

SOLIDARITY PRICE £1

THE SOCIALIST PAPER

40p

ISSUE 242

*Labour Finance Minister Quinn, refused to meet with lobby groups in the run up to this year's budget. Was this a minister practising "new ethics", refusing to bend to pressure? No, Quinn was refusing to do for nothing something that the Labour Party could charge £100 a head for.*

# POLITICIANS FOR SALE



Eithne Fitzgerald, Junior Labour Minister, who introduced Labour's much vaunted ethics bill while in government! She organised a £100 a head lunch to help raise Labour Party funds for tax consultants and accountants to meet Finance Minister Ruairi Quinn.



Joan Burton, Junior Labour Minister, organised a £100 a head lunch for business people to meet Ruairi Quinn, Finance Minister in the Burlington hotel on 26th January in aid of Labour Party funds.



Michael Noonan, Fine Gael Minister for Health, sent out invitations on Government headed note paper to a £100 a head dinner in aid of Fine Gael. Doctors were particularly targeted.

*"A REAL opportunity to meet the minister in a semi-formal environment", is how Eithne Fitzgerald described her offer to tax consultants and accountants. She goes on to point out the minister "is currently finalising the Finance Bill for 1996".*

It couldn't be put more clearly! This is an invitation to buy influence, to bend the minister's ear in favour of wealthy tax dodgers. Noonan's invitation to doctors is an invitation to bend his ear to ensure that the health service continues to serve the interests of private health

care professionals, rather than the interests of health care workers and patients.

So much for democracy. If ever proof were needed that people like Larry Goodman, big business and the wealthy in general, can buy and sell governments then this is it. So much for Labour's

"ethics in government". Dick Spring's Labour Party now has as much relationship to the party founded by James Connolly and Jim Larkin as would most PAYE workers to £100 a head lunches in Dublin's top hotels.

*Interview with Militant Labour Councillor Joe Higgins - see centre pages.*

*The North - No Going Back - Page 3*

*Suffer the Little Children, abuse and intolerance in Catholic Ireland - Page 2*

*Anti Water Charges Campaign - Page 5*

**DUBLIN WEST  
BY-ELECTION**

**VOTE NO.1**

**JOE HIGGINS  
PUT HIM IN TO PUT THEM OUT**

# SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN

"IT LOOKED like her ~~inn~~ legs had been burned to the bone. You could have put your fingers into the holes." - This is the description by a father of his 11 month old daughter's dead body after four days in the Goldenbridge orphanage in 1955.

The revelations of life inside the misnamed Little Sisters of Mercy orphanages in the 1950s evoked horror amongst people everywhere. Christine Buckley whose own story drew attention to the issue, receives 20 letters and dozens of phone calls every day from other "in-

**By Clare Daly**  
Swords Militant Labour

to people, alcohol abuse and their own children being taken into care because they couldn't cope.

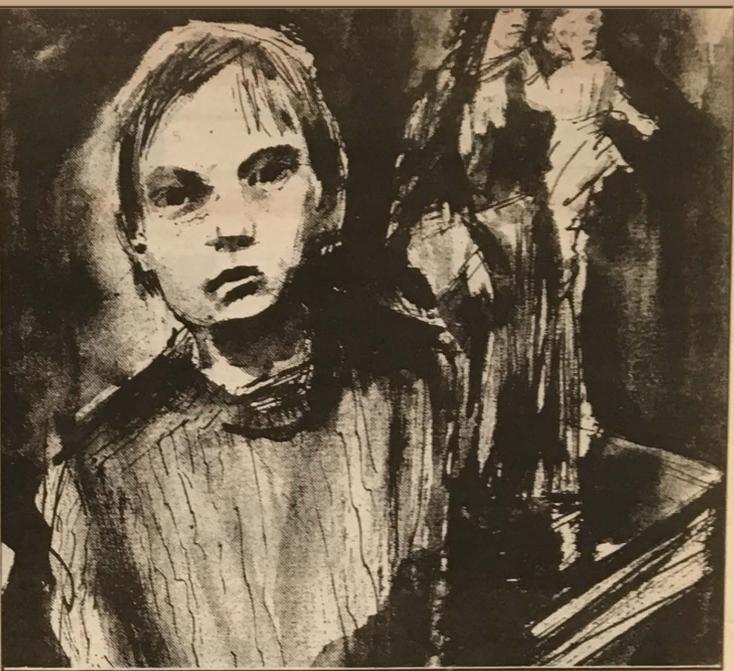
Full support must be given to these people with proper

society's attitudes to children who did not have a conventional upbringing, or a secure family life. The fundamentalist bigots who today campaign against divorce and rant about the importance of the family, hark back to the "good old days" without the "corrupting influence" of television and women's rights. The good old days never existed. The same problems were there, they were just kept locked away in institutions, out of the public view.

The state has to share the blame and learn the lessons. It was willing to leave these children hidden away in the care of religious orders without any check or accountability. Most of the children were not there because they were orphans but because of the difficult economic circumstances of their families, or prejudice against single mothers. Rather than assisting these families it was cheaper to hand over their children to the religious orders. It suited the Catholic Church as they had more control, and were deemed to be above the law.

Now, over 40 years later while the monolithic orphanages are gone, the needs of many children are still neglected. 3,000 young people are in care, 750 of those in smaller more humane residential units, the rest in foster homes.

But the statistics ignore the increasing numbers of young homeless, victims of family breakdown, unemployment and poverty. Many of them came from care units or foster homes. These young people are hidden away from society's view - 1990s style - on the streets - often abused, emotionally disturbed, turning to crime and drugs.



There have been three major enquiries into the system's failure to protect children in recent times, but no action has been taken. The only way to tackle these problems is for massive investment into identifying problems in the home, and providing the necessary proper back up services. For example the IMPACT union, have taken industrial action against cutbacks and for the provision of two full time emergency units, with trained staff for young people who are on the streets.

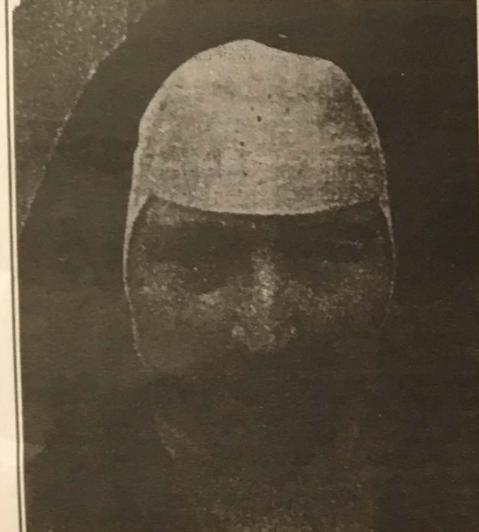
If the state is serious about its concern for what went on in Goldenbridge, then these resources must be put in now!

"I HEREBY relinquish full claim forever to my child and surrender the said child to sister 'X'....I further undertake never to attempt to see, interfere with, or make any claim to the said child at any future time."

This was the form used to separate 1,800 Irish babies from their "unmarried mothers" and send them for adoption in the United States between 1949 and 1973. The forms were accompanied by a letter of recommendation from their priest (most were Catholic), and a recommendation from the Catholic US charity in charge of vetting the prospective parents.

It also seems to be the case that the children's names were changed and their birth certificates falsified. The files discovered in the National Archives may only be the tip of the iceberg. The Health Boards may also have extensive files of the same character, and the files of Industrial Schools, where 70,000 children were sent between 1900 and 1970, probably contain many more cases of the exportation of the Irish Catholic State's "unwanted" children.

How many more horror stories are there, yet to emerge from the viciously cruel, savagely intolerant state which the bishops, with the collusion of the politicians, imposed on Irish society in the past?



Sister Xavier of The Sisters of Little Mercy

mates" each with their own tragic story - the beatings, sexual abuse, dogs being set loose on small children, developing sexuality punished as evil, an unending saga of wanton cruelty.

The courage of the victims in coming forward is to be commended and admired. Many have carried their scars all their lives, physical and emotional. Many reported psychiatric problems, difficulty in relating

counselling and compensation. A serious investigation must be conducted and those responsible made to account for their crimes. But the real issue that needs to be tackled is, how was this allowed to go unchallenged for so long? Is it really a legacy of narrow minded inward looking Ireland of the past, or are there similar features existing today?

Goldenbridge and its fellow institutions were the result of

## COMMUNITY ACTION, THE KEY TO FIGHTING DRUGS CRISIS

DUBLIN'S DECADE old drugs epidemic has reached crisis proportions. Last Summer in six weeks twelve young people living in the north inner city died as a result of drug abuse. In response the Inner City Organisations Network (ICON) organised a march on the Day.

**By Jacqueline Clarke**  
Steering Committee Pers. Cap.

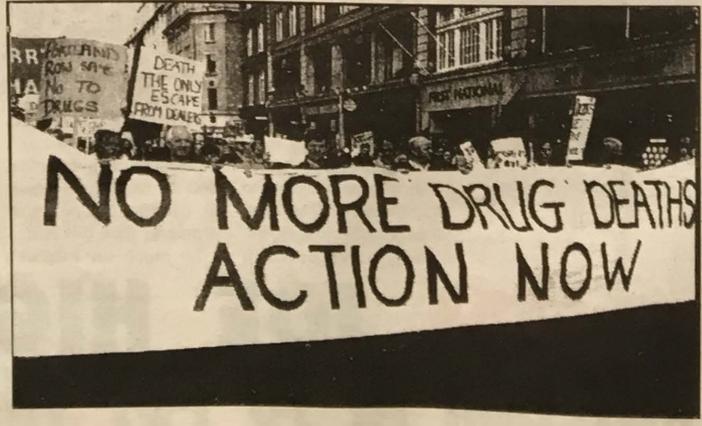
Placards carried on the march read: "Death the only escape from dealers", "Noonan if it were your children you'd act quicker", "Stamp out the dealers not our kids".

Following the march so many groups contacted ICON that they called a meeting, out of which came the Dublin City-Wide Campaign on Drug Abuse. It involves representatives from many of the communities most affected, the trade union and voluntary sectors, and workers from drug abuse projects.

The Campaign decided to hold a Forum, "Fighting Back Together", at which communities and unions could unite around vital policy and action issues. Three working groups, Health, Education and Justice were charged with discussing the situation and outlining broad demands for discussion at the Forum.

It is generally agreed that: The drugs crisis cannot be resolved without the participation of the communities most affected. The criminal neglect of the crisis and the piece-meal approach of successive Governments in

the past must be replaced by a comprehensive and integrated policy and action and services in all areas at both national and local levels. The Government must take responsibility for ensuring co-operation among departments and agencies.



A Health Research Board Report showed that of those receiving treatment for drug abuse in Dublin in 1994, 80% were unemployed, 60% left school without minimum education, 27% lived in the north or south inner city and 92% were between 15 and 39 years of age.

- HEALTH
  - Integrated services for drug users in locally based, properly funded and run treatment facilities. These to be set up in consultation with communities; facilities to be attached to hospitals.
  - Crisis/assessment centres with 24-hour access.
  - Residential centres for drug

- users and after care facilities for former users.
- Support for families of users
- EDUCATION
  - The lack of a drugs education programme is a scandal. There must be one for students at all levels. And also for parents, communities and in the workplace.
  - All programmes must be relevant to the local communities.
  - JUSTICE
    - Because the conditions for the drugs crisis are poverty and unemployment neither the drugs crisis nor its effects can be resolved by "law and order" methods alone - contrary to what recent Government proposals suggest.
    - The imprisonment of the biggest dealers must be a priority for the courts, the Gardaí and the revenue Commissioners. Court procedures must be speeded up.
    - Treatment must be available in prisons.
    - The estate management of the Dublin Councils and Corporation must take responsibility for getting dealers out of communities.

