

THE WORKER

FOR WORKERS POWER AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

Worker exclusive

IDA factories set to collapse

Coalition stick in boot ORGANISE TO FIGHT

by EAMONN McCANN

IN CHINA, 1982 was the Year of the Tiger.

In Ireland it was the Year of the Rat.

And the rats reckon they are all set to dominate '83 as well.

Chief among the rats were, and are, the leaders of Labour and of the ICTU who spent most of last year, and intend to spend all of next, preaching "realism" and "moderation" and calling for "unity" in the face of economic crisis.

Unity with the bosses, that is, and with the bosses' politi-

cal pals. And for the purpose of preserving the bosses' political system.

Their system is in sore need of salvation.

Not only are the public finances in chaos, as we have to listen to night after night, but private sector finance, too, is in deep stock.

Last year, 701 companies collapsed in the Republic — an increase of roughly 50 per cent over '81.

At the same time, the number of new companies being set up — many of them mere "paper" companies, of course — fell from 7,175 in '81 to 5,783.

When a system is in as bad shape as that, it costs dear to put it right. It's the workers who paid dear last year. And who, if the Government and the bosses' organisations have their way, will go on paying dear in the next.

And the Government, the FUE and the CII will have their way unless there is a ferocious fight back.

But where's the fight to come from? Who's going to lead the troops into battle?

Last year, there was no real battle fought. Isolated skirmishes, certainly, some of them long drawn out and — at Clondalkin, for example — needing fierce determination. But no battle on a broad front.

Workers were thrown onto the dole, sometimes in large numbers, as at Fieldcrest, sometimes handful by handful.

At the same time, the wages of those still in work were, in real terms, falling — by an average of about five per cent, although for some it was much steeper.

The first cuts in health, education and social welfare were either made or marked out to be made.

The working class wasn't exactly battered into the ground in '82. But it still took a bit of a thumping and is maybe softened up for a harder hammering to come.

like the bosses, actually believe in the capitalist system.

Either they believe in it, full stop. Or they believe that, like it or not, it's here to stay for the time being.

Politically, that's what underlies Labour's decision to go into coalition with Fine Gael. The equivalent on the industrial front is collaboration on wage deals, or on an "orderly" acceptance of redundancies. That's a coalition, too, between workers' representatives and the boss class.

Unless workers break out of that set-up there's no hope of change. And in order to break out, rank and file workers will have to take the initiative. There's nobody else.

That doesn't mean individuals looking for aggro or writing off the official union structures as a dead loss.

What it does mean is beginning the argument, at work, at branch meetings, on the dole queue, in the pub, wherever, and winning the widest possible support for a fight back in '83.

For a wage rise to keep pace with prices when the next round comes due. Against the loss of a single job. Against cuts in social welfare or disability. To stop school or hospital closures which will hit working class people hardest.

There is a ready audience for these ideas. People are sick to the teeth of sell-outs and, even when they don't see any immediate alternative, have the Dail parties well sized up.

But ones and twos seething with resentment is no good. It's only when resentment is organised that it can become resistance.

Workplace by workplace, union by union, area by area... workers are going to have to build up the base from which to launch a battle.

It is the aim of the Socialist Workers' Movement to play a part in building that base.

One of the reasons that happened is that the people who in theory are supposed to be leading the workers' movement have been doing nothing of the sort.

Nobody expects to find Donal Nevin or John Carrol on a picket line in the morning appealing for support for a fight against redundancies or urging workers to stand firm for a reasonable pay deal or putting the boot into passing scabs. Although it would help.

But neither should they be expected to do what they did, which at best was to hold back their own side any time a battle seemed likely.

There was, as there always is, no shortage of shadow boxing on platforms and television programmes, and the usual suggestions of fire and brimstone on their breath.

But at no point from January to December in 1982, through two changes of Government, did the trade union or Labour Party leadership break out from the consensus and try to rally the rank and file for a real fight.

That's not because they are personally corrupt or cowardly or too stupid to see what needs to be done. It is because they,



SITECAST, a subsidiary of the Rohan Group specialise in building factories.

The method they use is to build a frame from prefabricated metal portals and then attach the roof and wall to this frame.

This is now the normal method of construction for non-specialist factories.

Sitecast has been successful during the last few years in winning contracts for the IDA advance factories.

At the moment the IDA have invested over £40 million in these advance factories, many of them constructed by Sitecast.



The problem is, these factories are not structurally safe.

It appears from tests recently carried out that the portals which support the factory lack strength.

In cases of severe strain such as storms, or stress put upon these portals, the factory would be in danger of collapse.

This came to light when a private firm, who were contracting Sitecast to construct their factory, carried out tests on the safety factor of the frame portals.

These were shown to be inadequate.

What is disgraceful is that a private company found this information out.

Why did the IDA engineers not test the construction of their factories for safety, or was it a case of the lives of workers being less important than the profits of the multi-nationals.

If you work in one of these factories, raise the issue with your union.

Safety at work is too important an issue to leave to management, it's your life that's at stake.

Picket Labour Party HQ, 5 February, 11.30 am (see P4/5)

CAP BONANZA SPELLS HIGHER FOOD PRICES

EVERY YEAR, the farm price negotiations at the EEC occur.

The press would have us believe that "Ireland is winning" if food prices are pushed up.

Any move to cut back on the Common Agricultural Policy is said to "spell disaster for the country".

Dearer food prices, butter mountains and milk lakes — these are policies which both Coalition and Fianna Fail Ministers of Agriculture support.

But who really gains and loses?

The Common Agricultural Policy of the EEC (CAP) works on a simple system. EEC officials intervene in the market for certain commodities and buy sufficiently large quantities so that a guaranteed high price can be maintained. Food prices are then forced up inside the EEC. Workers pay taxes to have dearer food. It is a manumet to the madness of capitalism.

Only a limited number of products are covered by the intervention scheme. This has resulted in the agriculture industry in countries like Ireland gearing itself to producing these products.

In the case of dairy processing, the most important intervention product is Skimmed Milk Powder. It is easier to store in the massive EEC warehouses. Since Ireland joined the EEC there has been a major shift in the dairy processing industry towards skim milk powder.

Skim milk powder makes for a more "capital intensive" industry. There are less workers and more machines.

The result has been a concentration in the larger processing factories. There have been massive redundancies in the smaller rural villages, where other jobs are scarce.

This rationalisation process has been carried out with little organised resistance. This probably has nothing to do with the fact that the industry is organised totally by the ITGWU.

The EEC bonanza awakened the interest of the banks in the dairy and beef sectors. Up to this, much of the investment in milk processing, except for butter, was carried out by the major co-operatives which control the industry on a joint venture basis with the big British companies such as Express Dairies and Unigate. Not only did those companies provide the cash, but they also had access to the British market.

£5.3 million under its "re-equipment programme" to 24 projects in the food industry. The number of additional jobs that money will lead to amounts to a grand total of 24.

Much of the hypocrisy in the agricultural industry has to do with the role of the co-ops. The co-ops do not pay tax on their profits. They are supposed to involve all the local farmers — large and small — in the running of their affairs. But the growth and concentration that has occurred over the last two decades has led to the emergence of a professional managerial elite who actually control the co-ops.



These people effectively make the decisions and determine employment policies while the farmers who own the co-ops are asked to simply rubber-stamp the decisions.

They push through policies which most directly benefit the bigger farmers. The small gets used as the pawn when it comes to discussion of farmer incomes.

Once the co-ops have completed the rationalisation of their processing operations, they will turn their attention to the smaller suppliers. It makes more sense from their point of view to have a small number of large farmers supplying milk than a large number of small farmers. By insisting that all farmers install expensive equipment and comply with bureaucratic rules and regulations, they have already begun to force the smaller people out of agriculture and are putting the land at the disposal of the large farmers.

The people who gain most from the crazy CAP scheme are the big farmers, the banks and the new management elite of the co-ops.

ABORTION — the case for choice

EVERY year between 4,000 and 10,000 Irish women go to England for abortions.

Women of every age from 15 to 55, from every walk of life — workers in factories, hospitals and offices, housewives and unemployed.

Many already have children, some grown up families and are looking for a job again, others cannot afford or simply do not want another child.

Perhaps over 40,000 Irish women have had English abortions since it was legalised in 1967.

Increased sexual freedom and life outside the home, more education, new ideas, better standards of living — all these meant that women wanted the opportunity to control their lives and has fuelled the demand for abortion.

If women are to control their lives, decide what job to do, where and how to live, they must be able to decide if and when to have children.

This means easy access to legal and safe contraception free on the health service and, when contraception fails, free abortion on demand.

