THE 28,000 nurses in the southern Irish state are set to lead the way in shutting the long period of relative industrial peace that has underlined the state's spectacular economic growth - the so-called Celtic Tiger.

For the first time, their houses has depended on one crucial element: the type of militancy that Irish workers have used to move the state to power in a series of national pay deals.

These pay deals have put legal restrictions on pay increases, and has seen the collapse of bargaining and denying workers the chance to use their industrial strength to win a larger share of the value they produce. The whole concept of nation-wide nurses that are at stake in an emergency, intensive care and operating theatres.

Committees will arrange emergency cover. They have insisted that decisions will be made by the health service managers which means another £4,000. Agreement payments, but the nurses are almost 26 per cent, plus extra maximum for staff nurses would rise by £7,000 more. Under the new deal the nurses dispute.

The latest revelation about the state's spectacular economic growth the long period of relative industrial peace that has underlined the state's spectacular economic growth - the so-called Celtic Tiger. This boom period for the bosses has This boom period for the bosses has been the drivers.

Train drivers on the Dublin DART have already forced the Labour Court to arbitrate at the Labour Court but the drivers are exceptionally well-organised and will not easily allow any diminution of their claim. The train drivers have a claim for parity with the Dublin drivers.

They are luring 11,000 nurses to become support- ing the signalling workers and overhaul line engineers who want the same pay- But it is clear that none of these trade union bureaucrats are prepared to lead a break from the stranglehold that the national pay deals impose on trade unions. They think that a few percent- age point extras will buy off workers. O’Connor made this clear: “In its place a special increase should be negotiated for all workers to take account of the economic growth over the last three years.” Her hopes of working with the drivers demonstrating their strength and organization ability in strikes was made clear, “If things are not to be allowed to collapse into an irredeemable mess, the govern- ment must immediately undertake a major initiative with a view to the development of a new consensus model”. But the need of the working class is not for a “major initiative” by the pro-bosses government or a new “social partnership” with a little bit more money for some sections of workers.

There can be no partnership on equal terms between the representatives of capital and the working class. To quote Trotsky in Marxism and the Trade Unions: “There is one common feature in the development, or more correctly in the degeneration, of mod- ern trade union organisation in the capitalist world; it is their drawing closely and growing to together with the state power.

“Monopoly capitalism does not rest on competition and free private initia- tive but on centralised control. The capitalist cliques at the head of mighty trusts, syndicates, banking consor- tiums, etc. view economic life from the very same heights as deist power; and they require at every step the collaboration of the laity.”

In effect these “social partnerships” are the most brazen form of class col- laboration. Working alongside the anti- trade union legislation they use all the authority of the state power to control and discipline workers - with union officials as policemen. The twelve years of these deals in the south of Ireland has seen the gap between the rich and poor widen with tens of thousands living in misery. In the south of Ireland has seen the gap between the rich and poor widen with tens of thousands living in misery. In the south of Ireland has seen the gap between the rich and poor widen with tens of thousands living in misery.

The Moriarty tribunal has revealed that in 1991 Haughey, the former Taoiseach, spent £10,000 from state- funded party leader's allowances to the Paris firm of Charvet to pay for his expen- sive, hand-tailored shirts.

The most exquisite silk and the finest Egyptian cotton was used from taxpayers' money to clothe Haughey at a time when Irish workers were fighting against the hair shirts imposed by Haughey's government. The Moriarty tribunal revealed that in 1991 Haughey, the former Taoiseach, spent £10,000 from state-funded party leader's allowances to the Paris firm of Charvet to pay for his expensive, hand-tailored shirts.

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We need to build a new workers’ party - but how?

BY JACKIE VANCE

TROTSKY, writing about the socialist revolution, said, “for success three essential requirements are: a party, once more a party, again a party.” With the WRP winding up, he was attempting to concentrate attention on the importance of organisation as the working class engaged in the struggle to end capitalism and eliminate its own exploitation.

For many revolutionaries problems of organisation have tended to be relegated to a secondary role. Party building has not been seen as a theoretical question on the same level as political economy or dialectics. But it is the party that is the embodiment of class consciousness and when the problems that surround its organisation are treated in a pragmatic, common-sense way the unity of theory and practice is lost.

Under Lenin’s guidance the Bolsheviks had recognised that the working class everywhere needs not but much more ‘party organisation’ in order to conquer power than was needed by the bourgeoisie in its great revolutions of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Trotsky was to come late to an understanding of this point but was, of course, thereafter the strongest defender of the Bolshevik principles and conceptions of organisation which he described as Lenin’s greatest contribution to the development of Marxism.