## IS IT A BIRD, IS IT A PLANE, NO ITS OUR HIGH FLYING TANAISTE

SOMEONE SHOULD do the taxpayers a favour and make Dick Spring a present of an Irish Rail timetable with the Dublin-Tralee-Dublin service highlighted in bold red. The flying Tanaiste used the Air Corps fleet 36 times for internal ministerial flights last year. On 12 of these journeys he was the only passenger flying to and from his Kerry constituency.

It costs £1,200 an hour to keep Dick in the air. So far this year Spring has clocked up £47,300 worth of trips. One trip to Washington cost £16,500, another to Tel Aviv cost £12,500. In all keeping the government airborne has cost £100,000 in the first two months of this year, this doesn't include fares on regular commercial air services.

**MASSIVE DEMONSTRATIONS** have swept Northern Ireland since 9th February. Possibly upwards of one million people in Ireland took some form of action to demonstrate their opposition to any return to violence. It was this mighty movement that forced the government and the sectarian politicians to restart the peace process. It has also stayed the hand of the paramilitaries.

# NO GOING BACK

A turning point has been reached. People have sensed their decisive power and influence over events. The politicians will not be entrusted with handling the peace process again. The notion of maintaining pressure on them is wide-

spread as is the idea that we need other voices which represent the working class at a talks table.

The three weeks of protests following the IRA bomb will find a secure place in the annals of modern Irish history as

one of the largest and crucial mass movements. A glimpse of where real muscle lies - not in the guise of politician, paramilitaries or even governments, but in the hands of the working class and youth when united as one - was clearly revealed.

It was the mass movement of mostly working class people that pushed the government and the local parties to make a move on political progress after 18 months of stalling. But it remains to be seen how far sectarian politicians are capable

- ♦ For an immediate resumption of the ceasefire.
- ♦ No Loyalist retaliation.
- ♦ No barriers to talks between the parties.
- ♦ Include the organisations of working class people in the talks.
- ♦ Build a socialist alternative to fight for peace with justice.

or willing to go.

The two governments - John Major's and John Bruton's - finally set the date for all party talks for 10th June 1996 at a joint press conference. At the same time they announced the beginning of 'proximity talks', involving all the parties, except Sinn Fein, on Monday 4th March. Monday 4th March when it came turned into a pantomime.

Sinn Fein were outside demanding to get in, the DUP and the UUP (unionists), refused to attend, the SDLP, although there, refused to talk to anyone.

Even if there is a new ceasefire, and all the parties, including Sinn Fein are involved in talks, there is no way that these sectarian politicians and the two governments will come up with a lasting solution to the conflict.

The option which seems a possible result of all party negotiations is a new power sharing administration - with power shared between the unionist and nationalist political elite.

These people will leave sectarian division as entrenched as ever. To maintain its position, each party would continue to enthusiastically wave the sectarian card. It would be prone to breakdown and would inevitably collapse at a later stage, most likely into an even more bloody conflict than we've seen in the last 25 years.

The elections in May will be another sectarian headcount - unless working class candidates and a working class list is

put forward. Instead of sectarian bickering, division and conflict we want working class unity and a solution to the national question.

Capitalism offers no solution. Neither a capitalist Northern Ireland, nor a capitalist united Ireland will satisfy the conflicting aspirations of the Protestant and Catholic communities.

We believe that a socialist Ireland and a socialist federation of Britain and Ireland on a free and equal basis is the only way forward to a democratic resolution of the 'border' question.

But to put forward this programme requires the development of a new political movement of the working class. A new socialist party needs to be built - not just to fight elections - but to mobilise Protestant and Catholic workers against health cuts, redundancies, poverty and injustice.

This is why Militant Labour have demanded that trade unions, community organisations, womens' groups and youth groups be included in the talks. One way to achieve this is for trade unions and trades councils to take the initiative and organise with other groups representing working class people to stand in whatever elections take place prior to talks. We believe they would receive a considerable mandate.

The movement of working class people on the streets is the key factor that can save the peace process. Now is the time to go much further.



## RENEW THE CEASEFIRE NOW

**MARTIN MCGUINNESS** has now said that Sinn Fein is prepared to go back to the IRA and ask for a renewal of the ceasefire. Militant Labour has never supported the military campaign of the IRA but there is absolutely no justification now for it to continue.

The breaking of the ceasefire "must go down as the most stupid, blinkered and ill-conceived decision ever made by a revolutionary body anywhere before in history." Not our words but those of IRA prisoner Joe O'Connell, written in a British prison cell and published in An Phoblacht - Republican News.

If the IRA continues its campaign it will be a "war" with

the most limited objectives of any military campaign in history. The date for all party talks has been set. If there is a ceasefire, the two governments have said Sinn Fein can take part in talks without any pre-conditions, although there will be an election before talks.

What is the point in continuing a military campaign to achieve "negotiations for a settlement to the conflict", i.e.

talks? The "armed struggle" was initiated in the 1970s, against a background of a mass revolt of youth in the Catholic areas, with the intention to force a speedy British withdrawal. It failed, the idea of driving the British out has long been abandoned.

If the campaign continues now it can only achieve a deepening of the split that already exists in the Republican movement, and the isolation of Sinn Fein. The only people who will benefit are the sectarian bigots on both sides.

The idea that the campaign can be confined to Britain is a dangerous illusion. Inevitably there would be a loyalist reaction and the danger of an all out sectarian conflict.

No doubt activists in the Republican movement have been deeply disillusioned by the lack of progress over the last 18 months. Gerry Adam's alternative of a broad nationalist alliance has proven as much a cul de sac as the "armed struggle."

One of the most positive features of the ceasefire was the politics which

**SPEAKING AT a rally in the North, Chris Hudson of the "Peace Train" called for the introduction of internment.**

**Internment was introduced in 1971 and led to widespread repression in Catholic areas. It did nothing to bring peace, never mind a just solution to the causes of the conflict.**

**Hudson is an Executive member of the Dublin Trades Council. Like some other trade union leaders, Hudson has been completely one sided in his calls for peace, ignoring the sectarian politicians and the Tory government's role in undermining the peace process. We believe that Hudson should be asked to explain himself in his union the CWU, and on Dublin Trades Council.**

began to develop in Protestant working class areas. If people in organisations like the Progressive Unionist Party had not been faced with a unified bloc of nationalists but with working class republicans concentrating on class questions, these

processes could have gone much further.

A united class movement could have - and still could be re-built. The way forward for Republicans is to abandon nationalist 'solutions', including the impossible objective of a

capitalist united Ireland. This does not mean accepting the status quo, including the present state. Instead Republicans could play their part in common struggle with the Protestant working class for a socialist solution.

## MILITANT LABOUR FIGHTING FOR A VOICE FOR WORKING PEOPLE

**"NO GOING back" has become the official chant of the ordinary people of Northern Ireland. This silent majority, which has endured 25 years of sectarian violence, is now making its voices heard again. Just as they did in response to the atrocities of 1993, people are taking to the streets in their thousands.**

The No Going Back initiative was taken by Militant Labour, Youth Against Sectarianism and the Young Socialists in response to the bomb in Canary Wharf on February 9th.

Since then we have mobilised thousands across Northern Ireland. At our first rally in Belfast on 14th February 400 people turned out to listen to Militant Labour, Youth Against Sectarianism and Belfast Trade Council speakers put forward the demands of the No Going Back campaign.

Since then rallies which mobilised 4,000 in Omagh, 500 in

Cookstown and 400 in Magherafelt have been initiated by our members. Our members also helped mobilise the magnificent turnout of 5,000 which took to the streets of Derry on Tuesday 13th February.

These rallies have shown the willingness of ordinary people to affect the peace process and the potential that exists for unity among the working class.

We believe that pressure must be brought to bear on the trade union movement to draw up contingency plans, should violence return to the streets of Northern Ireland. The rally or-

ganised by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions on Friday 16th February, which attracted 15,000 could have been many times that number if the ICTU had combined the rally with a half day general strike.

Thousands have signed petitions supporting the demands of our campaign and we have raised cash to finance our on-going activity.

The next stage of the campaign is to ensure our message is taken into the working class areas and into workplaces to broaden support for the campaign.



# MILITANT LABOUR'S RALLY AND CONFERENCE

## BY-ELECTION CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

**MILITANT LABOUR'S Annual Conference took place in Wynn's Hotel Dublin on March 1st and 2nd. One hundred people attended the Rally which launched our election campaign for the Dublin West by-election. Kevin McLoughlin reports:**

The atmosphere was electric. Unlike meetings of the so-called left parties and movements, this rally will be remembered because of its humour, dynamism and the optimistic way it dealt with the real issues affecting working class



P.J. Madden, Irish Nurses Organisation

said that the water charges movement had helped him finally 'come out' as the 'militant' he'd always been inside. Many times he found himself listening to so-called politicians, including the President, for up to thirty minutes at a time, only to ask himself afterwards: "What did they actually say?". In contrast he thought Joe Higgins was an honest man, someone who the Councils fear and consider a 'terrorist'. Laurence said he was happy to see so many young people at the rally and looked forward to canvassing in Ballyfermot because: "It's a working class area and we'll be playing at home."

P.J. Madden, General Secretary of the Irish Nurses Organisation, spoke to endorse Joe's campaign. "I would need two hours to put forward all the reasons why I'm glad to be here," P.J. explained that there was now no difference between the established political parties. The extent of the sell-out of the Labour Party was shown by their abandonment of any public service job creation at precisely the time when, con-

sidering the economic situation, such job creation was entirely possible. Instead this Government was putting the boot into workers, particularly the nurses at the moment.

He pointed out that the trade unions were the very willing co-ordinators of a cosy cartel of employers, the political parties and themselves. That there had been a complete change of government, organised by this cartel, without any election, which was a subversion of democratic rights!

P.J. felt from his experiences, that these people viewed Militant Labour as the 'fringe' but in reality it was they who were out of touch. P.J. said Militant Labour was becoming a 'loud voice' and was essential to the dynamic of politics in this country. He was proud to be a friend of Joe Higgins and associated with Militant Labour.

These speeches as well as that of Alan McCoombes were greeted with enthusiasm by the one hundred people in Wynn's Hotel. All felt it was the perfect start for what promises to be an eventful campaign. Watch this space.

## CONFERENCE DISCUSSIONS

**IT WAS incredible that so much political discussion and debate was packed into just one day.**

This Government and the capitalist system it represents were denounced by many speakers. However what was most significant was the many constructive policies and suggestions to alleviate problems like unemployment, poverty and the crisis in health and education. Conference unanimously passed a motion calling for the 'public ownership of the banks, financial institutions and the key areas of the economy to

A WHOPPING £3,500 was raised at the Militant Labour Regional Conference towards our appeal for a new printer. Many thanks to all our members who contributed. This was magnificent, some members gave donations, of £300 and £400. However we are still only half way there, we need to raise £6,000 so if anyone hasn't yet contributed they should do so now. The acquisition of this printer would raise the work of Militant Labour to a higher level and will be particularly important as we move into the Dublin West by-election campaign. It is crucial that anyone who gave an IOU pay it in the next number of weeks, time is not on our side with the Dublin West by-election looming.

only way to take on the vested interests, the profiteers and their creed of 'competitiveness' which is destroying the lives of working-class people. Militant Labour is now the only organisation that consistently defends and advocates a socialist solution to the crisis in society.