Control of fertility is crucial to the emancipation of women, smashing the idea that women are just breeding machines, with no life outside the family and raising the question of a woman's right to work.

The demand for contraception and abortion is a class issue, affecting men and wo-

men, which socialists must support.

In fighting for abortion rights we expose the class hypocrisy where rich women slip off to England with no trouble and working class women face the panic of getting the money together fast enough to get an abortion.

Is not abortion taking the foetus's life? We would not deny that the foetus is a potential human being, but it is

totally dependent on the woman who carries it. It can only continue to live if she lives, will not be nourished if she does not eat, will not receive oxygen if she does not breathe, will die if she dies.

It is totally dependent on the use of her, and only her, body. This is why the woman has the right to decide whether or not she will continue to give life to the foetus.

That is why we put the woman, her life and her right to control that life, before the

rights of the foetus. The humanity it has is abstract and cannot be compared with that of the pregnant woman without devaluing her life, needs and aspirations.

Anti-abortionists like to call themselves "Pro-Life." They have done nothing to deserve the label.

It is we, the socialists who speak of and support women's right to choose on abortion, who are pro-life. We worry about the quality of people's lives, about the children who are already born and are not getting proper medical care because of the health cuts, who are living in poverty or being battered by family violence because of unemployment, who sit in crowded classrooms, live in tiny expensive flats and look forward to a future even bleaker.

We fight for a society where facilities are provided so that pregnant women have a genuine choice about whether or not to have an abortion and are not forced by economic necessity or childcare or housing problems or because of society's attitudes — a society where women can have children and a job and a life outside the home.

Every week about 140 Irish women leave Ireland to seek abortions in England. Yet the law in Ireland makes abortion illegal in all circumstances. It is time the law was brought into line with reality. As a first step this right-wing inspired Amendment must be fought against.

PIPE PUMPS PROFITS TO TV BOSSES

WHEN PIPED television was introduced into the area in 1973, it was unanimously adopted by the residents of Finglas.

Gone was the bad reception and here was access to several stations at a very cheap rate.

But not for long... The bosses of Dublin Cable Systems doubled the rate of payment within 6 months.

The West Finglas Tenants Association strongly rejected this increase and advised the people not to pay it.

Rather than lose thousands of customers, DCS made an agreement with WFTA that involved anyone falling into areas automatically having to pay the new rate.

If they refused they would be cut off.

Several years later, DCS tried again — this time picking

out individuals and accusing them of being in arrears.

If they had not kept every receipt since 1973, they had to pay up.

Due to the incompetent organisers of WFTA who failed to inform people of the agreement to enable them to keep their receipts, hundreds of people have been, and are continuously being victimised in this way, with WFTA refusing to do anything.

They have argued that the onus is on you to prove you were no in arrears.

The cable T.V. system is a licence to print money. But for the likes of Dublin Cable System that licence is not enough.

They are out to screw working class people for as much as they can get. The WFTA have done a terrible disservice in letting them get away with it.

PADDY CARROLL

the worker

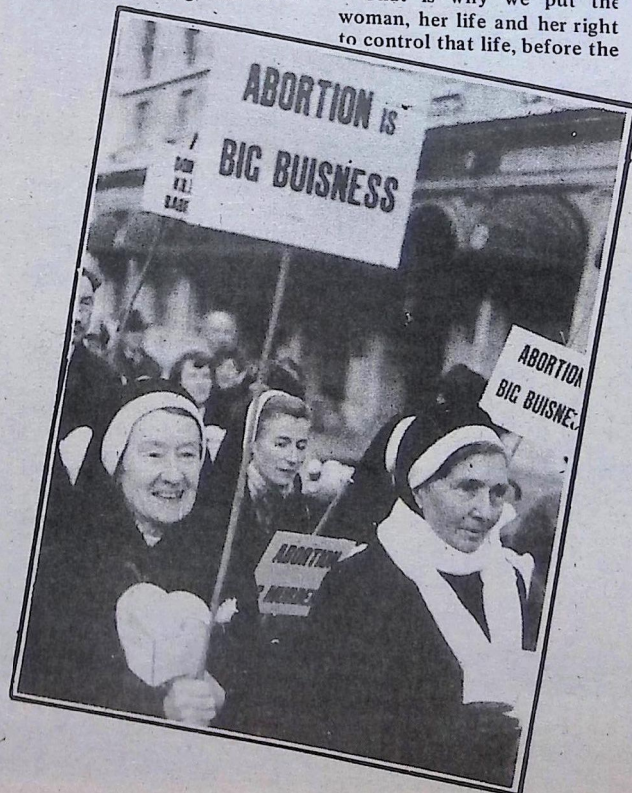
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Teacher's union bows to church

THE EXECUTIVE Committee of the Irish National Teachers Organisation — the union for primary school teachers — has refused to back one of its own members in the elections for the Senate.

Joe O'Toole was refused backing because he spoke against the abortion referendum. The INTO has no policy on the issue. Indeed it has gone to great lengths to make sure its members don't discuss political issues at union meetings.

Joe O'Toole guaranteed that he would fully support union policy on educational matters and oppose any cut-backs in spending on education. Two other primary school teachers who are also Senate candidates made no such guarantees. As members of Fianna

Fall and Fine Gael, they were in no position to oppose the cuts. Yet they received official union support.

The only reason O'Toole failed to receive union support was because of his position on the referendum. At an executive meeting he was questioned closely on the issue.



Mr Joe O'Toole

The other two teachers were simply formally endorsed.

The moves against O'Toole were inspired by the far-right members of the Knights of Columbanus. One of their number is now running for Presidency of the union. There is no doubt that their intention was not just to see O'Toole defeated in the election for the Senate. It is to set an example so that every teacher will feel intimidated against speaking out against this referendum because of their position in Church-run schools.

The Executive's failure to endorse O'Toole is just the tip of the iceberg of their cawthumping attitude to their church managers.

Unfortunately, the whole affair was fixed up with a patchy compromise. The executive of the union decided to endorse O'Toole, provided they could tell him how to vote.

That would be fair enough in a union that openly took political positions. But the INTO has gone to the lengths of taking legal advice once a resolution on plastic bullets and H Block were carried by branch. Now the same executive were prepared to discuss and instruct O'Toole on how to vote on all the major issues in the Senate.

Joe O'Toole accepted the compromise and then realised he had made a mistake. He subsequently withdrew from the elections. INTO members will have some opportunity to register a protest against the way the union is run in the election for Presidency in 1983.

The response from the rank and file union activists in Dublin was solid. The major District Committee passed resolutions calling for a special union conference if the executive didn't change their mind. But unfortunately it was left at that. There was no attempt to carry the arguments on the issue to the schools.

Revolutionaries have nothing to do with elections for the Senate. We regard it as an elitist mini-House of Lords. In the past socialists have spoken out against the waste of union funds in such "elections" — indeed in O'Toole's own campaign. But the Senate is not the issue in this case. It is clearly the clerical domination of the INTO.

that. Cuts in education and health, loss of jobs and pay increases in the public sector, stand in glaring contradiction to the moralist clap-trap of the so-called "Pro-Life" campaign. And no better place than the trade union movement to raise what really fighting for "pro-life" means.

Resolutions, however, are only a start. In order to mobilise opposition to the amendment, all those workers on the ground have to be reached and told of the issues at stake. Of what it will mean for contraceptives (or lack of them) if passed, of how it will push women further back into the "mother" role at home, of how it will do nothing to solve the real and material conditions that ordinary people are having to put up with. Like paying to get your child to school, paying more for your bus fare, paying more for your petrol — and a thinner pay packet, if at all to pay for it all.

The Anti Amendment Campaign needs badly to reach out to all those workers. They hold the power to defeat the amendment.

For leaflets and information on the Trade Union Committee of the Anti Amendment Campaign contact: Trade Union Ctte, PO Box 1285, Dublin 7.

ICTU OPPOSE AMENDMENT

DESPITE attacks from the Medical Union and slurs from Cardinal O'Flaich, the Executive Committee of the ICTU has stuck its ground and opposed the abortion amendment.

Its stand is very welcome: both for the anti-amendment campaign and for taking a stand on something that is "political", and affects all the trade unionists it represents. And, no doubt it will have to take more flack for it.

More seriously, it will face concerted attempts by the SPUCists in the unions to get it to withdraw its statement — even maybe with threats of disaffiliation — and get other anti-amendment voices in the unions to keep quiet. Let's hope that the ICTU continues to stick to its guns.

Its stand is important for those trade unionists who have tried in vain to raise the issue in their branches. Resolutions against the amendment will now carry greater weight and give confidence to branches and trades councils to take a stand.