In his “Lessons of October” (1924) Trotsky explained, “the part played in bourgeois revolutions by the political power of the bourgeoisie, by its education, by its municipalities and universities, is a part which can be filled in a party revolution only by the party of the proletariat.”

In other words, the bourgeoisie while still the organised class is able to build up wealth and integrate itself in the institutions of the old regime through important positions, but the working class is not able to acquire these advantages and has to be organised by itself because it does possess. As Lenin put it, “in the struggle with the bourgeoisie, the weapon of the working class is its own organisation.”

Since the Russian revolution of 1917 there has been no change in the essential tasks confronting the working class internationally. Today capitalism is an unprecedented system which produces mass insanity and social crisis across the world. Power and wealth is increasingly concentrated in the hands of the representatives of the transnational monopolies which act as agents of stagnating wealth through exploitation while hunger, disease and natural disasters condemn millions to degradation and death.

In the advanced capitalist countries the disparity between the rich and poor continues to widen (latest research reveals that more than four million children in Britain are living in poverty) as capitalism is forced to attempt to back every gain won by the working class. This is an economic necessity.

But if the task of establishing working class power remains the same as in 1917, what about the forms of organisation for a revolutionary Marxist workers’ party? Must they be modelled on the forms developed by the Bolsheviks who never wavered from the fundamental principle of a centralised, disciplined party?

There were, of course, modifying ideas on party organisation and membership according to the fluctuations and changes in Russian law and the pressures of the civil war, but the fundamentals remained.

Is it possible for a loosely-knit, undisciplined, untrained organisation to prepare the working class for the taking of power?

These questions come more and more to the fore as the deep-going changes in the objective situation of the class struggle continue to have a dramatic impact on most of the parties and groups calling themselves Marxists. Splits, divisions and confusion are common-place and they are increasingly accompanied by a questioning of what once were firmly held views on the vanguard party and its forms of organisation.

In particular the call for a new working class party is now widespread.

It is absolutely essential that any discussion on the forms of organisation for a mass workers’ party attempts to learn from the experiences of the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP).

In Britain the call for a new mass workers’ party was first initiated by the WRP in 1982. The WRP went on to dissolve in 1990 and, along with a few other individuals, the Movement for Socialism (MFS).

There was, however, a major difference in reasoning behind the initiative made by the WRP and the current call by the other organisations for a new party. Whereas the WRP had been increasing isolation of small groups unable to recruit (and also in the case of the Socialist Party in Britain, a reaction to their splits) the WRP went on to investigate the possibilities that were being opened up by the changed relationship of class forces, world-wide.

The break-up of Stalinism, with the virtual collapse of many Communist Parties, and the open abandonment of socialist aims by the British Labour Party is a bitter characteristic of the capitalist-democratic forms of the party that is the embodiment of the party ofbourgeoisie.

The WRP, and the Workers International, characterised this changed situation as favourable for the advancement of the cause of the working class. In opposition to all who said that the downfall of the Stalinist regimes in eastern Europe and the USSR would give a new lease of life for capitalism we were insistent that the crisis of capitalism would be intensified by the problems of restoring capitalism in these countries and re-integrating them into the world capitalist system.

“Party building has not been seen as a theoretical question on the same level as political economy or dialectics. But is the party that is the embodiment of class consciousness and when the problems that surround its organisation are treated in a pragmatic, common-sense way the unity of theory and practice is lost.”

This proposal has of course been confirmed. From eastern Germany to Russia - and with the barbaric examples of Biran and Kosovo - imperialism is exposed as requiring a grasped and disciplined workers’ party which is capable of taking over and weakening its control world-wide.

Continuing the characteristic of the changed situation as “favourable” was in turn the cause of the campaigns of the WRP particularly in Workers Aid for Bosnia. Support for this campaign came from many trade union branches controlled by Stalinists who presumably would not even have allowed anything initiated by Trotskyist on the agenda. This happened not only in Britain and in France it was highlighted by the granting of a stall at the fete of the Communist daily paper L’Humanite.

But, of course, the question begs to be asked. If the situation is favourable for developing the working-class movement -what has the WRP been so unsuccessful? It has no public face and its sectoral basis, its international thrust - important features of the party - were being restricted by the lack of central control of the party.