Two statements were agreed by Conference. The first entitled, "Combating the Drugs Crisis" put forward ideas on legalisation of cannabis, how clinics can effectively deal with

State to do anything meaningful and a society in social decay. The second statement was Militant Labour's electoral strategy. Conference committed itself to go all out for the Dublin West by-election and to stand Clare Daly in Dublin North and Mick Murphy in Dublin South West in the next general and local elections.

Manus Maguire from Belfast Militant Labour brought greetings to the Conference and there was great interest in his report on the current situation in the peace process and particularly on our 'No Going Back' campaign and the recent strikes and demonstrations of workers. Conference got messages of support from many different sections of our international movement including Britain, Nigeria, South Africa and Sweden.

Conference finished on a very confident note. The mood was that Militant Labour through our work in the unions, on the water charges and among young people, had massively increased our level of support among the working class. With the correct approach Militant Labour can not only grow quickly but is in a unique position to assist in the building of a broad left movement in the years ahead.

The following were elected to the Regional Committee: Clare Daly, Joe Higgins, Michael Murphy, Susan Fitzgerald, Dermot Connolly, Terry Kelleher, Joan Collins, Sinead Daly, Kevin McLoughlin and Mick Barry. Elections will take place in Militant Labour branches to fill the remaining positions.



Stobhain Daly, Cork Militant Labour speaking at conference

create the basis for a socialist plan of production to end unemployment and poverty." This policy is not in any way lip-service to a past socialist tradition but we believe is the

hard drug addiction and how to and how to destroy the drug pushers' market. It has also put the growing drug crisis in its correct context i.e. the inability of the Government and the



Lisa Maher, Tallaght Militant Labour at conference

**Militant Labour is a fighting socialist organisation. We are active North and South and are part of an International organisation with members in more than thirty countries. Members strive to build M.L. around the following goals:**

- ★ Fight against unemployment, job cuts, poverty and attacks on the welfare system and workers' rights.
- ★ Build the unity of the working class - fight all forms of discrimination and sectarianism.
- ★ Break the co-operation between the Labour movement and the capitalist parties - for a fighting leadership that represents the working class.
- ★ Plan the economy for people's needs not for profits, under workers control and management.
- ★ For workers unity North and South, for socialism in Ireland and Internationally.

Join Militant Labour, P.O. Box 3484, D.S. Ph. (01) 6772686

people.

Joe Higgins summed it up: "No bunch of people are more eagerly awaited in Dublin West than the politicians, particularly Labour and Democratic Left. We are going out in this by-election not to spit in the wind nor to make some feeble impact, we are going out to win."

He pointed out the intention of turning the by-election into a referendum against the water charges, which could also be a focal point for all the pent up discontent people feel. "Our message will be simple, what's the use in voting for another member of the establishment parties, when the 160 or so already in there can solve none of the problems we face?"

Laurence Doran an ex-Guinness worker, now a pensioner also spoke. He had just been issued with a water disconnection order by the courts but

## HUNDREDS VOLUNTEER FOR GENERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN

**THE IDEA of turning the Dublin West by-election into a referendum on the water charges is going down well.**

**By Fiona O'Loughlin**  
Palmerstown Militant Labour

At a water charges meeting in Mulbuddart, one man said "I was one of the three quarters of a million goshbites that marched down O'Connell St in 1979, we let them stop us then, we went so far and then let the Government off the hook. The working class don't realise their power. Now is our chance to screw those who screwed us".

There were over 300 in attendance at this meeting. The announcement of Joe's candidature was greeted with enthusiasm. Over 40 people volunteered to work in the campaign. 47 copies of Militant were sold by two members in fifteen min-

utes. In March an Anti Water Charges meeting in Palmerstown had over a hundred in attendance the by-election was discussed in detail and a number of people agreed to help in the campaign. Fifteen papers were sold.

At special Militant Labour meetings held in Blanchardstown, Lucan and Palmerstown, over 150 people have signed up to help in the campaign. More meetings are planned for the next few weeks. We have had people from outside the constituency signing up to work from areas like Tallaght and Swords. We intend to have hundreds of local activists working in their own areas and other parts of the constituency.

## GENERAL STRIKE IN CANADA

### WORKERS AND UNEMPLOYED UNITE

**DURING A visit to Canada in January, I was able to see first hand the crisis that is unfolding. The numbers of people, including young people, begging on the streets in the cities of Toronto and Montreal was quite shocking.**

**By Joe Higgins**

Blanchardstown Militant Labour

I was in Canada as a guest speaker at a conference in Montreal called jointly by the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) and the Quebec Committee of the Unemployed. These are organisations of community and rank and file trade union activists, mobilising against the cuts and defending those hardest hit. They have played an outstanding role in organising opposition to the Conservative cutbacks in Ontario and against the Nationalist Party in Quebec, which is also in power with a programme of cutbacks.

These groups have close links with key sections of the trade union movement, especially at local level and do joint campaigning.

At the Montreal conference,

attended by 400 activists, it was agreed to launch the Common Front/Le Front Commun as a Canadian-wide coalition to unite all those campaigning against both provincial and federal attacks on working class people.

A broad manifesto was agreed to which a very wide stratum of groups and trade union branches could affiliate. It commits the Common Front to a united fight back against all cuts and attacks on the poor and on living and working conditions.

I was very impressed by what I saw and heard. I believe there are important lessons we could use here in Ireland. The anti water charges campaign could be a focal point to unite workers and the unemployed for example, to launch a general fightback on all the issues that face working class people.

## THE CONSERVATIVES,

**under the Prime minister of the province of Ontario, Mike Harris, have embarked on a programme of cutbacks in the public service sector and social welfare benefits. They plan to axe 28,000 public sector jobs - one third of the total number of public sector workers in the province! They have axed certain social welfare benefits by 21%, driving a whole stratum of low income people towards destitution with big increases in threatened evictions for inability to pay rents.**

On Saturday 24th February a massive rally of 120,000 took place in the Canadian city of Hamilton, called by the trade union movement in the province of Ontario. It was the biggest working class demonstration in Canadian history and was directed again at the Conservative Party provincial government which took office last September.

The day before a general strike took place in the city, with large sections of the steel industry, transport and postal service closed down.

# STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS

## CAMPAIGN NEWS

### DON'T PAY WATER CHARGES

**"The Council say I owe money for water charges. I do not believe I owe this charge. I believe that I have already paid for this service and that this charge is double taxation.**

"I have been paying my due taxes for 45 years. I have no choice as PAYE tax was taken from my wages and after I retired PAYE was taken from my pension. The PAYE tax payer is paying for everything in this country while the big farmers, wealthy self-employed and super-rich in this country get away with tax evasion.

"During the last eight years PAYE taxes collected from farmers and from the wealthy self-employed have fallen. If the wealthy paid their due taxes, PAYE tax payers would not be asked

to pay millions for the Beef Tribunal but no beef baron was brought to court. Instead we are asked to pay the £105 million fine imposed by the EU due to the fraud. How can this be right? This money would pay service charges all over the country for two years.

"Nobody has ever been jailed in this country for tax evasion. The rich tax evaders have been given two tax amnesties. The last amnesty in 1994 wrote off £500 mil-

lion but the Revenue Commissioners report huge amounts of tax outstanding in 1995. These people are laughing, while people like me who always pay our taxes are brought to court. That is very unfair. The water tax is an unjust tax and PAYE tax payers should not pay it."

**Laurence Doran, a retired worker from Greenhills, speaking in Rathfarnham Court on February 22nd.**

People faced with water charges bills will be amused to see Ivan Yates working himself up into a real storm of indignation over Larry Goodman and the beef barons. Yates was angry that the EU wouldn't reduce the £100 million fine for fraud in the beef industry, and thought it would be a good idea to have a go at Goodman, even suggesting that the beef industry would be better off without him, Goodman that is, not Yates.

In his desire to deflect the anger of taxpayers who are going to have to foot this £100 million fine, Yates forgot that Goodman, like all good businessmen, has been funding Fine Gael for years, to the tune of £60,000 in one year alone, 1988, according

to Goodman.

Goodman also revealed that since the Beef Tribunal, a leading fundraiser for Fine Gael made three approaches to him for cash, one of them only two weeks before the Beef Tribunal report, and another two weeks after it!

What does all this reveal? Nothing new, big business have had the politicians in their pockets for years. That's how they ensure that governments act in their interests with tax breaks, grants, rezonings, tax amnesties, and the occasional cover up like the Beef Tribunal when necessary. Goodman, like any good businessman, knew that it was no good just buying the support of one party, you have to buy all of them.

★ AFTER FOUR months of dragging people to special courts, protected by massed Gardai, at tax payers expense, the Councils have succeeded in getting disconnection orders against just thirteen people who were legally represented by the Campaign. These cases are all being appealed to the Circuit Court.

★ Judges have given contradictory rulings on legal arguments presented by barristers on behalf of the Campaign, and the Campaign has now submitted a case to the High Court for a ruling in these areas. While there is no guarantee of winning such a case, it will further frustrate the Councils' attempts to intimidate non-payers.

★ For the first time in years, no water disconnections took place anywhere around the country in 1995. We believe this has been due to the mass campaign in Dublin.

★ If the Councils attempt disconnections, the Campaign will stop them as we did at the end of 1994. This we did by peaceful mass protest, denying the Council access to the stop-cocks on the pavement. Even if there is a disconnection, the Campaign can reconnect a water supply within minutes.

★ The Councils are lying when they say their intimidation and threats are working against mass non-payment. They won't release the real figures, why not?

★ They have increased artificially the numbers of people claiming waivers by 300% in each Council area, to try and make the figures for those not paying look smaller.

★ No matter what they do to cook the books, the fact remains, 50% of all households are not paying or are entitled to a waiver, and a tax which is not paid by more than 50% is unsustainable and will have to be abolished.

★ The government is paying £350,000 for a study on a replacement to local charges. Another waste of tax payers' money. Brendan Howlin, Labour Minister for the Environment has already said "the options likely, are to bring back rates in one form or another."

★ The Federation of Dublin Anti Water Charges Campaigns is opposed to the reintroduction of rates in any form. They demand that local authority funding be provided through an Adequate Rate Support Grant.

### SIPTU OPPOSES SERVICE CHARGES

THE COUNTRY'S biggest trade union, SIPTU, has come out clearly against service and water charges. Below we reprint a letter which SIPTU has circulated to all branch secretaries.

Dear Colleague,

Attached please find a summary of SIPTU's position as endorsed by the National Executive Council in January, 1996. The summary reflects the content of various conference motions adopted by both the two founding unions, and SIPTU itself, in relation to service charges.