It helps to open the door to revealing the hypocrisy of the proposed amendment. The ICTU statement talks of how "inappropriate in a democracy" is the amendment. But the issue goes further than



Our Tribute to "Comrade" Brezhnev.

OUR 1983 ALMANAC

JANUARY: Budget puts 20p on the pint, 6p on the fags (each), cuts dole money by £1 per person plus £1 for each dependent; Coombe Hospital closed "because it has consistently lost money". "Forward to the Workers Republic" declares Dick Spring. Fifteen Catholics shot dead by RUC in Armagh after failing to salute District Inspector. SDLP, Cardinal, Dublin Government, Stickies call for enquiry and stronger measures to be taken against Provos.

FEBRUARY: Ronald Reagan threatens to use Trident missiles in effort to restore democracy to Nicaragua. Denounced by Jim Andropov (Russ) who announces SS20s now in position to discourage isolated hooligan elements terrorising the Polish workers' state. Announced in Dublin that unemployment has reached 200,000. Plus many others in Limerick, Cork, Kiltimagh etc. "On a clear day I can see socialism", claims Dick Spring. Pro-egg referendum bill passed in Dail, by 160 votes to five.

MARCH: At pro-egg rally in Knock, Central Committee of the Virgin Handmaidens of Our Lady of Knock urges "all the unborn children of Ireland" to "make their voice heard." Min. of Labour, Liam Kavanagh warns of "anarchist element" intent on undermining wage restraint. Workers Party fraternal delegation to Afghanistan arrives in Kabul, pledges support of Irish working class to socialist government struggling against "anarchist element of feudal theocracy." US Secretary of State Schultz condemns anarchist elements behind Harlem riots.

APRIL: Cardinal O'Flaich warns Catholics against anarchist elements seeking to confuse debate on pro-egg referendum. Mattie Merrigan arrested under new Social Partnership regulations for "insufficient encouragement of social partnership." "No tiny, dissident element will be allowed to disrupt the onward march towards the Workers Republic" declares Dick Spring. Managua reduced to rubble by the nuclear strike following US claims that Sandinista government had been "interfering" in El Salvador. Unemployment in Republic passes 300,000. 200 dead when RUC use flame throwers on Republican club on Falls. Cardinal, SDLP, Coalition, Stickies express "grave disquiet" and call for internment of Provos.

MAY: As controversy continues over nuclear attack on Nicaragua, State Department promises "firm evidence" of Nicaraguan interference in El Salvador which made the attack "not only permissible but imperative". Ed. Min. Gemma Hussey announces closure of primary school system. "Not one of these schools has made a profit for many years", she tells hushed Dail. Pro-egg referendum postponed while Knock Virgins appeal to Supreme Court for votes for unborn children in the poll.

JUNE: At Washington press conference 50,000 Green Berets swear they saw an interfering Nicaraguan while advising the El Salvador army. "Oh well, that's all right, then", quips Foreign Minister Peter Barry. Unemployment passes 350,000. Dole and social welfare pay halved. "Many unemployment exchanges have been running at a loss for donkeys years", explains Liam Kavanagh. "We are well on the way to breaking the grip of the two capitalist parties" — Dick Spring.

JULY: An estimated five million unborn Irish children turn up at "Votes for All" rally at scene of Kerrytown apparition. Cameras banned on ground that five mill. too small a number to be seen by naked eye. Telexed statement afterwards claims: "We are a clear majority of the Irish nation and as full human beings this has certain interesting implications, eh?" Concern mounts over Workers Party delegation to Afghanistan — unheard of since March. Unemployment in South reaches 400,000, disability benefit halved. "It was an incentive to people to become disabled", explains Minister Frank Cluskey.

AUGUST: Catholic hierarchy says ("while in no way seeking to interfere in constitutional or political matters") that "a fertilised ovum is a full human being just like Garret FitzGerald" and ("while conscious of the wisdom of refraining from direct comment on matters of current controversy") that "anybody who says different will roast in hell." Supreme Court retires "to do a bit of thinking". Unemployment 450,000. "Our policies are working towards the great goal of socialism" — Dick Spring. 500 Catholics killed in British Army artillery attack on Bogside area. Widespread concern, calls for enquiry, etc, plus demands that new measures be taken against Provos.

SEPTEMBER: Travellers from Afghanistan report Cathal Goulding leading guerrilla band in mountains. Reports dismissed by T. MacGiolla in Dublin: "I have known Cathal all my life. He is not an Afghan guerrilla. He's a carpenter and a follower of Joe Sherlock". Quba obliterated from face of the earth in nuclear strike. "They were definitely interfering somewhere or other", claims R. Reagan. Supreme Court announces "full citizens' rights including vote" for all fertilised ova and upwards "as is only logical". Government, FF welcome the move.

OCTOBER: Unemployment passes 500,000, fire brigade abolished. "Whole service a white elephant, hasn't made a profit since foundation of state," explains Ruairi Quinn. 10,000 unborn children meet in a match box on the table in the back lounge of Mulligan's, announce formation of new party. Dole abolished altogether, "still losing money", says Kavanagh. UDR use tactical nuclear weapons against boy scout troop near Crossmaglen. "This is going a little far," SDLP, Cardinal etc lash out, call on young people to shun paramilitary groups.

NOVEMBER: Dublin Government abandons sewerage system, closes reservoirs, shuts hospitals, CIE, all local authorities and Radio Leinster. "All unprofitable, it's as simple as that" explains Tanaiste, Dick Spring. "We are on our way to socialism", US nuclear attack takes out Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Vancouver. "There was always something suspicious about Canada insisting on being just across the border from us", explains Reagan. A "Goulding Khan" reported to be "at the gates of Kabul". Unemployment in South 550,000, reports from North Dublin of citizens eating grass, riot squad dispatched to defend Green Belt area.

DECEMBER: Dublin Government falls. All seats in Xmas Eve election won by unborn children, apart from Ceann Comhairle Tom Fitzpatrick, returned unopposed. "This could be tricky", he says. 100,000 Catholics killed in RAF sorties in North. SDLP, Unborn Babies, Irish Times etc express "growing apprehension as to the direction in which events may, or on the other hand may not, be moving", demand "tough security measures" to deal with terrorism. "Goulding Khan" takes over in Kabul, denies he is C Goulding of Workers Party, which organisation he denounces as "an armed gang of Stalinist social workers", Guinness to be available in all Afghan pubs, Luke Kelly made Poet Laureat. Ronald Reagan takes out London on grounds that "I never really liked the dump". "Socialism is just around the corner", announces Dick Spring. by EAMONN McCANN

What we stand for

The Socialist Workers Movement is a revolutionary workers movement organisation which aims to organise the working class in the struggle for power and for the overthrow of the existing social order.

The system under which we live, capitalism, is based on production for profit and not for human need. It is a system that leads to poverty and war, racial and sexual oppression.

Only the working class can destroy capitalism and build a socialist society based on workers control of production.

Our political action to prepare the working class for that is based on the following principles:

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

There is no parliamentary road to socialism as the left in the Qail believe. The system cannot be changed by piecemeal reform. The state machinery—the courts, parliament, the police and army—are used to maintain the dominance of the ruling class. The real power lies in the boardrooms of big business.

We stand for a workers revolution which produces a different and more democratic society—one based on councils of delegates from workplaces and localities who are democratically elected and subject to recall at any time.

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

That kind of socialism does not exist anywhere today. Workers have no control over countries like Russia, China or Poland. They are exploited by a state capitalist class. A workers revolution is required in those countries too.

A SOCIALIST ANSWER TO THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The six county Orange State is propped up by British imperialism. By bribing loyalist workers in the past with privileges in, for example, housing and jobs, Protestant workers have come to see their interests as being served by the British-backed Unionist boss class. This divides the working class and delivers a section of the workers as allies of imperialism. The Northern state is sectarian in essence and must be smashed.

The slow task of building working class unity against imperialism must be begun.

However imperialism must be fought in the here and now and we support all forces engaged in that struggle regardless of our difference of programme.

We stand for: Immediate withdrawal of the British Army. Political Status Now.

The Disbandment of the RUC and the UDR.

In the South, the bosses are junior partners with other European and American bosses in world capitalism. The main enemy is the boss at home. Nationalism or a united capitalist Ireland offers nothing to workers. The only republic worth fighting for is a workers republic.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

We believe that only through socialism can women achieve full emancipation and that their struggle is part of the whole class struggle for socialism.

FOR A RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT

The main area of political action for socialists is the mass organisation of the working class, particularly the trade unions. We fight for the independence of the unions from state interference, democratic control of all union affairs and the election of all union officials.