There was no means of checking that decisions were being carried out correctly and the political involvement of the members in the party’s activities was a large extent, left to chance. The Liverpool dockers’ dispute illustrated vividly how the party was acting as a barrier to strengthening the working class in its struggles and also to deepening of the party’s links with the class.

Despair and frustration which correctly identified the paramount importance of this dispute and its significance for the whole of the WRP was met with the neglect and failure of the WRP failed the dockers. Internal political letters called for all the members to fully engage in raising support for the dockers and to make the winning of the strike the goal of these members one task.

The work of WRP members helped produce some significant developments for the dockers, such as the many issues of the Dockers’ Charter and the formation of the London Dockers Support Group but, actually, only a tiny handful of WRP members got involved and, with the lack of control in the party, there was no way in which this could be changed.

It is accepted that a new party cannot be created out of the people it has to be imposed on the class. It can only be built through strengthening the ability of the members to fully engage in raising support for the dockers and to make the winning of the strike the goal of the whole of the WRP membership.

If this was the case, the question of the WRP members was posed with breaking through the MFS. Tensions inside the party deepened to the point where the MFS members were posing the question of a new party. We believed that it would be impossible to build a new party in a new situation, if this party did not incorporate the struggles and theoretical gains of the right for the Fourth International. The challenge was to test this fight for the continuity of Bolshevism in the new situation and in front of the whole working class.

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The Workers Revolutionary Party of Namibia (WRP), has formed an electoral alliance with South West Africa National Union (SWANU). The old political party in Namibia, SWANU, contains its socialist, and has always had differences with the West African People's Organisation (SWAPO), which has been the party of government since independence. Although the WRP was instrumental in forming a Socialist Alliance on the land question and the declaration was well received. Agreement on this last basis for the electoral alliance. The alliance will be fighting not only SWAPO but a new party, Congress of Democrats (COD), formed by former leading members and officials of SWAPO who felt out of place in the context of the new political situation and in order to keep these differences. The COD is very much a part of the urban middle class, the political upheaval resulting in its formation has opened up greater political awareness and discussion. Many can now see the truth of the WRP's campaign to bring into the open and fight for justice for the SWAPO ex-detainees. Thousands of dedicated young freedom fighters who were imprisoned and tortured in SWAPO's dungeons. Apart from SWAPO dissidents, some SWANU members have also joined the COD. There are those who thought that SWANU would disintegrate, but the move away by some to the new party has left a hard core of SWANU members who are serious in their endeavours to understand their own history and the fight for the future of workers and peasants to take their future into their own hands. It is in this basis that the WRP has been able to join with SWANU in the electoral alliance.

The All-Africa Workers, Peasants and Youth Conference

After the resounding success of the All-Africa Workers, Peasants and Youth Conference, the South West Africa National Union (SWANU) has designated the development as a cultural area and is assisting with the building of the homes. These include the following important developments:

- A cooperative — the Housing Organization — has been set up, with a bank account and a list of donors.
- Plans have been drawn up, and talks have been held with engineers from the water and electricity departments.
- A pilot project, including pre-paid electricity and water, has been agreed.
- Apart from the homes, there will be a laundry, a cheap restaurant, a second-hand shop, a kindergarten and an after-school centre.
- The Namibian National Union has organized a program to bring into the open and fight for justice for the SWAPO ex-detainees. Thousands of dedicated young freedom fighters who were imprisoned and tortured in SWAPO's dungeons. Apart from SWAPO dissidents, some SWANU members have also joined the COD. There are those who thought that SWANU would disintegrate, but the move away by some to the new party has left a hard core of SWANU members who are serious in their endeavours to understand their own history and the fight for the future of workers and peasants to take their future into their own hands. It is in this basis that the WRP has been able to join with SWANU in the electoral alliance.

The Socialist Youth League

A growing number of young people have already WRP classes on socialism since March this year. They are organized a terrific May Day event, with music and as speeches rallying the youth to the banner of socialist internationalism.

Homeless Project

After their eviction and the break-up of the squatter camp in Windhoek (see WRP No 14, June 1999), a delegation of the homeless and their supporters was invited to put their case to officials of the municipality. These officials knew that there was a growing movement among the homeless. (In fact 300 people attend the Sunday afternoon meetings.) Therefore a plot of land was secured to build homes.

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- The Namibian National Union has designated the development as a cultural area and is assisting with the building of the homes. These include the following important developments:

Land & Liberty

An irregular column, about property, poverty, the rent under our feet, and whether we’ve a roof over our head ...