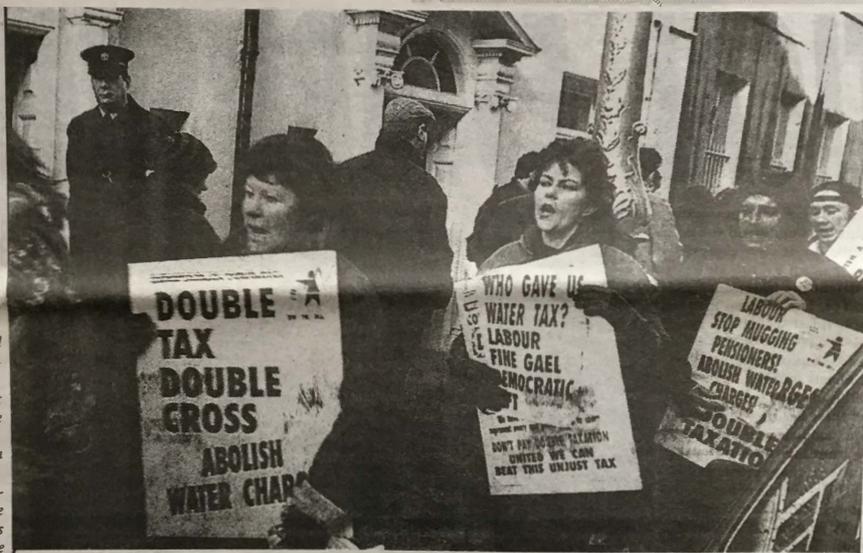
In brief the position we have adopted is: We oppose the application of service charges on the grounds that:

(a) they are a form of double taxation on PAYE workers

(b) they are applied on an indiscriminate basis without regard to level of use of the service or personal circumstances

Our grievances in this respect fall to be dealt with by an overall revision of the taxation system which overburdens PAYE workers.

Please ensure that our policies in this respect are made known to the membership.



"THE LABOUR Party's vote is in big trouble, we won't pay taxes on the double!", roared 50 anti water charges protesters, they were touring the party offices of the Government partners, 75 year old pensioner, Jim Campbell, with us. He had a disconnection order given against him in Rathfarnham District Court for taking a stand and boycotting the charges. A letter was presented to each party, condemning them for imposing the double taxation water charges, while using our taxes to pay the £100 million EU fines for the tax dodging beef barons.

### BUILD THE CAMPAIGN IN YOUR AREA

WITH APPROXIMATELY 10,000 members signed up by the end of February, the Federation of Dublin Anti Water Charges Campaigns already has more members than all the political parties in the Dublin area. It is extremely important that over the next couple of months the campaign is strengthened at local level.

Local action groups must be established in all areas and local activists must be in constant contact with one another. This is necessary in order to build the sort of solidarity on the ground which is vital if disconnections are to be resisted.

Already local action groups are up and running in some areas and activists meet on a regular basis in order to plan local actions and activities. Many of the people who form the backbone of these groups have never been involved in any form of political activity before.

In areas where local action groups do not yet exist activists who have been building

Campaign membership and distributing Campaign literature should take the initiative in beginning their establishment. All that is involved is that someone book a room in a local pub or community centre (or even someone's sitting room) and invite other activists along to a meeting. As well as the obvious items for discussion such as building the membership and developing a profile for the campaign in the area, others which should be considered include the stepping up of pressure on local politicians (pickets/lobbies of clinics etc.), letter writing campaigns to local and national media and contacting radio shows. As the group begins to meet on a reg-

ular basis and as confidence develops, other ideas will come forward. The local action group should elect a convenor to liaise with the area co-ordinator.

It is through this type of on the ground organisation that our campaign will be ultimately successful. The politicians and council officials will have no answer to such a level of solidarity. When it does come down to resisting disconnections, it is local solidarity which will win. Don't wait for someone else to take the initiative in your area. Go for it yourself!

This article has been reproduced from Water Charges News, the bulletin of the Federation of Dublin Anti Water Charges Campaigns

### ANTI WATER CHARGES PROTEST

Saturday April 20th  
Assemble Parnell Square  
2pm

This is your chance to show your anger at these charges. All residents' and tenants' associations, community organisations, trade unions, anti-water charge groups and individuals are invited to participate. Bring banners and placards.

CAMPAIGN HOTLINE 8729163

If you haven't yet joined the Campaign, send a postal order for £2.50 (or more) to P.O. Box 4534, Dublin 1 and your membership card will be posted to you.

Send a donation, organise a fundraiser

Every donation, small or large is vital to enabling the campaign to be effective. We appeal to individuals, residents' associations, community organisations, trade unions etc., to please send a donation. Anyone can organise a fund-raiser - a coffee morning, a disco, a social, a pub quiz, a sponsored parachute jump... For advice or assistance contact the Federation.

**JOE HIGGINS** has been selected to stand as the **Militant Labour** candidate in the **Dublin West By-election**, which will take place on **Tuesday April 2nd**. He has also been endorsed as the **anti water charges** candidate by the **Federation of Dublin Anti Water Charges Campaigns**.

In the following interview Joe explains how he sees the **By-election** as a great opportunity to help defeat the water charges, and also how it could be a significant step in the creation of a new, genuinely socialist political, movement which would really represent working class people.

# A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO ROCK THE POLITICAL ESTABLISHMENT

**What are the key issues you will be raising as part of your campaign?**

"As you know, working people in Dublin West have been mounting a massive campaign against the unjust double taxation known as water charges. This has been a part of the biggest campaign seen in many years in the Dublin area.

"This is a never to be repeated opportunity for them to register a massive rejection of the parties that have imposed this double tax. It is an opportunity to register a huge protest vote and lay the basis for a political defeat of the water charges. I will also be standing as a socialist in opposition to the same parties whose policies have totally failed to address any of the issues that face working class people in Dublin West and elsewhere."

**You have been chairman of the Campaign for the last two years. Is there a real anger on this issue?**

"The water charge is not just an unjust new local tax in itself but it raises the whole issue of injustice in the tax system. PAYE workers are squeezed again and again while the super rich and big business get break after break.

"There is a huge anger over the charges. It has brought out people's anger and resentment over issues like the tax amnesties, the fraud in the beef industry, with the tax payer having to pick up the bill for the inquiry at £35 million and now a £100 million fine from the EU. It is an anger against corruption in high places."

The Federation of Dublin

Anti Water Charges Campaigns has endorsed you as a candidate. Is your campaign a part of an overall strategy to defeat the water charges?

"Yes. It will mean that the very widest sections of working class people who have boycotted the tax despite all sorts of threats will be assured that in this election there is a clear cut alternative to vote for. That is, a candidate who has a record in building the anti water charges movement and in standing with them against the threats of the Councils.

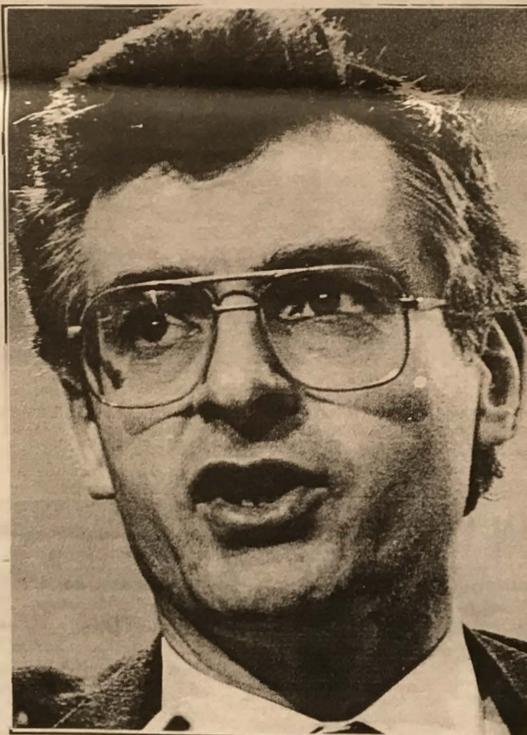
"A vote for me is a vote in opposition to the charges and the Federation sees this as an important part of the campaign to abolish them."

**Are people who are involved in this Campaign going to come out and work for you in this by-election?**

"There are already very large numbers of people becoming involved in the campaign. This includes people who have been active in building the anti water charges campaign. They will be crucial in turning out their families, their neighbours, and generally working in the local estates. People come up at the end of meetings and say, 'There are five votes in my house, you have them'. People have come to meetings and made donations of £30 to £40. There is a very good level of support. It is crucial that this is mobilised in our election campaign and I am fully confident that this will be the case."

**"On the water charges the Green Party have totally compromised themselves. They were part of the unholy alliance with Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, the PDs, Labour and Democratic Left in imposing the water charges."**

**Do you believe you can win?**  
"We are going all out to win and there is a very realistic basis



Militant Labour Councillor Joe Higgins

to that. A majority of householders in Dublin West have supported the non-payment campaign. There are 3,500 households who have paid the £2 subscription fee to become members of the Federation. I believe this can be a huge base of support.

"I have also been a Councillor in Dublin West for five years and will be standing on my record, going back to the days when we fought to defend Blanchardstown Hospital, against the dump in Mulhuddart, for proper accommodation for travelling people in consultation with them and the settled com-

munity, the local campaigns against rezoning and protecting the green belt and the Liffey Valley. At present I'm involved in a campaign against a micro wave transmitter in a built up area in Blanchardstown.

"These campaigns have involved at some level a huge number of people. By mobilising this support we will pose a real threat to the establishment parties who believe they have the political system wrapped up."

**An opinion poll in Phoenix magazine has shown a certain level of support for the Greens.**

## A MESSAGE FROM THE FEDERATION OF DUBLIN ANTI WATER CHARGES CAMPAIGNS

The Federation of Dublin Anti-Water Charges Campaigns is pleased to fully endorse Joe Higgins as the Anti Water Charges candidate in the Dublin West By-election. Joe Higgins has been Chairperson of the Federation for the last two years and has played a key role in building the movement of mass non payment and opposition to this unjust double tax. The Federation of Dublin Anti Water Charges Campaigns calls on all its members, its supporters and those opposed to water charges in Dublin West to vote No.1 for Joe Higgins.

We fully endorse Joe Higgins' call to turn the Dublin West By election into a referendum on the charges. This is your opportunity to let the politicians who have brought in the charges know how you feel.