We oppose all anti-union legislation and all forms of national wage understandings and wage restraint. We oppose all redundancies. We say: Occupy to demand Nationalisation under workers control. Fight for a 35 hour week. We support the building of a rank and file movement which draws together militant trade unionists to oppose the class collaboration of the union leaders.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY

The SWM is a democratic centralist organisation open to all those who accept its principles and objectives. The struggle for a workers republic in Ireland is inseparable from the international struggle. The SWM fights to build a mass party of the working class as part of a revolutionary international of working class parties.

Why the Labour Party sell out the workers

IT WAS Sean Lemass, the former leader of Fianna Fail, who gave the most perfect description of the Irish Labour Party.

"Labour", he said, "always wrestles with its conscience, but Labour always wins!"

Although it has on occasions turned bright red and remembered its working class base, it has never in its history turned down an opportunity to go into Coalition.

Dick Spring, the young right-wing leader from Kerry, was originally hailed — even by the left of the party — as having a more open style. Yet it was Spring who brought Labour into its fourth coalition and one which is already all set to establish a record on betrayal. The coalition package, which was backed overwhelmingly by the delegates at the Labour conference in Limerick, would not even embarrass the likes of Maggie Thatcher.

It is a Fine Gael document through and through with a few minor sops thrown in for Labour supporters. Unemployment it claims, can only be solved through increased competitiveness.

The £5 on hospital charges may go — but there will have to be more cuts to make up for it. The abolition of the free school bus service is just a taste of what is to come.

Unemployment and Disability benefits are to be "kept in line" with wages. And that won't be happening through raising the wages. The campaign by Fine Gael against "anomalies" in social welfare payments will result in cuts.

By contrast, the bosses can look forward to an easier life. VAT will no longer have to be paid on imports at the point of entry. Our employers will therefore get some more free credit from the state. Smaller firms will get a "more simplified tax

structure". That will be even simpler than the bother of filling in "your own tax returns."

But what of the "socialist" achievements of the Labour Party?

The coalition promises to erect a massive bureaucratic structure with such wonderful socialist sundry names as "Employment Task Force"; the "National Planning Board" and the "National Development Corporation". The last named has been held up as the pivot of Labour policy. It probably is but that only shows how pathetic Labour policy is. The NDC will attempt to channel £200 million in state funds towards profitable investment areas and so prove that it is not just private enterprise that can make profits. Only those who believe that Bord na Mona or the ESB have got a socialist management structure can be impressed by this great leap forward.

The taxing of households of over £60,000 has been hailed by the media as the one solid achievement of Labour. Two points should be well noted however. The tax will only bring in an estimated £14 million next year. That will be handed back to the rich as they switch

from house property to cars, art collections, holidays and claim tax allowances on money borrowed. Secondly, it leaves untouched the vast area of tax relief and hand outs to industry — currently estimated at over £500 million. It is a tax on how the rich spend their

money — not on the fact that they have wealth.

It is not just Michael O'Leary who has defected to Fine Gael.

It is the whole of the parliamentary Labour Party.

The Party you can't change

THE Irish Labour Party has become a graveyard for active socialists. Instead of building an active opposition against the Coalition Government, their efforts will be spent in passing resolutions in the constituency councils. They hope that some day the party will be changed.

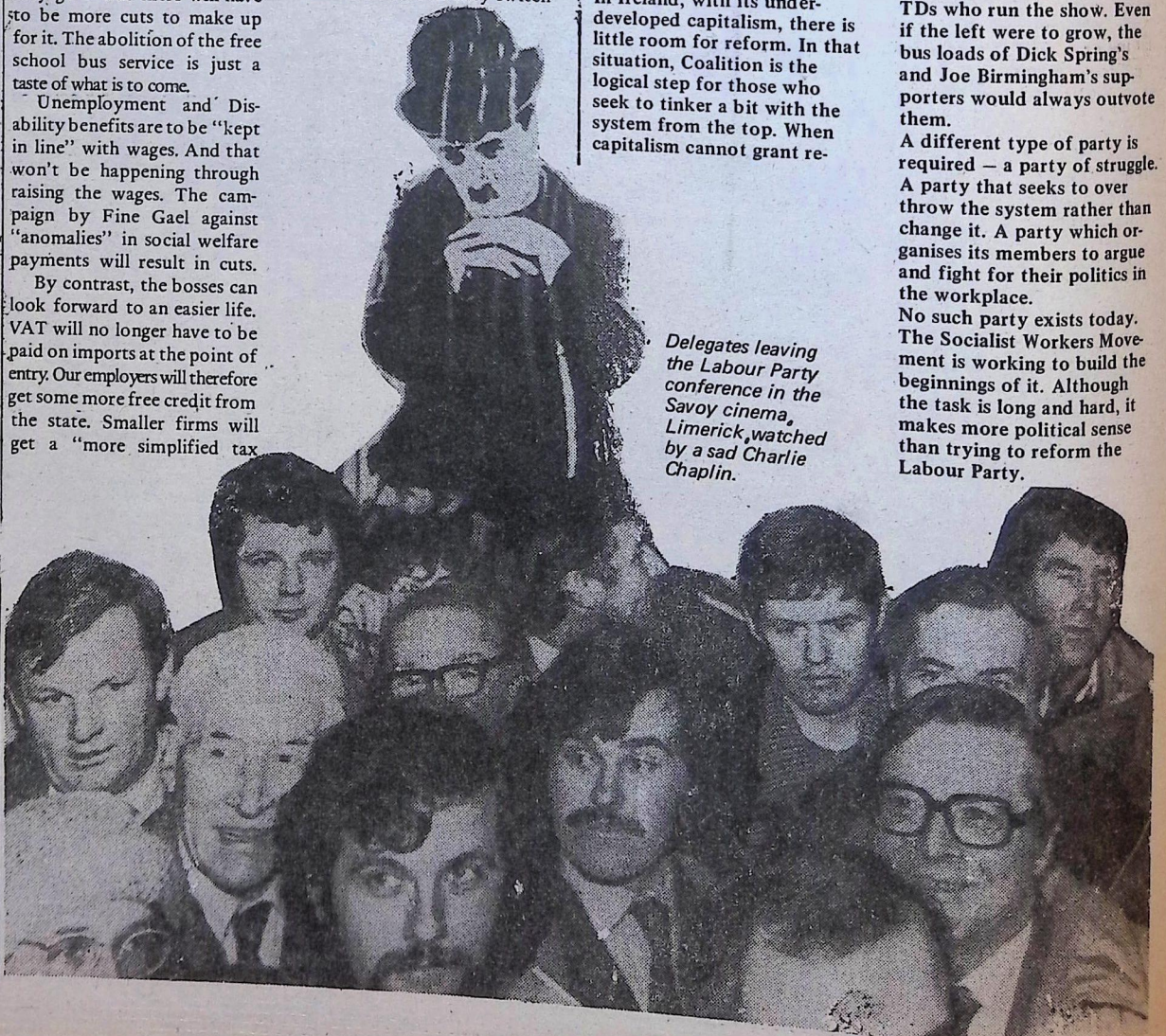
It is an impossibility. You can pass all the resolutions you want, but that won't change the party. A recent Labour Conference passed a resolution calling for nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy. It proved totally meaningless. Why? The Labour Party believes in reforming the system in Ireland, with its underdeveloped capitalism, there is little room for reform. In that situation, Coalition is the logical step for those who seek to tinker a bit with the system from the top. When capitalism cannot grant re-

form, you have to patch it up first.

The tradition of the party is one that has turned its back on workers' struggles. Elections and the parliament are the focus of its activity rather than the shop-floor. Even on the left there is a belief in "socialism from above" — get a few TDs in who can legislate socialism for the working class. Missing is any idea that the tiny fights now must be built upon to encourage workers to build a movement where they themselves take on the bosses and the system. It is because of those ideas that the party is fundamentally undemocratic. It is the TDs who run the show. Even if the left were to grow, the bus loads of Dick Spring's and Joe Birmingham's supporters would always outvote them.

A different type of party is required — a party of struggle. A party that seeks to overthrow the system rather than change it. A party which organises its members to argue and fight for their politics in the workplace.

No such party exists today. The Socialist Workers Movement is working to build the beginnings of it. Although the task is long and hard, it makes more political sense than trying to reform the Labour Party.



Delegates leaving the Labour Party conference in the Savoy cinema, Limerick, watched by a sad Charlie Chaplin.

