

international  
**VIEWPOINT**

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**The elusive peace**

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**Assassination sparks outrage**

**World Economy (2)**





## IRELAND

RADIO Teilifís Éireann (RTÉ, Ireland's radio and television company) are to appeal to the Irish Supreme Court in a bid to increase censorship.

On 4 March this year the Supreme Court heard RTÉ's appeal against the High Court judgement in favour of trade union militant and Sinn Féin activist Larry O'Toole.

In July 1992 the High Court had found that RTÉ was wrong to use Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act to censor O'Toole as the spokesperson of a Dublin strike committee.

This judgement was welcomed by RTÉ journalists, by the journalists union and even by Conor Cruise O'Brien, the parliamentary architect of the current Section 31 law. RTÉ was found to be applying censorship provisions to harshly.

In August 1990 the workers at the Gateaux Bakery in Finglas, North Dublin, were in dispute with the Allied Lyons Group of Britain. The workers elected Larry O'Toole as Chair of the Strike Committee.

Larry had worked in Gateaux for 24 years and was a member of the national executive of the Irish Bakers Union.

The dispute gained a great deal of media attention. After broadcasting one interview with O'Toole, RTÉ thereafter banned him from the airwaves. He was not allowed to represent the view of those workers who had elected him for that purpose.

Head of RTÉ news, Joe Mulholland, said that the reason for banning O'Toole was that "any person who is a member of Sinn Féin... will not be permitted to broadcast on any RTÉ programme".

RTÉ's interpretation of Section 31 is narrow even by the standards set by that Act. Section 31 censors any person who is acting in the capacity of spokesperson or representative of Sinn Féin not any person who is a member of Sinn Féin. Larry O'Toole's membership was irrelevant to his work on behalf of the Gateaux strikers.

The case is seen as very important for all those who believe that workers, community groups and other organisations should have the right to have their point of view expressed through their chosen spokesperson, without interference from the state.

For further information contact: Larry O'Toole Free Speech Campaign, 33 Geraldine Street, Dublin 7, Éire ★



## INDIA

THERE has been an increasing amount of interest in, and comment on the position of women in India. This has followed the recent spate of communal conflict where women, from the minority community in particular, have borne the brunt of the violence. This has been the case since the partition of India and Pakistan which preceded independence from Britain in 1947.

My personal experience as a member of teams instituted by women's groups and democratic rights organizations to investigate violations of the human rights of common citizens during caste conflicts in Marathawad (1978), the Assam agitation (1980) and communal riots in Bombay (1984) revealed gender blindness and insensitivity on the part of political parties, relief organizations and the state apparatus.

The most shocking revelation in all the above mentioned incidents was the role of the state repressive machinery. During the communal carnage at the start of 1993, hundreds of Muslim women were stripped naked; raped in public, not allowed to put on their clothes for hours on end by the anti-social elements patronized by the communal forces, all in front of military and para-military forces.

Instead of arresting the miscreants, the police arrested the women, the victims of the violence. The attackers were armed with video cameras and focussed on the naked women. When the women started to run away in shame, weeping and wailing, the jeering crowd chased them with the video camera and the police chased them with batons. The women were forced into police vans and once again molested by police. — **Vibhuti Patel** ★

## SRI LANKA

THE Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP — Sri Lankan section of the Fourth International) has joined forces with a number of other anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist organisations to fight the May 17 provincial councils elections.

Under the name Peoples Liberation Organisation, the campaign will be focusing on the following four themes:

- Rejection of the conditions demanded by the IMF and World Bank. Reverse the programme of privatisation.
- The right of self-determination for the Tamil speaking people.
- Land to those who work it. Abolish the water taxes and cuts in agricultural subsidies
- Overthrow of the dictatorial constitution. Democracy based on workplace councils.

The ruling bourgeois United National Party (UNP) will be going to the polls in coalition with the Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC) and two bourgeois muslim groups. The other major coalition, called the Podujana Jana Peramuna (Peoples Front), includes the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SFLP), the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) and the Communist Party.

Both of these electoral alliances have launched systematic campaigns against the intervention of the Peoples Liberation Organisation and in particular against the NSSP, because of their opposition to the economic policies that are currently being pursued and their support for Tamil self-determination.

The NSSP have made an urgent appeal for financial assistance. They plan to print one million manifestos in Sinhala, Tamil and English; print 50,000 posters and organise upto 200 public meetings. The estimated cost will be equivalent to \$15000.

Contributions can be sent to A/c No.0004 5001 3153, S Borella Branch (Joint Account with lakasiri). ★