## JOE HIGGINS IS THE ANTI WATER CHARGES CANDIDATE

**Is the environment going to be a big issue?**

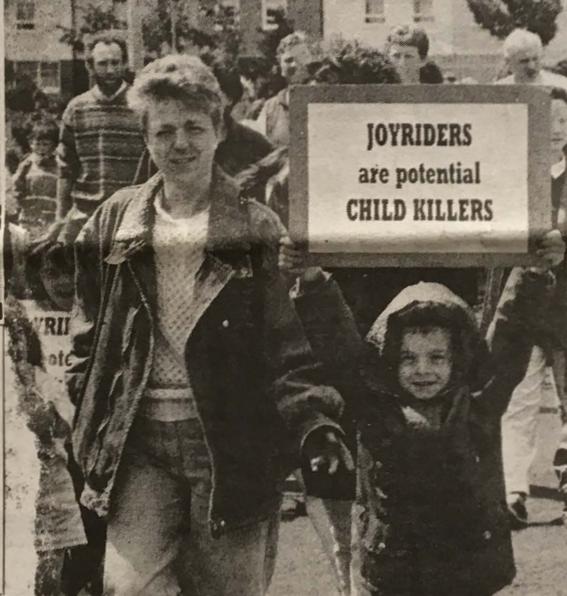
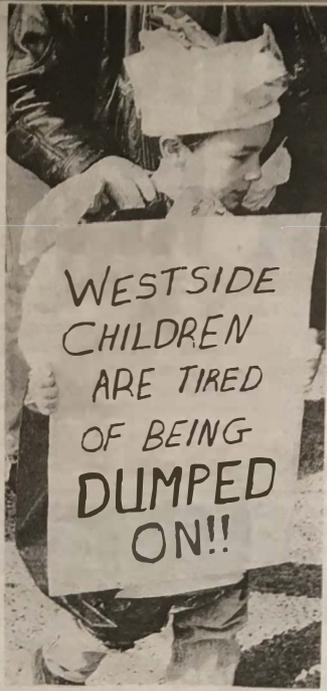
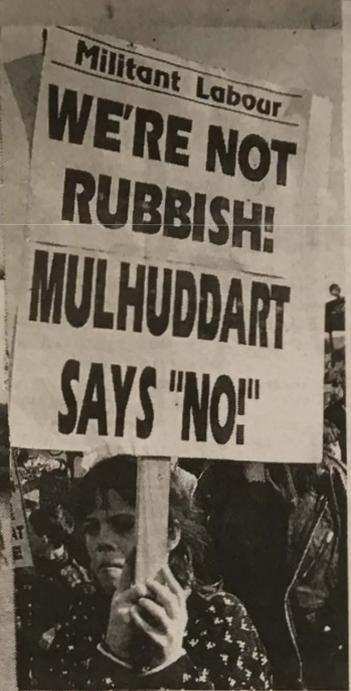
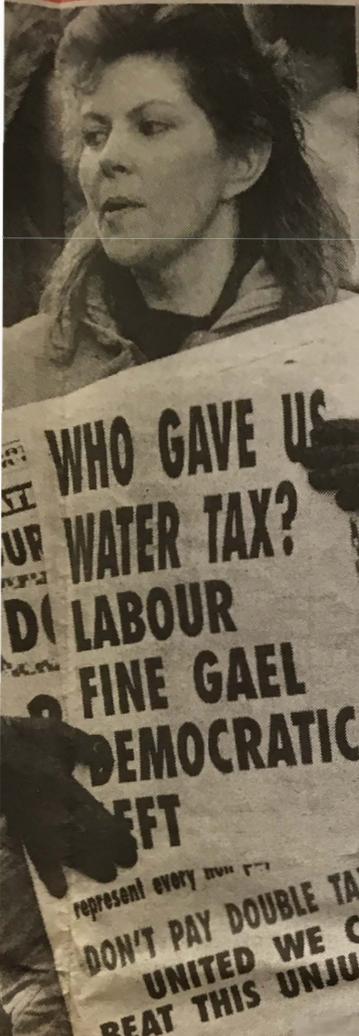
"Yes. The Greens topped the poll in the Euro elections in Dublin without having any real base. It is a protest vote but also shows that people are deeply concerned about the environment we live in. When there is no other alternative I think people would look to the Greens for a protest vote. The situation in Dublin West is quite different. There is a very creditable alternative in this election in our campaign."

themselves. They were part of the unholy alliance with Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, the PDs, Labour and Democratic Left in imposing the water tax. They are also in favour of imposing a charge per bag for refuse collection, which would also be a big burden on working class people.

"I believe that we have been the ones to spear-head all the campaigns on crucial environmental issues in Dublin West. I mentioned the rezonings, the Liffey Valley, the microwave

Militant Higgins in organ of com the issu

What is the record of the Greens on issues like the water charges? On the water charges the Green Party have totally compromised themselves. They were part of the unholy alliance with Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, the PDs, Labour and Democratic Left in imposing the water tax. They are also in favour of imposing a charge per bag for refuse collection, which would also be a big burden on working class people. "I believe that we have been the ones to spear-head all the campaigns on crucial environmental issues in Dublin West. I mentioned the rezonings, the Liffey Valley, the microwave



JOE HIGGINS' RECORD

MAKING A REAL DIFFERENCE IN WORKING CLASS COMMUNITIES

Joe Higgins is proud to stand on his record as an extremely hard working Militant Labour County Councillor for almost five years in Dublin West.

Joe Higgins is Chairman of the Federation of Dublin Anti Water Charges Campaigns and is its co-ordinator in Blanchardstown, Mulhuddart, Palmerstown, Lucan and North Clondalkin.

Joe Higgins has worked with the local community;

- Against rezoning and land speculation in Lucan, Clonsilla and in defence of the Green Belt and the Liffey Valley.
- In opposition to the massive dump in Mulhuddart and for an alternative strategy with a major reduction of waste at source and recycling.
- In organising against the placing of micro wavetransmitters in residential areas because of serious concerns about damage to peoples' health.
- Was a leading organiser for the renowned Shackleton Garden and Parkland to be taken into public ownership for the community - an opportunity criminally wasted by the present government.
- Played a leading role in ensuring that the Blanchardstown Town Centre became a reality.

**Militant Labour and Joe Higgins have been involved in organising a wide number of community campaigns on the issues that affect people in Dublin West.**

What is the record of the Greens on issues like the water charges? On the water charges the Green Party have totally compromised themselves as part of the Fianna Fáil Left in tax. They imposing a refuse collection also be a working class

transmitters, our campaign to have Shackleton Gardens taken over by the state as a public facility. We have shown ourselves to be the real "green" activists in a way that is relevant to the communities in Dublin West.

What you are saying is that people who want a real alternative in this election should vote for you?

"Yes. That will become clear in the course of the election campaign. On all the issues, without exception, our record and our programme is the one that will stand up to scrutiny, all the others will fall."

The other parties seem to be trying to exploit the issue of crime and law and order which obviously is an issue in all working class areas, how do you see this issue?

"Crime is an issue of very real concern to working people in the constituency. My own house has been broken into on a number of occasions. I can ill-afford to have anything stolen from me. I can assure you.

"However, the approach of the main parties is totally hyp-

ocritical. Crime has social roots, though in no sense do I in any-way condone crime. These social roots are unemployment, poverty, the alienation of a great number of young people from our society.

"The main parties are responsible for running and defending a system which has created these problems. They have no solutions. I believe our campaign will outline how the local community do have the right to mobilise and organise democratically against crime, but while taking that stand, we say, you have to fight for a real solution to the causes."

You have been a Councillor for five years. That should give you an insight into how the system works, how the parties operate. What is your main impression of this?

"My main impression is that the politicians are generally people out to make careers on the backs of ordinary people. That is their priority. They are not interested in mobilising communities, to empower people, to make real changes in our society. They have no interest

in struggling for a new society, which would mean challenging the interests of their big business backers.

"So much of what goes on in the Council is futile lip service and has no relationship to the real problems that our people have. There is no serious discussion about funding local authorities to provide the services that are needed."

Many people are very cynical about politicians and political parties, what would you say to those people?

"Well, people are cynical with very good reason. The parties have feathered their own nests and been part and parcel of a cosy cartel with the very wealthy. This cynicism is increased by parties such as Labour and Democratic Left, who talked about change, but then became part of the political establishment at the first opportunity. Militant Labour is genuinely different. People should look at our record, we have turned down opportunities to become part of the establishment in order to fight for working class people. We

should be democratic planning of resources to meet the needs of the people, not for profits.

"I believe in the traditions laid down by people like James Connolly and Jim Larkin. They were socialists and proud of it, and the best leaders the working class ever had in this country.

As a socialist how do you see your role as a Councillor, and how would you see it as a TD?

have become a part of the establishment and no longer represent the working class, are you saying we now need to build a new party for working class people?

"Yes. Labour in particular benefited from a very big vote for change in the last general election. The people who voted for them have been bitterly disappointed. I think it's crucial that a discussion is opened up rather urgently inside the labour movement, and in the working class communities about the creation of a genuine political alternative."

Do you think that the water charges campaign can play a role in preparing the ground for a new left?

"I think the water charges campaign has given a very wide range of working class people the understanding that they can come together, and mobilise and organise together. I think it is not a huge step from that to seeing the need and possibility of building a new movement of working class people. I hope that there would be an openness in the anti water charges campaign to discussing the idea, first of a slate of candidates on the service charges issue nationally in the next general election and then as part of that process, creating a new left party."

**"My main impression is that the politicians are generally people out to make careers on the backs of ordinary people. That is their priority. They are not interested in mobilising communities, to empower people, to make real changes in our society."**

the balance of my wage as a TD to help the community organisation on the issues that need to be taken up. This is a condition that Militant Labour insists upon from its candidates in any election.

You are a socialist, but many people who previously called themselves socialists have abandoned that position. Do you still feel proud to stand in the socialist tradition?

"Well I think that democratic socialism as opposed to the system that existed in Eastern Europe is the only solution to the problems of society. There

**SCOTTISH SOCIALIST ALLIANCE**

Alan McCoombes a leading member of Scottish Militant Labour and a key activist in the establishment of the newly formed Scottish Socialist Alliance, was in Dublin for the launch of Militant Labour's Dublin West by election campaign and regional conference. He spoke to us about the new socialist organisation.

# UNITING TO BUILD A NEW LEFT

**What is the newly founded Scottish Socialist Alliance?**

It's an amalgamation of left wing political organisations, trade unions, community groups, pressure groups, who have come together to formulate a socialist alternative to the mainstream political parties because all of them are welded to free market capitalism.

**What are the basic principles of the alliance?**

Firstly, to show support and solidarity with workers, tenants and environmental activists who are taking a stand against injustice, taking a stand to improve their living standards.

Secondly to promote a radical socialist alternative to the anarchy of capitalism which in Britain allows the richest 1% of the population own 129 times as much wealth as the bottom 50%. We are building an ideological alternative as well as a campaigning

We also stand for a form of Scottish self government, all the organisations involved are opposed to the situation where the Tory government can rule Scotland despite the fact that the Tories have the support of only one in ten of the Scottish population.

**What is it that has allowed these organisations that would normally be at loggerheads to reach an agreement?**

There is a recognition that in the past there was too much emphasis on differences, for every acre of difference that divides the left there are a hundred acres of common ground. There has been a genuine political convergence brought about by changes in the national political climate in Britain. Different political trends have united around a clear cut analysis of the need to change society.

The Social Democrats both in opposition and in government across the world have abandoned any pretence of socialist ideas and pursued a naked Thatcherite agenda. Everything has become polarised

and people recognise that for them the choice is between free market capitalism and the socialist transformation of society.

**What do you see as the immediate work for the SSA?**

We will use direct action against social injustice. At the same time we will build an

electoral alternative to the mainstream political parties.

Immediately we are involved in campaigns against any attempt at privatisation of water in Scotland. We are about to embark on an all Scotland campaign of mass non-payment of water bills. Also we are involved in a major battle in the

cities against a savage programme of social spending cuts, wage cuts, job losses - all supported unfortunately by Labour controlled Councils.

There is also the possibility in Britain because of the position of the Tories, of a general election taking place at any time. We've begun discussions on standing candidates in selected seats throughout Scotland.