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I want to join; I want a subscription and enclose £3.50;

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Party will always

ers



Gonzalez of Spain

the reduction of unemployment. "Reflation"—the pumping of money into the economy by the state to get investment going — was the principle mechanism. The policy fell flat on its face. The number out of work has now passed the two million mark. In June '82 Mitterand imposed a wage freeze. The promise the Socialist Party made about shortening the working week has been pushed back to the distant future. Mitterand is now forcing through a policy of cuts to pay for his failed policy of borrowing. Hospital patients must now pay for their own food and accommodation? A figure of £3 a day has been suggested. The one area there will be no cuts in on defence. Mitterand has ordered that production of the seventh nuclear submarine go ahead.

THE Left Wing of the Labour Party is firmly against Coalition.

Michael D Higgins has repeatedly warned that another coalition with Fine Gael would spell disaster for the party.

But what is their own alternative?

If the Labour Party were to adopt independent socialist policies, they claim that a majority Labour Government could be achieved eventually. They themselves admit that this would be a long haul. First, the party would itself have to be changed from top to bottom. At present 15 of the 16 Labour TDs are enthusiastic supporters of coalition. They would have to be replaced if the party were to have any credibility for its socialist policies. Then the party would have to spend some years in the wilderness taking a position of "principled opposition". Finally we might get a Labour Party Taoiseach backed up by a committed socialist cabinet.

But would that long march be going anywhere? A majority Labour government sounds fantastically radical in a country that has never experienced one before. The record of other "majority Labour governments" in other countries brings less cause for optimism. Over the last year Socialist Parties have come to power in France, Greece and Spain. They have won a reputation for abysmal sell-outs.

In May 1981 a new wave of enthusiasm came over the French workers' movement. President Mitterand had finally come to power. The major plank in his programme was

to remove the American bases and withdraw from NATO. He has allowed the fascist generals to continue the practise of interrogating soldiers who attend political meetings.

In October 1982, the Spanish Socialist Party finally came to power, over forty years after the last Civil War which was provoked by the election of a Left Republican government. This time the bosses had no reason to lose a night's sleep. One of the leading members of the Socialist Party, Joaquim Aluminia has claimed that its aim would be "to create the conditions where employers could invest." There was not the slightest mention of nationalisation or agrarian reform in its programme. Instead the party has supported the massive re-arming of the army. Although substantial sections of the officers have been involved in two attempted coups, there will be no purge of the army. The Socialist Party will remain among the most enthusiastic supporters of police repression and ten-day detention orders against militant Basques. For Gonzalez and the Socialist Party the breeding ground for terrorism is to be found in the Basque desire for regional autonomy rather than in the ranks of the fascist army.

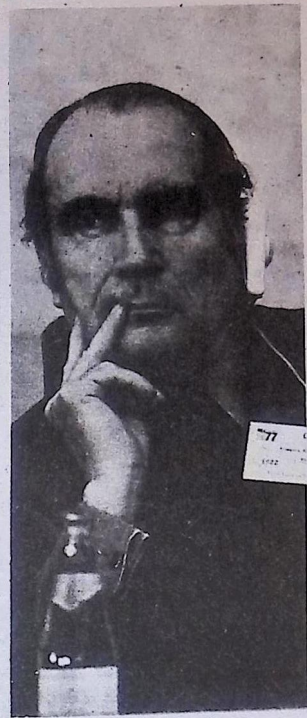
What do all these three Socialist Parties have in common?

"Reflating the economy" has come to be defined as the socialist measure. (Charles

Haughey wasn't too far out when he claimed to be more socialist than the Irish Labour Party.) But in the present period it has proved to be unworkable. Any country that reflates faces the prospect of a wave of imports and rising inflation. As a result the Socialist Parties have retreated. Gone are the promises and back comes the pattern of wage restraint and cuts. The system has to be patched up before it can be reformed. Business confidence has to be boosted by making it more profitable to invest rather than sink money in property and financial institutions. The Socialist Parties offer nothing more than a softer capitalist alternative.

In all these countries the socialist parties have gone out of their way to appease the army generals. Like Allende they believe they can kill any mutinous instincts by kindness. But the Generals have nothing to fear from the Mitterands, Gonzalezes or Papandreous. It is their working class followers who might have stirred into action that terrifies them. And the socialist parties will have made sure that their respective armies are well equipped to launch any coup when and if they consider it necessary.

The socialist parties came to power in some wave of enthusiasm. The prospect of reforms being handed down from above always seems attractive. But the enthusiasm has never lasted long. Already in France there has been a dramatic swing to the right in the local and union elections. It has



Mitterand of France

nothing to do with Mitterand going "too far". It has everything to do with cynicism and disillusionment. The socialist parties can never fulfill the mild promises that they make because they rule out the only means by which they could be achieved — the active mobilisation of the workers' movement.

Before Labour activists start out again after this coalition to "transform the party", they should have a good look at the record of their fraternal parties in Europe.

It will be a long haul to change the Labour Party. But in the end — even if it were possible — it means ending up with an Irish Mitterand.

And that doesn't advance the cause of socialism one little bit.

Senate elections

YOU may have noticed that the senate elections are in full swing.

The Senate comprises 60 seats. Of these 49 are elected and 11 appointed.

But don't be deluded that the 49 "elected" seats have anything to do with the "people" having their say — far from it. They are elected by a very elitist group of people.

Seats are divided into the following areas: Dublin University (3); National University of Ireland (3); Agricultural Panel (11) and Administrative (7).

The other eleven are nominated by the Taoiseach. Only graduates are allowed to vote for the first two.

The remainder are nominated, and voted for, by County Councils, representatives of Trade Unions and large organisations (for example ICA) throughout the country.

So the Senate is elected by the people at the top for the people at the top — to ensure that any decisions of the Dail will be carried through with minimum delay by their cronies in the Senate.

The Worker has found ten good reasons why we don't need the Senate — any advances on 10?

- (1) It sits only thirty days a year;
- (2) Salary for Senators is £7,619 — £254 per day — and all have other jobs.
- (3) It is only an advisory body — the Government can ignore it.
- (4) Approximately ten of the 60 Senators contribute to debate in any one year (sorry! 30 days).
- (5) It is not elected by the people.
- (6) It is a place of rest for failed TDs — 40 per cent of Senators in 1981/82 had been defeated in the General Election.
- (7) It is a place of rest for party hacks;
- (8) It is a place of rest for party hacks who are potential TDs (for example Maurice Manning, Gemma Hussey, Alexis FitzGerald);
- (9) It is a place of rest for (6), (7) and (8) above, who get full publicity while doing little AND collect the money AND the perks — travelling allowances, phones, secretary all tax free.
- (10) It cost 1.5 million pounds to run — and while we are told to tighten our belts, they laze about on our money — a very good reason why we don't need the Senate.

MARY RYDER



Mitterand's economic measures have been paralleled by an increase in repression

MEETINGS & ACTIVITIES

WATERFORD
January 31, Monday
'Fight the cuts'
speaker EAMONN McCANN. Venue to be announced.

DUBLIN
February, 1, Tuesday,
'Fight the cuts'
speaker EAMONN McCANN, ATGWU Hall, 8 pm.

BELFAST
February 3, Thursday,
Socialism and Republicanism, speaker EAMONN McCANN Central Hall, Rosemary Street.

CORK
February 8, Tuesday,
'Fight the cuts,

speaker EAMONN McCANN, ITGWU Hall, 8pm.

FINGLAS
Finglas Worker Discussion Group:
Jan. 25, Tues, "Why You Should Be A Socialist"
Jan. 8, Tues, "Socialists and the Trade Unions."
Jan 22, Tues, "Can

Socialism come through the Dail".
For details write to SWM, 41, Herberton Park, Dublin 8, Ring 716932.

ANTI AMENDMENT CAMPAIGN PUBLIC MEETING' Mansion House, Wednesday, Feb 2

WORKER FUND

During 1983 we need £1000 for the production of THE WORKER. The money is needed to improve the regularity and quality of the paper.

We have no advertisers or rich backers to pay for its production. We are appealing to all our supporters and readers to send a donation to the paper.

With each issue we will keep you informed of the progress towards our £1000 target.

The good news is that the 1983 fund has got off to a flying start with £123 raised so far.

Send your donation to:
The Worker, 41 Herberton Park, Rialto, Dublin 8. (Cheques payable to 'The Worker'.)

THE LABOUR PARTY SELLS OUT AGAIN!

Pre-Budget Picket of Labour Party HQ
Gardiner Street
Saturday 11.30
February 5th

Organised by Dublin branch Socialist Workers Movement.



MOVING HEARTS, pictured with their new line-up where MICK HANLEY replaces CHRISTY MOORE.

Below DAVID BYRNE reviews their recent LP release, "Dark Side of the Street".