Penang Lawyers

There were 21,000 electoral votes for the 12th Commonwealth law conference, in Kuala Lumpur, the Malaysian capital, last month, promised that Britain’s Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine, would give a special address on the subject of “Human Rights in the Millennium”, at 5pm on February 14th. But a last-minute request for move of the last minute, the request was granted. Apart from the homes, there will be a laundry, a cheap restaurant, a second-hand shop, a kindergarten and an after-school centre.

The Socialist Youth League of Namibia celebrating May Day 1999
This article by Liz Knight and Erkan Gok was originally published in "Workers Left Briefing". Workers International Press thanks the authors for permission to reproduce the article.

The earthquake which struck north-west Turkey on 17 August have been more catastrophic than almost any other in Europe this century. Thousands of buildings collapsed in an instant. More than 500,000 people fled or were trapped in ruins. Tens of thousands are feared dead, and those responsible are the present rulers of Turkey.

80 per cent of earthquake deaths are caused by collapsing buildings and 85 per cent of Turkey is vulnerable to earthquakes. Yet more than half of all buildings in Turkey are built in violation of construction regulations and unknown numbers without planning permission. Many are simply weak or turn a blind eye. Politicians, often the owners of illegal buildings, or corrupt architects, also regularly grant permission for illegal buildings at the approach of elections. In the last four years, 100,000 new illegal buildings, not approved by the State, have been built in rural, poor, economic migrants in their own country, or driven from army-occupied Kurdish villages, have been flooding into Istanbul and the industrial north-west. Often they can afford only badly and illegally built housing. That was where they lived and where tens of thousands have now suffered or died. Workers International Press thanks the authors for permission to reproduce the article.

Where are all our murdered MNWs now? Where's the bloody Prime Minister? My father's dead in there. But where's all the family and all the responsibility? The soldiers get everything and we get nothing. So aloud a woman in Golcuk, Selcuk Celik (quoted in The Guardian, 28-9, 99), three days after the quake. The riot police were first only at the Golcuk navy base and later at other prisons. Many other areas received help only whenever four days after the earthquake. People tried to reach their homes with bare hands to reach family and relatives but they knew they were still alive but who were almost all buried. Fourth day. Journalists were unanimous in their description of the bureaucratic inertia, bungling and downright criminal indifference of the various wings of the state in relation to their pets suffering. Robert Fisk in The Independent pointed out that Turkey has one of the largest prison populations in NATO — they could destroy a thousand buildings. Whole, people, buildings, furniture around, help from the government had to reluctant- the government had to reluctant- the government had to reluctant- the government had to reluctant-to allow freedom of Press. The army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, sup- the army of Turkey, su...
The following statement from the National Frond for Indonesian Labour Struggle (FNPNI) (see statement reproduced on this page) was written by the Indonesian Communists to oppose interference in the internal affairs of the Indonesian people.

**FNPNI statement on East Timor**

The ballot, offered as a way to resolve the 25-year-old crisis in East Timor has been completed. The results show that the Timorese people reject the special autonomy offered by the Indonesian government and prefer to exercise their right to self-determination.

FNPNI calls for a position of respect for the principle of the right to self-determination of all peoples and adherence to the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

FNPNI demands the following:
1. The immediate withdrawal of all troops from East Timor
2. The disarmament of all militias
3. The holding of elections under UN supervision
4. The protection of the human rights of all inhabitants of East Timor
5. The restoration of all human rights
6. The respect for the principle of self-determination
7. The withdrawal of all foreign troops
8. The establishment of a democratic government in East Timor
9. The support for the solidarity actions and strikes conducted by the workers' organizations
10. The conviction of those responsible for the crimes committed in East Timor

The Indonesian Unionists back East Timor freedom struggle

Dita Indah Sarif (Chairperson)
Ilham Syah (General Secretary)

CRITICISING the one-sidedness of the Stalin "Draft Programme of the Communist International" published in 1928, Trotsky wrote:

"Capitalist gains mastery only gradually over the inherent unevenness, breaking and altering it, employing therein its own means and methods. In contrast to the economic processes which stepped on capitalism, the development of capitalism is inherently and constantly arrested at economic expansion, at the penetration of new territories, the formation of monopoly cartels, the conversion of self-sufficient liberal economies into a system of financial interrelations.

"Therewith it brings about its remarkable and epochal one-sidedness of the Stalin "Draft Programme of the Communist International"."

(Trotsky’s views are also echoed in the recent call for East Timor independence.)