**What is your relationship with the Socialist Labour Party of Arthur Scargill?**

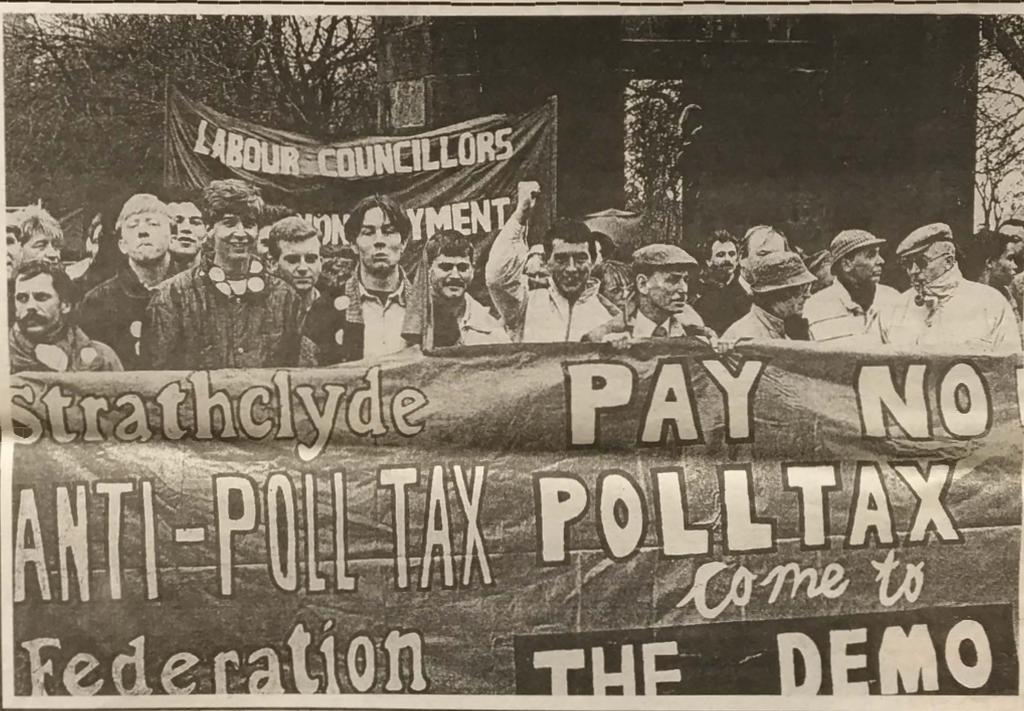
Initially we had hoped we would be able to come to some accommodation, perhaps be the Scottish wing of the SLP. Unfortunately that wasn't possible because Arthur's conception of a party is much more centralised than the type of party that we had been discussing in Scotland.

The SSA is in effect a political party, founded on federal principles. There are many long established parties in Scotland, with their own identities and traditions that are just not going to dissolve themselves into a centralised party like the SLP.

The SLP in Scotland is very small numerically in comparison to the SSA, but the leaders in Scotland are working hand in hand with the SSA, so I don't really see a problem.

**What about a Scottish parliament?**

A parliament established in Edinburgh under proportional representation would, we believe, blow apart the existing party system in Scotland because there are severe tensions inside the parties. We believe that the SSA can be a powerful pole of attraction for working class people in that situation, including sections of the SNP and Labour Party.



The poll tax revolt has laid the basis for a renewed Socialist movement in Scotland.

**CWI SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGNS**

**LIVERPOOL DOCKERS**

THE LIVERPOOL dockers' struggle has developed an enormous wealth of international solidarity. In many cases the dockers have simply visited the waterfronts, approaching rank and file dockers and appealing directly for support. The sister organisations of Militant Labour in the Committee for a Workers International (CWI) have often played a key role in providing information, translation facilities and meetings with dockers and other workers.

The Merseyside Port Shop Stewards Committee would like to thank the officers of the CWI for their help and efforts and would like this message to be passed onto all its affiliates. Without their help many of the things that have been achieved could not have been possible.

The following is a statement from the recent International Port Workers' Conference organised by the strikers and an account of the solidarity action which they have

received. "We the assembled delegates of this International Port Workers' Conference in Liverpool, 17th/23th February 1996, represent port workers from around the world who have given practical and material solidarity to the 500 sacked dockers of Liverpool.

The port is the last unionised port in Britain. A victory for the Liverpool dockers in the face of the Conservative government's anti-trade union legislation, is a victory for dockers and all other workers, not only in Britain but around the world. Piraeus Greece a 24-hour solidarity strike - 22th February and

threat of boycott action. Sydney, Australia and New Zealand - continuous 24-hour blockades and go-slows on all ships using the port of Liverpool. New York - longshoremen refuse to cross Liverpool dockers' picket lines. Canary Islands - all Liverpool ships will be blockaded. Montreal, Quebec - go-slows on all ships.



Liverpool Dockers

Salerno, Italy - overtime ban and go-slow on all ships. Stockholm Sweden - blockade of all goods from Liverpool

**NIGERIA**

THE CAMPAIGN of repression in Nigeria by the Abacha military dictatorship continues. The latest prominent arrest was on February 14th of Femi Aborisade, the National Conscience Party's (NCP) Director of Organisation and leading member of Militant, Nigerian affiliate of the Committee for a Workers International. Two weeks before that Gani Fawehinmi, a leading civil rights lawyer who founded the NCP in October 1994, was also placed in indefinite detention.

Femi, previously held for eight months in 1989 because of his links with the Nigerian Militant, was arrested in the NCP Headquarters during a meeting of the NCP and 13 trade union, student and civil rights groups.

The meeting was called to discuss united action against the military and in particular to

organise a mass boycott of the bogus local government elections the government plan to hold on 23 March.

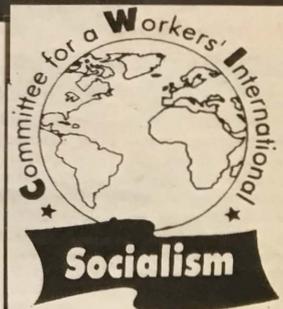
Messages of support to NCP, PO Box 1114, Surulere, Lagos State, Nigeria. Copies to PO Box 256, London SE11 5TH.

**ARGENTINA**

THE COMMITTEE for a Workers International has learned of the arrest in Argentina of Horacio Panario a leader of the unemployed and homeless people of Nequen province and a leading member of the socialist MAS group.

Horacio was imprisoned for his part in the occupation of provincial government buildings during a mass mobilisation of the homeless last Autumn.

This arrest arises from the government's policy of repres-



The Committee for a Workers' International (CWI) is a socialist organisation to which Militant Labour is affiliated. It has affiliated organisations and supporters in over 40 countries.

sion against left wing organisations in Argentina, against the backdrop of savage cuts in public and social spending.

Letters of protest should be sent to: Casa de Gobierno del Nequen, Calle Roca esquina Rioja, Nequen, Argentina. Fax: 00 54 99 427113, and Direccion de la Corte Suprema de Justicia del Nequen, Calle Rivadavia 205, Nequen, Argentina.

# CIVIL SERVANTS TAKE ON THE GOVERNMENT

# NURSES PREPARE FOR ACTION

26,000 NURSES, organised in the Alliance of Nursing Unions, are preparing to take strike action over the government's refusal to concede their pay claim.

The Government is hiding behind the Programme for Competitiveness and Work (PCW), saying that if they con-

cede, co-operation with all new technology, which will cut jobs, and the further introduction of temporary staff. Nurses work incredibly long hours in a very demanding and stressful job, senior nurses are highly skilled, their pay is an absolute disgrace, yet the Government are not prepared to move. They will have to be forced to do so. What these developments show is that the PCW and the two previous national agreements have made the position of already low paid workers worse. Nurses, civil servants, other health workers in IMPACT and Government employees are balloting or have already balloted for strike action. Rather than take on the Government one by one, they should fight them together.



Nurses took action last year to highlight healthcuts

THE HALF-DAY national stoppage on 21st February by the Civil and Public Service Union, was the beginning of a campaign to force the government to lift its embargo on recruitment. The same month saw a conference of its members unanimously reject the latest pay offer from the Department of Finance.

By Terry Kelleher  
CPSU Executive Member

The executive of the CPSU gave the lead on both issues, recommending that a strong stand be made to send a clear signal to the Department of Finance, that we are sick talking and want progress on pay and the lifting of the embargo!

This lead was endorsed by a ballot of the membership, which saw an extremely high turn-out of 82% and 75% of the membership voting in favour of action. The mood of the members was also reflected in the high participation on the picket line on 21st February. This anger flows from the lack of progress during five years of negotiations on pay and grade restructuring. The latest offer, does nothing to address low pay, which was the whole reason that the union entered into talks.

These talks recently broke down with the Government saying they could not afford to give anymore. The CPSU is now in the same position as the nurses, if any further progress is to be made it will be through industrial action. The embargo just added insult to injury, and was the final straw for the Executive Committee.

The embargo and the pay

TALKS ON the viability plan between the CPSU and An Post management recently broke down, following a failure to reach agreement on aspects of the deal related to pay.

The issues are now at the LRC tribunal and they will make recommendations to both sides in the coming weeks. The result will not be binding.

The CPSU An Post Branch is still refusing to co-operate with new changes, despite a previous recommendation from the LRC to do so. The company tried to use this LRC recommendation to introduce further changes. The Branch Committee however ignored the LRC's advice and stood firm. At this stage it looks like last year's dispute will be redeveloped.

issue are linked to the Government's approach to the public sector. For far too long the trade union movement has allowed this process to go unchallenged, i.e. privatisation of state firms, casualisation of public service jobs, contracting out of work etc.

The CPSU Executive needs to have a clear strategy for industrial action which hurts the Government. CPSU members play an important role in all Government departments including revenue, agriculture and social welfare. But any action would be more successful with an alliance with unions like IMPACT and Government inspectors who also have similar pay claims as the CPSU.

The Government are using divide and rule tactics, doing a deal with teachers, but not with the nurses. The embargo has been aimed at the CPSU members only.

What is needed is a broad alliance of public sector workers to take on the government together. The CPSU can play a key role in bringing this about.



Civil Service workers on half day stoppage.

cede the nurses claim it will go beyond the pay limits of that agreement. The Government have already given a deal to teachers which goes outside the terms of the PCW, but are afraid if they concede to the nurses, then they will have to concede to civil servants and other public sector workers.

Contrary to the campaign of lies in the media about overpaid, secure, pensionable jobs in the public sector, low pay is the norm for the overwhelming majority of public service workers.

The offer from the government to low paid civil servants would give them a starting rate of £155 a week, rising to £280 a week after 21 years of service! This maximum level is £50 a week below the average industrial wage for male work-

## ELC STRIKERS NEED SOLIDARITY SUPPORT

Despite the Early Learning Centre spending thousands of pounds to put lying advertisements in the Cork Examiner and Evening Echo, public support for the three and a half month old strike against low pay and for union recognition, remains rock solid.

This is shown by 3,000 people signing the strikers' petition within three days of its launch.

By Mick Barry  
Cork Militant Labour

ELC shop in the country. Mandate should immediately taking out advertisements in the national press explaining the issues and appealing for a consumer boycott. Mandate should also be approaching the dockers in Northern Ireland and appealing to them not to handle ELC goods. These steps must be acted on urgently by the union to ensure a victory for the strike.

Militant Labour members in Cork organised a very successful table quiz in support of the ELC strikers which raised £400.

"We greatly appreciate the help from Militant Labour on the picket line and especially in organising the table quiz." Helen Murray on behalf of the ELC strikers



## QUINNSWORTH AND DUNNES SHOPWORKERS UNDER ATTACK

MANDATE MEMBERS in Quinnsworth have massively rejected a Labour Court recommendation on the issues of extended trading, pay and conditions.

The Labour Court basically gave the same recommendation as in the Dunnes dispute, but with total flexibility for part timers. It would have allowed Quinnsworth to roster new staff at flat rate for bank holidays.

95% of the workers voted against it after Mandate had recommended rejection. Shop stewards in Quinnsworth feel

that the company will try to push the issues to a strike.

Meanwhile no progress has been made in the dispute with Dunnes. The Tribunal has collapsed after its chairman, Moriarty, said that Dunnes were not prepared to take the Tribunal seriously.

After Moriarty's experience, it has been impossible to find someone willing to chair the

Tribunal. Dunnes are now looking for talks on a store by store basis, but Mandate refuse to accept this. They are demanding talks on a national basis.