"DARK End of the Street" is the second LP from Moving Hearts, a band I consider one of the best to emerge from the Irish scene of late.

I had been intending to get my hands on it for a couple of months back. As it happened, I was lucky to get it at Christmas, a time when the mush which is presented as music is even worse than usual. The season's message from the media to "love one another" would make you puke as thousands of workers are thrown on the dole, health services are cut, unemployed youth are shot on the streets of Belfast by British

troops and world-powers compete with one another in stock piling nuclear weapons.

Now you might think what has all that got to do with the LP review. Well the fact is that most of the above statements are contained or at least hinted at on this record.

The band blends some great jazz, rock and trad sounds and achieves an even tighter sound than on their first record, thus lending fantastic expression to the fine lyrics.

Side one opens with "Remember the Brave Ones" - a good straight down the line anti-nuclear song which Christy Moore handles very well on vocals.

Moving Hearts moving on

Second track is the title song "Dark Side of the Street." Musically I found this track very weak, but it still manages to express what people go

through while living their lives outside of what society calls "normal" in Irish catholic terms.

Third track I thought was one of the strongest on the

record. It's a Mick Hanley song called "All I Remember." Most people who went through the educational system in Ireland will recognise the truth in this song. The band use extra vocals on this track and it makes for a very good sound.

Mick Hanley who wrote "All I Remember" has replaced Christy Moore since this record was cut. He will strengthen the band with his direct approach to song writing. His earlier songs on the Farenka closure and the H Block struggle, spring to mind as good examples of songs that spelt out why the bosses get so scared when workers use their strength and organise against their oppression.

The band are all set to break new barriers in 1983 when they play a one-off con-

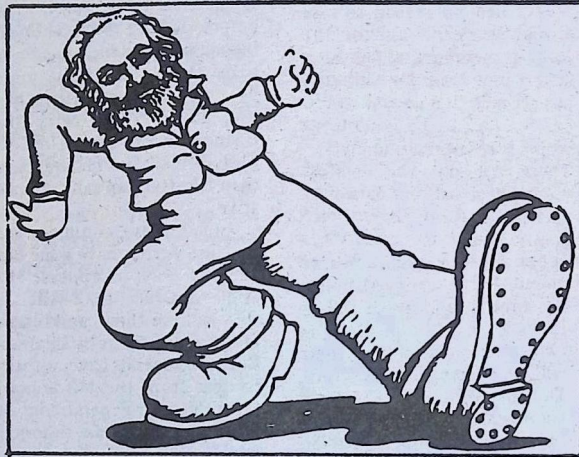
cert in East Berlin. They will be top of the bill at the Festival of Songs for Political Freedom in February.

Let's hope Moving Hearts dedicate some of their songs to the working class in the eastern block countries. The track "What Will You Do About Me" would be a nice statement of what the workers in Poland have gone through recently, and which workers everywhere have to face from any boss class.

I worked in your factories I studied in your schools I lingered in your prisons and your unemployment too.

I know you are stronger now But night will soon come round You keep adding to my numbers as you shoot my people down.

So I recommend you to buy this record or better still borrow it and tape it, if only because you are warned on the record sleeve by the WEA record company that it's illegal and if they catch you it won't be nice. DAVID BYRNE



Germany - the lost revolution

CHRIS HARMAN, a leading member of the Socialist Workers Party - our counterpart in Britain - has recently published a major book on the German Revolution. KEVIN WINGFIELD reviews it

IN 1914, the world was plunged into a great crisis by capitalist imperialism. The ruthless rivalry of the capitalist monopolies and their governments spilled over into a military competition - total war - that was to leave millions dead and millions more maimed. The political consequences for the rulers of the world were desperate. But while empires and kingdoms fell, the crisis reached right into the workers' movement also.

Marxism had come to mean Social Democracy - the reformist socialism born of the growth of trade unions under bouyant capitalism and the routine propaganda in place of red-blooded class struggle that relative social peace had encouraged in the years leading up to the First World War.

This international movement - the 'Second International' - knew

that war was coming and its national sections knew their task was to assert international class solidarity against the patriotic hysteria that each ruling class would attempt to whip up.

The war came. German Social Democracy supported the German war effort. Reformists in Britain, France and the rest followed suit and rushed to support their 'own' governments. Only tiny minorities denounced the war - Lenin's Bolsheviks, Luxemburg and her handful of followers in Germany, Connolly and then a few pacifists. The international brotherhood of working people much proclaimed by the Socialist International had been exposed as empty rhetoric. When it came to the crunch, the reformist socialists would rather support the butchering of foreign workers than break with their own rulers.

For Lenin, one thing was clear, the Second International was bankrupt. It was dead and new parties built on a revolutionary and international socialist basis had to be built. Revolutionaries had to ruthlessly expose the pro-imperialist nature of the 'opportunist' Social Democracy leaders.

But what of Germany's ablest revolutionary, what did Rosa Luxemburg think? Much earlier than Lenin, she had seen the political drift to the right of German Social Democracy. She had been the first to take up the struggle against Bernstein. He was the leader of the Right within the SPD and in the dying years of the nineteenth century had advanced the view that marxism should abandon revolution and settle for being a reform movement. In her writings 'Social reform or social revolution' published in 1898/9 she powerfully rebutted Bernstein's 'revisionism' by insisting that only the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism would answer the problems of society and only the mass actions of the working class could achieve this.

Later, she wrote 'The Mass Strike' inspired by the 1905 revolution in Russia - the 'dress rehearsal for 1917' - which pointed to the rich creativity of the masses in action and the revolutionary potential of mass strikes for political and economic objectives. This was a necessary corrective to the bureaucratic elitism of the leaders of the SPD who saw the main arena for politics as the parliament and the sole role for the masses was to occasionally strike by order of the parliamentarians in order to assist some parliamentary manoeuvre or other.

The reformists failed to recognise that mass struggles arise from the actual needs of the masses and is not something to be turned off and on like an electric light. In this they resembled the politics of the Republicans except they substitute the reformism of the gun for the reformism of the ballot box.



Revolutionary scenes in Berlin 1918. Members of the Workers' and Soldiers' Council handing out arms and ammunition

Tony Cliff, in his book 'Rosa Luxemburg' writes:

'Between 1905 and 1910 the split widened between Rosa Luxemburg and the centrist leadership of the SPD, of which Kautsky was the theoretical mouthpiece. Already in 1907 Rosa Luxemburg had expressed her fear that the party leaders notwithstanding their profession of Marxism, would flinch before a situation in which decisive action was called for. The climax came in 1910, with a complete break between Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Kautsky on the question of the workers' road to power. From now on the SPD was split into three separate tendencies: the reformists, who progressively adopted an imperialist policy; the so-called Marxist centre, led by Kautsky (now nicknamed by Luxemburg the "leader of the swamp") which kept its verbal radicalism but confined itself more and more to parliamentary methods of struggle; and the revolutionary wing, of which Rosa Luxemburg was the main inspiration.'

Undoubtedly it was very difficult trying to demolish the political influence of the centrist Kautsky. He was regarded throughout the Marxist movement - and by Lenin too until the outbreak of war - as the leading authority on Marxism. He was referred to as the 'Pope of Marxism'. Yet when all that is said it is clear that Luxemburg did not recognise the priority of organising

her political opposition to the centrists and reformists in the SPD.

The revolutionary tendency inside the SPD was not formed into a disciplined faction. The result was that when she opposed the betrayal of SPD support for the German imperialist war effort she was almost completely isolated. A revolutionary leader without a party is like a general without an army.

As the war ground on, opposition crystallised round the centrists and pacifists. They were united by nothing except their opposition to the war. They were expelled by the right and founded a fairly large splinter, the USPD. To this vacillating rag-bag - who wanted nothing so much as to be reconciled with the SPD who had just expelled them - Luxemburg's supporters adhered.

Luxemburg and her followers, now called the Spartakus League, believed it was only possible to maintain contact with the masses through the USPD - the 'Independents' - because as the workers' radicalism developed they would not distinguish the small numbers of revolutionaries from the larger anti-war centrists. So the revolutionaries did not develop an independent organisation outside the USPD. Of course what actually happened was that a clear force standing unambiguously for revolution was not apparent to those workers who were looking for a way forward. And those with illusions in the Independents had them confirmed by the organisational unity of Spartakus and the USPD.

The Russian Revolution of 1917, gave an enormous fillip to the anti-war sentiment and in 1918, with privations increasing and the military situation deteriorating, all the pent up grievances exploded in revolution.

Chris Harman's 'The Lost Revolution' is a splendid narration of the events of 1918-23, five years of convulsions during which the whole edifice of bourgeois rule tottered on the brink and revolutionary Russia's isolation was within an ace of being broken. It describes how revolutionaries struggled to influence events with a fledgling Communist Party (KPD) formed one month after the outbreak in November 1918 of the revolution, and a few weeks before its two best known leaders, Luxemburg and Liebnicht, were murdered by the SPD (now the government).

Harman's book analyses the short-lived Bavarian Socialist Republic, the Kapp putsch of March 1920, which led to the formation of Red Armies on the Rhur, the 'March Action' of 1921 when the KPD staged a lunatic bid for power without the support of a majority of the workers, and the great lost opportunity of 1923, when the French occupation of the Rhur, and the hyper-inflation caused great sections of the population, and surely a majority of workers to look to the KPD to take power as the only force that could put any sort of programme into action, but which the KPD let slip.

Again and again Harman comes back to the fatal weakness. Trying to build a revolutionary party while

THE LOST REVOLUTION

Special offer to readers of THE WORKER:

IRE4.95 (plus £1 p. and p.) Please rush me my copy of Chris Harman's *The Lost Revolution*. I enclose £1R5.95. Return to SWM, 41 Herberton Park, Rialto, Dublin 8.

Name

Address

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Import controls - no answer

The demand for import controls is being raised as the recession gets worse. And at the moment those leading the call are the Trade unions.

by PAUL O'BRIEN

The ITGWU recently held a day of action with posters and leaflets given out at town centres with the theme "When you buy Irish the job's right."

The demand for import controls is popular, but as a way of saving jobs it is useless.

The call for import controls flies in the face of reality - the recession is not an Irish phenomenon that can be overcome by erecting barriers and "all pulling together".

It is a world recession, and import controls would lead to retaliation by those countries

which import Irish goods. The Irish economy is one of the most open in Europe. For every £100 worth of goods produced, £115 worth of exports and imports are generated.

The next highest is Denmark with a ratio of 100 to 60 and the UK with 100 to 40. In an economic war, the Irish economy would suffer hardest.

Even in capitalist terms, import controls don't save jobs. Take Belgium, which has one of the highest unemployment rates in the EEC.

Between 1970 and 1979 it

had the lowest growth of import shares of any EEC country (in fact imports from the developing countries declined by half a percent).

That did not slow down Belgium's unemployment growth rate.

In Ireland we constantly hear calls for a ban on the export of cattle on the hoof and the "scandal" of imports of fruit and vegetables, while Irish produce is ploughed back into the ground.

Yet one is a product of the other. Processed meat is exported in refrigerated vans, in order to pay for the return journey they pick up fruit and vegetables which also need refrigeration.

The more processed meat we export the more vegetables we will import.

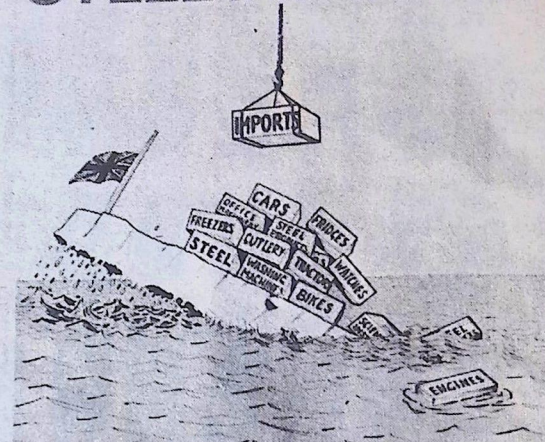
The truth is unemployment is not caused by import penetration. Increased unemployment and increased import penetration are both results of the world economic crisis.

The first is caused by the overall decline in demand and the second by the ever-increasing compulsion of each competing country to grab as much of the shrinking demand as possible.

The evidence is that import controls actually worsen the situation overall for each ruling class.

Demand falls as international trade slows down.

DON'T LET IMPORTS SINK THE STEEL INDUSTRY



IRON & STEEL TRADES CONFEDERATION

Swinton House, 324 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1R 4DD. Bill Sims, General Secretary.

"British workers demand import controls..."

What is to the advantage of one particular section of the economy (usually an ailing one) is to the disadvantage of the economy overall.

More importantly from our point of view, the situation is also worsened overall for the working class. Protectionism increases prices, real wages fall as cheap imports are replaced by more expensive

home-produced goods. Consequently, workers won't be able to buy as much and so demand declines and more jobs are lost.

Import controls are a call to export unemployment. Jobs in Ireland are treated as more important than jobs in Britain or France or India.

Workers around the world have more in common with one another than with their bosses or governments.

The call for import controls simply aligns workers with their own exploiters. It's not a fighting strategy.

That is why John Carroll and the ITGWU leadership favour controls - it is the easy way out.

For us, the example of the Clondalkin Paper Mill workers showed the way forward.

They were not prepared to accept redundancy, but organised independently, occupied their factory and demanded that it be kept open or nationalised.

They have not yet won, but are an example to all as the best way to fight job losses.

It is not that there is no demand for the skills and products of the 175,000 Irish unemployed workers, but simply that their output can not be sold at a profit.

When profit is no longer the god of the economy we will be able to use all the skills of workers to produce for the needs of people.

Until then, the question is the defence of jobs and how to convince workers that there is an alternative to the destruction and chaos of capitalism. PAUL O'BRIEN



FIGHT THE SACK AT PREMIER

MICHAEL JACOB, the managing director of Premier Dairies, has gone on the rampage. On the 15th of November last year he announced that he wanted 440 redundancies. There was to be a major re-organisation of the remaining workforce. His long term strategy was that the roundsmen would become agents rather than employees of the company. They would bill the customers, work on a commission and accept any losses from their own pockets. This would open the way for sackings among the clerical staff and the helpers.

Jacob set January 1st as the deadline for his scheme. January 1st came and went and still there were no redundancies. The unions and the company were in negotiations. Clearly, Jacob's announcement was all bluff. He wants redundancies, but he also wants to give the unions something

so that they can sell them to their members.

Jacob is one of the tough new breed of Irish bosses. Michael Edwards and Gengis Khan would be more likely among their heroes than St Francis. When Jacob was appointed manager of Mitchelstown Co-op, there was a strike because of fears of his tough approach. He was on a salary of £35,000 before he left for Premier.

In his letter to the workers he claimed that the company was making a loss. But Premier Hughes does not produce any accounts. They have undertaken a major investment in fruit juice recently. That could produce a fake loss. Yet the Irish Press in January '82 wrote that Premier was making £1 million profit on sales over £36 million.

Jacob has tried to play on

fears that increased competition from other dairies was breaking into Premier's near monopoly on milk supply in Dublin. 'Increased competition' was supposed to be the cause of the redundancies.

A few days after Jacob's announcement, the managers of Dundalk and Drogheda Dairies let 20 workers go from their smaller staff. Again the excuse was increased competition. By playing workers off against one another, by hoping to convince them that they must be more competitive, both sets of bosses cut more jobs.

Premier is one of those traditional industries where divisions run rife. Van helpers can be kept on temporary employment for years. It becomes a minor privilege to build up the service to get to work inside the dairy. Eventually you might even get to be a roundsman. Union representation for the helpers is minimal. In some depots they

do not have their own shop stewards.

The management of Premier are trying to play on those divisions. They must not be let. There is only one way to fight any job losses. That is refusing to take on the job of other workers. That means refusing to work without helpers; refusing to bill the customers.

The workers at Premier will be in a strong position if they decide to fight. They work in a strategic industry. Blackleg milk supplies can be stopped. The resistance to redundancies could bring a massive wave of solidarity from other workers in Dublin.

One thing though is sure: there is no other jobs going. The ITGWU policy of encouraging voluntary redundancies may look fine on paper, until you are out the gate but it the gate. But the lump sum soon disappears when there is no work around the corner.

the revolution is actually happening is a desperate situation to be in.

Revolutions knock everybody out of their old groove. Peoples' actions run ahead of their ideas. But still the old leaders command support. It takes the lessons of the struggle for workers to learn that the reformists are really about defusing the radicalism of the masses with rhetoric. Only bitter experience can teach that the centrists will vacillate and dither but not break with the reformists. A minority of the working class needs to be pointing out those lessons in the day to day struggles, showing in practise what the problems and tasks are that lie ahead.

All that needs leadership - a body of men and women who can connect the day to day experiences of the class with the best political analysis available, that can centralise the otherwise unconnected struggles, that can learn from the experiences of the past or that locality and generalise it.