The Mandate Executive have decided that if such talks are not underway by the time of their National Conference at Easter, they will redevelop the dispute into strike action.

P.J. Moriarty is no friend of workers, as anyone who worked in the ESB will testify, but even he found Dunnes' anti-union attitude a bit much. This is what he said in a letter to Dunnes' representative in the talks.

"Your letter of 12th January 1996 is really the last straw. I have been around the industrial relations scene for over twenty five years and I consider it foolish to say the least, on your part and on the part of Dunnes Stores management, to attempt to dictate to me how I should conduct the business of being Chairman of the Tribunal.

"On reviewing events since I accepted the invitation to be Chairman I detect a strategy of confrontation with the Chairman on every issue on the part of Dunnes Stores management. From this I conclude that I could not reasonably expect the co-operation of Dunnes Stores management in developing a positive climate of industrial relations and staff relationships. Rather, the evidence is that I could expect a climate of attrition and confrontation all along the line. I will not waste my time on such games. I therefore withdraw from the arena and this decision is final. Incidentally I wrote to Dunnes Stores management on 15th November last setting out my terms for engagement as Chairman of the Tribunal and I sought confirmation of acceptance of them by the company. While it is now irrelevant, the fact is that the letter has been ignored by Dunnes Stores management."

Yours sincerely,  
P.J. Moriarty

£2,000 has been raised for the strike fund including nearly £400 from Militant Labour's February table quiz.

99% of ELC custom is staying away. To win the strike it looks increasingly likely that this multinational's profits will have to be hit hard both in Cork and also outside the city.

This can be done by teams of activists distributing the ELC strikers' leaflet outside every

## MILITANT



## REVIEW

# SPIKE LEE'S LATEST OFFERING

**SPIKE LEE'S** new film *Clockers* is a story of drugs, drug dealing, violent crime and race. Strike, the main character, is the leader of a small group of clockers (low level street dealers who sell drugs around the clock), who "work the benches" outside the housing block where they live. The clockers work for Rodney, the main dealer in the area.

Rodney is grooming Strike to become a bigger player in his operation. Strike is interested but hesitates when Rodney explains that he wants a favour first. He asks Strike to kill a manager who refuses to allow drugs to be dealt at a restaurant.

Strike reluctantly agrees, he goes to a bar to gather his courage where he meets his hard working brother, Vincent. Feeling the pressure Strike tells him what he is about to do, but changes the story to say that the night manager has raped a young girl, and this is the pay off. Vincent is enraged and vows to have the night manager killed himself.

The manager's body is found and the clues point to Strike.

By Alan Bermingham  
South Dublin Militant Labour

He is picked up, but then Vincent comes forward claiming he killed the manager in self defence. The story unfolds with the homicide detective, Rocca (Harvey Keitel), leaning on Strike and the clockers, trying to get to what he believes is the truth, that Strike committed the murder but that Vincent is covering for him, knowing that a family man with two children, two jobs and saving to take his family out of the projects, who makes a plea of self defence will be viewed with a lot more sympathy than a clocker like Strike.

The film's strength is its ability to simply and credibly dem-

onstrate, how easy and even natural it is for young, jobless kids living in the projects, to become involved with selling and using drugs, along with the violence and anti-social behaviour that accompany it.

The only alternatives are the occasional low paid job as a fast food or shop worker, or waiting away on welfare. Here, the story reaches far beyond New York, and touches us in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and so many other towns and cities in Ireland and elsewhere.

This allows the film to affect us in a way that its contemporaries have not, *Boyz in the Hood*, *Menace to Society* and *New Jack City*, left us as stunned spectators witnessing something so far beyond our

experience that it was easy to remain unaffected.

The dealers and users in *Clockers* are human, products of an environment which they do not control. Frightened people looking for a way out, like Vincent - the workaholic, and even Strike who plays incessantly with model trains yet has only ever ridden on the subway. The struggle by hysterical parents to keep their kids safe and their community clean puts the film in a universal context, as easily understood in Ballymun or Ballyfermot as in Brooklyn and the Bronx.

Spike Lee offers no solutions, but he exposes the traps for the users and the clockers, alongside the enormous pressures that bare down and threaten to engulf those who try to 'do the right thing' by working hard and trying to get out.

Drugs are a symptom of a society in trouble, its social

fabric wearing threadbare, and many individual strands beginning to snap. The number of Americans taking drugs has increased every year since records began in the '50s, the war on drugs is a failure as are all the repressive police methods that have been employed. It's a time for new ideas, to quote a hero of Spike Lee - Malcolm X. "A better world must be built!"



Spike Lee

## BELIEVE IT OR NOT

**★ YOU WILL be pleased to hear that nobody gets "sacked", "fired" or "laid off" in the US anymore. American workers are not even likely to be "downsized" or suffer "re-engineering".**

**Under the latest American corporate newspeak workers are "involuntarily separated" or experience "workforce imbalance correction", "refocusing on the job mix", or "right-sizing".**

**Chase Manhattan Bank, about to lay off, sorry, "vocationally relocate", 12,000 of its staff, are concerned to be seen as sensitive in how it breaks the news to its "saves", i.e. sacked workers.**

**A memo on management meetings with those "not selected for the new corporation" urges managers "to be supportive but not compromising" and includes advice to prevent the meeting lasting more than ten minutes.**

**★ WHEN DEBT collector Anthony Kelly didn't get satisfaction from a Dublin businessman who owed £1,600 he threatened to have a private detective investigate the private life of the businessman's wife.**

**Apart from this outrageous threat Kelly also said in a letter "you must be the most accomplished liar I have ever met and a ....con man."**

**Mr. Kelly should know about such things. He has a £30,000 bad debt with AIB registered against him and further judgements for £3,600 and £2,300 owed to printers by his own debt collecting company.**

**Mr. Kelly though is not a thug and a scoundrel. He was president of the Leixlip Chamber of Commerce in 1993 and 1994, and likes to sign his threatening letter using that illustrious title.**

Write to reply, P.O. Box 3434, Dublin 8

## ★ STAR WATTER AN INTRODUCTION TO THE WORLD OF BIG BUSINESS

**INTEL IS big. It's right up there among the most profitable corporations in the world like Coca-Cola and GM. The company has a world-wide revenue probably in excess of \$10 Billion or 10,000,000,000 -that's a lot of zeros.**

Tens of thousands of workers in Intel plants across the globe are employed to produce micro processors and circuit boards. Since the end of 1994, Intel has taken on 10,000 new employees world-wide. In September of last year I became one of them.

Last month the corporation admitted that it would have to let go 1,000 of these workers, those brought in since August. In Leixlip where I was working, 234 employees who work in the PC circuit-board plant (BSSM) are now being laid off.

From the experience of working for Intel for six months, you learn how the company has a unique approach to industrial relations. No Intel workers can join a trade union, but in reality most of them have no wish to do so. The pay, conditions and promotional opportunities are above average for the electronics sector. Even though I've been laid off, I hold little against the company, because they're the most worker friendly company I know of.

Most of the anger and disappointment you see from those leaving is not directed at Intel but rather the national and global economic conditions that they are just a part of.

The Irish government's enthusiasm for large high-tech companies to locate in Ireland is shown by the sizeable tax incentives and millions in grants given to these companies. When it comes down to it, Intel could have paid the wages of those 234 employees since September, told us all not to come in to work, and still make a large profit from the state.

This country retains the status of a tax haven for big business and the labour and trade-union leaderships are failing to

drag us up to the standards of pay and conditions of average European workers. This economic prohibition is sold in the media as growth and a jobs boom. But this cannot last forever, the pockets of the Irish PAYE sector are not an inexhaustible source to bribe inter-

national corporations whose repatriated profits we'll never see again.

Yours Fraternally  
Robert Connolly,  
78 Kilworth Road,  
Dublin 12

## FAI NOT PLAYING BALL

**ANYONE WHO** ever had anything to do with football in this country, as a player, coaching kids, supporting the League of Ireland, or the national team always knew that the FAI was run by a bunch of messers.

We knew it was bad, small men with small ideas, but with big egos and even bigger appetites for expenses, first class travel, first class hotels, (even 'Gold' credit cards as has now emerged), but we never knew it could be as bad as has been revealed over the last few weeks.

Ten years of incredible success through the senior international team, should have laid the basis for a real development of the game on a new level, instead we have an absolute fiasco. The bubble has been well and truly burst, we are back to the "Good Old Days", when our international manager made his own way to the World Cup, and slept on the floor in the England manager's hotel room, when good players were embarrassed on the pitch by the lack of preparations, interference in team selection, and atrocious messing that went on around international games. Those were the days when the players, outnumbered by officials, sat in the back of the plane while the FAI apparachiks sat up in first class.

Jack Charlton put an end to all that. Charlton was lucky, Ireland qualified for Euro '88, putting him in the position to run the show. But the last ten

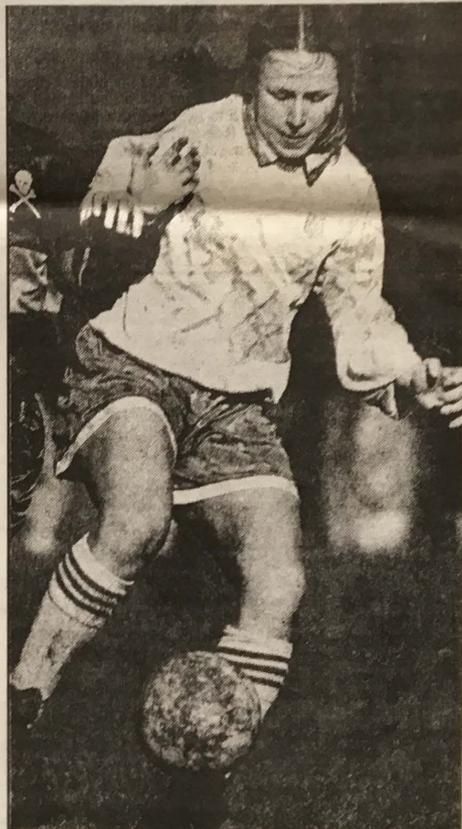
years were a mirage, we had a good international side, we qualified for two World Cups, but behind the screen nothing changed.

At schoolboy, under 18 and under 21 we went backwards, not forwards. The FAI now try to blame Charlton and Setters, but what were they doing? They were riding the Charlton gravy train for all it was worth, that's what they were doing.

The mess they made of selecting a new manager, and then undermining him days after his appointment pales into insignificance with what's going on now, £8,000 used to pay off a personal loan, £200,000 in ticket money gone missing, dealings with international ticket touts, and an attempted cover up followed by mass resignations of the officers.

Now we have the League of Ireland clubs going to sort it out. Heaven help us. They certainly know a thing or two about dodgy accounting when it comes to ticket sales and gate money.

One of the reasons put forward for the FAI's dealings with ticket touts was that they wanted to look after the fans. Give us a break! I'm one of those people who went to every international game from the



There has been an explosion in the numbers playing soccer - but the FAI is incapable of harnessing this.

late 1960s up until the success years. Then I was told to fuck off when it came to getting tickets like thousands of others.

I remember a home game against Latvia in the last World Cup campaign. Ticket sales weren't going well, "the suits" only wanted to go to the big games. Sean Connolly (who is no relation) had the cheek to say it was an opportunity for "all the moaners" who said they couldn't get tickets to go to

this game.

I made a pledge that day never to set foot at an international game again. Now I find Ray Treacy calling for a boycott of the friendly against Russia! I've found a reason to break my pledge.