Because the revolutionaries had not got the beginnings of such a party in 1918, each mistake was a disaster, they had no machine that could arm any serious section of the workers with the politics of its best leaders, and this in turn viciated the development of revolutionary leaders who could become experienced and keep a cool head. Instead of calmly appraising the lessons of each mistake, the KPD swung wildly to commit opposite mistakes. In the end its leaders lost all self-confidence and came to depend more and more on the Russian leadership of the Communist International, many of whom were no more able than the German party leaders and lacked the detailed knowledge of the situation. When the International became a negative factor, after the rise of Stalin, they were easier prey to the lunatic policies emanating from Stalin's mouthpiece.

This is not just a historical curiosity. In spite of her greatness, Rosa Luxemburg's failure to at least make a start in building a revolutionary party in opposition to the reformist SPD and USPD during the war if not earlier, was undoubtedly the main factor that accounts for the bungling of the KPD. And the bungling of the KPD cost Germany her revolution. We must not make the same mistake. Revolutionaries will again be marginalised in the revolution if we do not make a start. The crucial task for socialists is to make those beginnings, the task the Socialist Workers Movement has set itself.

Harman's book is a must for all who want to learn from the German experience. Buy it and read it. KEVIN WINGFIELD

THE WORKER

FOR WORKERS POWER AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

Michelin defeat

WORKERS at the Michelin factory in Mallusk have voted against occupying the factory.

Already management have started to move the machinery out.

The vote went against sitting-in because of fears that redundancy money would be reduced.

1,700 jobs will disappear. No matter how high the redundancy offer is, most of the work-force won't find other jobs.

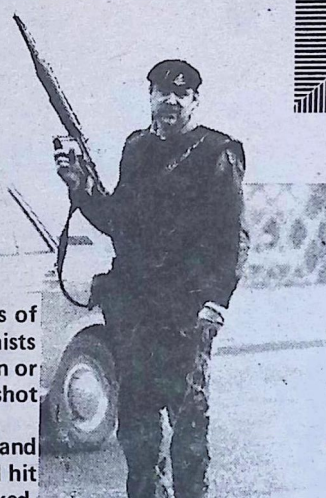
It's a terrible defeat for Northern workers. Michelin in Mallusk is not a specialist factory - it makes many products. The Michelin management reckoned it was a soft target. Work that was carried on there will now be transferred to other plants in the multi-national empire.

Many workers were looking to the union delegation that went to Michelin HQ to bring back some hope. There was little hope on offer.

It's a hard and bitter lesson. The only way to get anything from the boss class anywhere is through struggle. Waiting on polite delegations or putting any faith in the big mouths in the Assembly will get nowhere. The Loyalist politicians who spent a day debating the closure could come up with nothing but hot air.

The closed gates at Michelin should be a reminder to the deminishing workforce of the North that negotiations get you nowhere. The only answer to threatened closure or redundancies is occupation to demand nationalisation.

New approach needed now they - SHOOT ON SIGHT



ON JANUARY 30 1972, the British Army set out to wipe out members of the IRA. The plan was to backfire. As a huge march by anti-unionists reached the edge of the Bogside in Derry, the Army opened up on any man or boy of "military age" who came into their sights. Fourteen people were shot down.

The end of 1982 brought with it more and more killings by the Army and RUC, with Nationalist politicians "discovering" the existence of a special hit squad trained to shoot and kill unarmed Republicans with no questions asked.

The army and the RUC still kill. The difference 11 years after Bloody Sunday is that following the killings then, intense mass activity took place.

In the South, workers took strike action.

Last year, however as the RUC and British Army continued to shoot on sight those it considered "subversive," the level of mass resistance to the British presence in the six counties reached its lowest ebb since the struggle began.

The reasons are to be found in the method of struggle Republicans - Provos and IRSP - have undertaken with a dogmatic adoration of bombs and bullets as the only way of defeating imperialism.

The Provisionals have always held the centre stage in the anti-imperialist movement. They have without doubt massive support as the 1982 Assembly elections showed.

However, the nature of the organisation - because it is radical nationalist and cannot go beyond radical nationalism - is such that support at the ballot box is seen as the endorsement of IRA activity.

While there are tens of thousands of the oppressed minority in the North who feel bitter, and who want real change, the only hope offered to them is to put their faith in "the Army of the Irish Nation" to get rid of imperialism.

The IRSP and INLA claim to be socialists.

That claim, however, has been wearing very thin over the years as the INLA and its military activity is all that is holding the IRSP together.

Revolutionary socialist activity - which puts the organisation of workers and the oppressed first and foremost in the methods of struggle - has been absent from the programme and practise of the IRSP for many years.

The bombing of the Ballykelly bar in November was met with the usual condemnation and cries of horror from the media, north and south, the reformists, the London Government, and every bishop, priest and moralist in these islands.

Of course it's all hypocrisy - when the RUC or Army shoot to kill the moralists and reformists express at best vague concern or call for investigations.

These people know there can never be a genuine investigation when the RUC shoot unarmed Republicans. The sectarian Orange state is hardly likely to condemn itself.

After all it makes the law and order, a law and order designed to stabilise the six counties by repressing the minority. Shooting to kill is one of their weapons.

Incidents like the Ballykelly bombing by the INLA do not take the struggle forward in the least. Neither does the kidnapping and shooting of UDR men.

While the British Government cannot impose a solution, it has been able to hold its ground. Military activity just after the Assembly elections last year, gave the British Government the green light to rant on about terrorism and ignore the massive vote against the Assembly.

If the anger and bitterness that thousands of people feel against the Orange state can be harnessed the situation could change rapidly in favour of anti-imperialism.

Yet if real organisation against the state is to be built we cannot simply wait around for the Republican Movement to blow a whistle and call out its supporters.

The masses cannot be merely a stage army for the militarists.

Let it be understood that Sinn Fein cannot build such organisation. Only revolutionary socialist politics can do that.

Sinn Fein - according to itself - is the embodiment of the

anti-imperialist struggle. And the role of the masses is to simply applaud and vote support.

The way forward is to build an active movement against imperialism based on working class politics.

On such a basis anti-imperialists can change the political methods and content of the struggle against the state.

Organisation and structures that involve the oppressed themselves must be built against the killings of the British Army and RUC, against unemployment and against factory closures.

It is by drawing together the struggle against all the effects of imperialism and capitalism, North and South that the stalemate can be broken and socialists begin to get a lead.

Even though our forces are weak, a start must be made.

BELFAST SWM PUBLIC MEETING

Socialism and Republicanism
8 pm, Thursday February 3rd.
Central Hall, Rosemary Street
Speaker: EAMONN McCANN



NO TEARS for Gervais McKerr, Eugene Toman and Sean Burns when they were murdered by the RUC last month

Dole sops or jobs?

ANOTHER 1,700 jobs going in Michelin and there seems to be no end to the redundancies. The industrial base of the North is crumbling.

The Northern Ireland Office has come to rely on the likes of John De Lorean or now Lear Fan to provide the jobs.

Both represent the "high risk" companies which are starved of capital and hope to soak as much as they can in grants. If that is the future on the jobs front then it is a pretty miserable one indeed.

But can anything be done? One solution has been to establish Claimants Unions. In West Belfast there are now active claimants groups in Ballymurphy and New Lodge. Some of the impetus has come from the old idea that if they don't give you a job, you should screw the British Treasury for as much as you can get. But the formation of claimants groups has also been influenced by the new turn in Sinn Fein.

The electoral victories of Sinn Fein has encouraged them to widen their base. The decision of Prior to treat with its Assembly reps on "constituency matters" has opened certain avenues. But they are avenues for servicing the community only.

Claimants work is servicing par excellence. A room, an expert and a phone can make all the difference in winning a few claims against the penny-pinching officials. For individuals it can even mean the difference between survival and malnutrition. It requires no mass organising of the unemployed.

Organising as a claimant means accepting the status of unemployed. Individual victories there may be, but over half the area is still without a job. The Tories would like to institutionalise unemployment in areas like West Belfast - or indeed the Shankill. They may not provide the jobs - but they can still pour the money in for leisure centres and advice offices. And they are quite prepared to deal with individual constituency problems - no matter who the representatives are.

It is for that reason that a different job has to be done. Claimants work can only play a minor part in a strategy that actually fights for jobs. A will to fight can be rekindled. De Lorean workers proved that workers from both sides of the divide don't have to take unemployment lying down. The battle against unemployment was lost but the battle has yet to begin.

The central demand on any struggle has to be the right to work. That means supporting every group of workers who are prepared to fight to defend their jobs whether they be mainly "Protestant" or "Catholic" jobs. It also means organising in the community and linking up with any initiatives either in Britain or Southern Ireland. Next May the unemployed will be marching from Waterford to Dublin. It would shatter a lot of myths if there was a similar leg from Belfast.