Yours fraternally,  
Dermot Connolly,  
30 Ring St.  
Dublin 8

# LOW PAY EMPLOYERS

"IF YOU are a worker in the Bad Ass Cafe you're on £2.25 an hour, if you're working as an apprentice in Peter Marks you start on £1 an hour, if you're a cashier in Super-Value you're on a miserable £2.25 an hour, these are the conditions that young people face in this country".

# You Are OUTED

IF THE working conditions and pay talked about on this page are nothing new to you, contact the campaign and have your boss OUTED!. Enter your boss for the 'Scrooge of the month chart'. Drop us a line and let us know about your workplace. Young Left Resistance, P.O. Box 4773, Dublin 1

## TELLING IT LIKE IT IS

YOUNG WORKERS have not been slow to let our campaign know how low pay affects them. Marie works in a fast food joint, we cannot name the shop worker for obvious reasons.

"I WORK in a diner on the southside, I am not going to say where because I'd probably get sacked. I only get £2 an hour. I get paid for working from five until two, but I end up waiting till about three and don't get home till ages after. So the boss gets an hour or more free work off me.

"Having to stay late to clean up is a real problem in restaurants and pubs - it's not always even just to clean up if the diner's busy. That just normally means you'll be late. My friend started work at five in the evening the weekend of the Wales - Ireland match. She didn't get home till eight o'clock the next morning. The place was jammed packed with all the supporters, the busiest she'd ever seen it - but she was the only waitress on.

"The boss really tries to push the idea of grades - the lowest in their opinion being kitchen porter. They want you to aspire to be a waiter if you're a kitchen porter, and a supervisor if you're a waiter - what an ambition! But even this is ridiculous because during the week I end up both waiting and doing the kitchen porter work.

"I'm sick of it the money is crap, I don't get home till about three in the morning. I have to be in college for bang in nine, I've been getting into trouble about timekeeping and attendance. I spend my nights waiting tables or cleaning dishes and my days trying to stay awake in college.



"I WORK in Penneys in Dublin, the reason I work part time is because I'm still at school.

"The conditions in Penneys aren't the worst I suppose. I get £3.78 an hour, which isn't that bad when I talk to my friend who's a hairdresser. She gets £1 an hour.

"Because I'm studying and working I'm generally exhausted all the time and it does my head in when people say things like "Give it up if you can't hack it". I'd be happy to give it up and concentrate on my leaving cert for the next year, but I can't because I need the money.

"I'd say the reason Penneys is alright is because workers

there are in the Mandate union. Whereas most of the places with bad conditions and really low pay, the places where most young people work aren't unionised.

"I think there should be a minimum wage of £5 an hour though, because sometimes I don't know if it's worth it. I mean I have to go to work straight from school, which means bus fare a couple of times a day. Any books I need for school I have to pay for, as well as obviously handing up money at home. I think it's about time there was a minimum wage."

YOUNG LEFT RESISTANCE'S outing campaign was kicked off at the end of January outside Burger King on O'Connell St. We went for this place because it employs mainly young people, paying them a pittance in comparison to the owner of Burger King who is worth a 'whopping' £31 million.

Despite a snow blizzard our first stall was really busy. People were queuing up to sign the petition against low pay and for the immediate introduction of a minimum wage. Next on trial was the Early Learning Centre in Henry St. This outing was in solidarity with the workers on strike in Cork. This was quite a day. The Gardai decided to use article 21 of the Public Order Act. This meant that we were not allowed to put a

stall, but it didn't stop us from having a successful protest. The word of our protest reached the strikers in Cork and had a really good effect on them. Where do we go from here? Right now we're spoiled for choice as to who we can 'out' - we've been given lots of suggestions ranging from Peter Marks to Super Value and from

By Sinead Daly  
Young Left Resistance

the Baggot Inn to Eddie Rockets Diner. Its up to you to decide. Get involved in our campaign against low pay now.

The militant poets out in force of course it's not easy to build the consciousness of the unconscious masses lying in pools of blood and slavery and they think it's bravery that men and women go out to fight in war when they don't even know what they're fighting for it's time to settle the score rock the boat ripple the waters let it be known to our sons and daughters that your governments are not there for you or me or her or him and you'll surely drown if you can't swim in your own preconceptions and misconceptions of the world as we pass and the ruling class will rip and tear and the poverty and famine too much to bear anymore we won't be your whore president taoiseach prime minister it's all so sinister how you preach and breach and cover up and lead us to believe that you run for us when you run for us every day in every way but soon you'll see the time will be when reality and evolution join forces to become revolution!



Poem by Mark Cleary, South Dublin Militant Labour. If you have any poems or cartoons send them in to us at The Militant Youth Page, P.O. Box 3434, Dub. 8

## WORKING FOR LEVIS ON 22p AN HOUR

UNDERAGE WORKERS some as young as 11, are paid 22p an hour to produce Levi Strauss clothing in Honduras. The factory has a contract for five years to produce 35,000 garments a week for the American multinational. Under a certificate hanging on the wall, confirming the factory has "satisfactorily completed" the demands of Levi Strauss, work 600 squashed in Honduras.

By Susan Fitzgerald  
North Dublin Militant Labour

Levis' have long claimed to "pioneer ethical business practices", their global sourcing and operating guidelines which state that "workers can be no less than 14 years of age". The Honduran government say that no child under 16 can work more than six hours a day. Tell

that to the 11 year old girl who started when she was 10 who said: "I am the youngest but there are other children here too". Another worker employed

more than three years as a machinist - confirmed "there are several children under 16. Some are 13 and 14."

So much for the 'ethical business practice' assurances of multinationals and governments.

## WORKING FOR NOTHING

THIS YEAR approximately 20,000 school students will take part in their respective school's transition year programme.

By John McCamley  
Young Left Resistance

Transition year is intended to involve students in community and project work, languages and work experience.

"Transition year is a chance for pupils to develop in self confidence and can afford an opportunity to reflect on their future", according to Department of Education Inspectors.

What kind of future is on offer for you to reflect on?

One of the plus sides to the programme is that it gives students a chance to practice subjects they haven't been able to try before because some of the subjects are not on the Junior or Leaving Cert courses.

It can give you an idea of what area of employment or the college course you would like to move into. This is all very well, but when you sign up to enter transition year you don't expect to be exploited!

Work experience is said to give you the experience of working in the job you want to do after school. The experience you do get is one of total exploitation for two weeks.

One story I heard was from someone who wanted to get

experience in electronics so he got a job for two weeks in an electronics company, but ended up licking stamps and cleaning the floor. He never saw any electronics. He got paid £20 for a five day week and he was one of the lucky ones. Schools advise companies that students shouldn't be paid.

Employers have come out and said work experience is a great idea, of course they would because it means getting free labour with no rights or anything.

By the way, the government now want more work experience programmes in school.



School students on the march, at the anti coursing protest at the annual coursing meeting in Clonmel.

# Militant

SOLIDARITY PRICE £1

Militant is on the Internet Worldwide Web at: <http://www.dojo.ie/militant/>

## INTERNET

Militant e-mail address is [militant@dojo.ie](mailto:militant@dojo.ie)

THE SOCIALIST PAPER

40P

ISSUE 242

# MASS PROTEST AGAINST WATER CHARGES

SAT. 20th APRIL

**APRIL 20TH is the day! On that Saturday, we intend to show the establishment politicians that the anti-water charges campaign is on the march.**

By Emmett Farrell  
South Dublin Militant Labour

We want a big, colourful, noisy parade of residents from all over Dublin with placards, banners and noise makers - whistles, drums - try two saucepan lids.

Most of all we need people from every estate facing water charges. Some estates are discussing area marches to join the main

march and rally.

Start preparing now. Get posters and leaflets from the Federation of Dublin Anti Water Charges Campaigns. Get your residents association or trade union to support or sponsor the march. Make your banner. Get people to commit themselves.

**United we can beat the double tax.**

Justice, Irish style. Pensioners get Court Orders, the rich get tax amnesties.



Eileen and Jim Campbell, pensioners who have had a water disconnection order made against them in court.

## ANTI WATER CHARGES PROTEST

**Saturday April 20th  
Assemble Parnell Square  
2pm**

This is your chance to show your anger at these charges. All residents' and tenants' associations, community organisations, trade unions, anti-water charge groups and individuals are invited to participate. Bring banners and placards.

**CAMPAIGN HOTLINE 8729163**

**WHAT AN irresponsible proposal! I'm referring to ESAT Telecom's proposal to build a 16 meter microwave mast at Roselawn shopping centre. This is to facilitate their nation-wide network of masts for mobile phone links. The proposed site is next to a large school, St Francis Xavier's, with 1,100 students and in the centre of a densely populated residential area.**

There is an ongoing debate about the health risks from long term exposure to the abnormal pulsed microwaves emitted from the mast. ESAT claim there is no danger, but this technology is very new. Research into the long term effects is only beginning and results will not be available for many years yet.

Without the benefit of this type of independent research it is totally irresponsible for ESAT or any other company to claim that these masts are safe. In fact, due to the health risks, the location of transmitter

By Karen Allen  
North Dublin Militant Labour

masts in California and New Zealand is barred from residential and school areas.

ESAT however, are prepared to overlook any risks because mobile phones are big business. They are concerned only with their own profits. Residents of the Roselawn area and parents of the school students have different concerns and have organised a campaign against the

mast.

Militant Labour Councillor Joe Higgins, organised meetings in St. Francis Xavier's school attended by over a hundred people. The group have called themselves the Concerned Residents of Roselawn. Fingal County Council refused planning permission in December 1995 but their decision had nothing to do with health risks. Refusal was on the grounds that the height and location of the mast would contravene the County Development Plan. ESAT have appealed the decision

## BLANCHARDSTOWN SAYS NO TO ESAT MAST

# OUR HEALTH COMES FIRST

to An Bord Pleanála.

Further meetings have organised opposition in a number of different ways. It is important to make the maximum number of people aware of the proposals and to give them a way of voicing their outrage. A door-to-door canvass collected 1,500 signatures which have been given to An Bord Pleanála.

A report has also been commissioned from a consultant on non-ionising radiation. The report concluded that microwaves of a lower density would be acceptable but this is not the type of mast ESAT are planning. Residents then staged a protest outside ESAT's office. This protest, the report and the number of signatures leave no doubt about the level of anger in the area against the proposed mast.

A decision from An Bord Pleanála is due on or before May 15th. Should they overturn the refusal by Fingal County Council, the residents have let the owners of the shopping centre know their feelings. Roselawn Shopping Centre depends on local people for its business. It would obviously be in their own interest not to continue their contract with ESAT.

The residents have a number of concerns about the proposed mast. How the structure would look, the affect on property values, but the most serious question is the health risk. The people of Roselawn refuse to be used as guinea pigs to safeguard ESAT Telecom's profit margins.

**Title:** Militant, No. 242

**Organisation:** Militant Labour

**Date:** 1996

Downloaded from the Irish Left Archive.

Visit [www.leftarchive.ie](http://www.leftarchive.ie)

*The Irish Left Archive is provided as a non-commercial historical resource, open to all, and has reproduced this document as an accessible digital reference. Copyright remains with its original authors. If used on other sites, we would appreciate a link back and reference to the Irish Left Archive, in addition to the original creators. For re-publication, commercial, or other uses, please contact the original owners. If documents provided to the Irish Left Archive have been created for or added to other online archives, please inform us so sources can be credited.*