

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

Haughey's and Thatcher's plan :

Rob the poor pay the rich

HAUGHEY'S CUTS have gone to frightening lengths. A young pregnant woman arrived to a Cork maternity hospital to be told that she would have to give birth on a stretcher bed on the floor.

Parents whose children need serious operations are being told they will have to wait for years. Old people needing hip replacement operations are told they must suffer in agony for years and maybe die still waiting for their operation.

In the North, young women are being told that once every five years is often enough for a cervical smear. But by that time, cancerous cells may have developed and the main reason for smears — to catch it early and so cure it easily — is defeated.

There's no money left for a decent health service.

The long term unemployed are offered work on the Social Employment schemes. Six months ago they collected £70 a week for a two and a half day week. But now their wages have been cut to £60.

Young people in the North are being conscripted into the YTP schemes and will lose their dole if they refuse. Their wages average £25-£28 for a 37½ hour week.

There's no money to pay them any more.

In Longford, workers at Hanlon's ambulance factory strike to defend their rights. Albert Reynold's great buddy, Hanlon, tells them they are all sacked and that they are all sacked and that he'll take on unemployed in their place, or move to Liverpool

Abbey Meats workers, just outside Belfast, go on strike for decent working conditions and wages and they, too, are told that the factory will be closed down if they don't give in.

Trade union rights cost too much. The money just isn't there.

But it's a different story for the rich.

Take the Hyster Company. They told the Irish government that they would "provide jobs" (non-union jobs, that is) if they got a big enough grant. They got £15 million and a fine flashy factory that cost another £3 million. Last month they closed down. The grant is gone. Hyster Ltd have pocketed the grant.

Consolidated Micrographics in Limavady, Co. Derry pulled exactly the same stunt. In 1986 alone they got £640,000 from the IDB. Last month they threw more than fifty (non-unionised) workers on the dole, grabbed the money and ran.

But it's not just foreign companies that are greedy.

The Allied Irish Banks are a good example. They got £250 million to bail them out of their little trouble in dabbling with insurance. Last year they turned in £150 million in profits.

Haughey's vision for the South of Ireland is remarkably like Thatcher's for the North and for Britain.... and Reagan's for America.... and Kohl's for Germany and.... In fact the ruling class all over the world is pulling out all the stops in its rush to take from the poor and give to the rich.



Pictures: JOHN STURROCK (Network)

The rich get richer and the poor get poorer

■ Inside : Health cuts, pages 6&7 ■

Health-care: rich and poor

A ROW HAS BLOWN up over the use of armchairs and stretcher beds in one of the country's top maternity hospitals. Medical staff at the Erinville Hospital in Cork claimed at the start of the month that one pregnant woman spent the night on an armchair because there was no bed available for the night. They also claimed that eight stretcher beds are being used in two of the wards. The stretcher beds had been used in the ante-natal and post-natal wards since June 1st.

A Cork gynaecologist made the obvious comment that it was not "Reasonable to have pregnant women lying on the floor in stretchers."

The stretchers have had to be used since the gynaecological ward — a 28 bed unit was closed because of the health cuts.

There are on average 3,200 births a year at the Erinville Hospital.

Meanwhile Mrs Camelia Fox from Gurrabraher, Cork was refused further treatment for her six-year old daughter



who had an ear operation. Mrs Fox received a letter informing her that the Eye Ear and Throat Clinic at the North Infirmary would be closed from 1st July and that her daughter's appointment was therefore cancelled. Mrs. Fox then rang the doctor at the Eye, Ear and Throat hospital; she spoke to his secretary who

told her that there were hundreds of calls like hers from people trying to get appointments.

These are just two examples of the ever deteriorating conditions within the Southern Health Board hospitals; there are many more.

— EAMONN LEWSLEY

DUBLIN IS TO HAVE yet another private hospital! The closure of wards and entire hospitals all over the Twenty Six counties needn't worry Haughey's rich cronies — not only do they have private clinics to go to in Cork, Limerick, Kildare, but in the capital city they can choose between Blackrock, the Mater or Beaumont luxury private hospitals.

Now, just for good measure, another has opened on the site of the former (closed-down) St. Ultan's Infant Hospital.

The new Charlemont Clinic has so far cost £1.3 million to build. 15 of the 22 consulting suites have already been bought by "a group of consultants from a number of Dublin hospitals" who obviously figure that if Haughey is stopping them treating working class patients, they'll keep their hand in — and pockets lined — by looking after the bunions, boils, pimples and piles of those who can afford a couple of hundred pounds a week to stay at their luxury hotels — sorry, that should read hospital.

FRIENDS OF NAZIS

HAS ANYBODY been following the Barbie trial in Lyons, France? I have, and it's been horrific reading. Barbie is accused of the most atrocious crimes against the French resistance, the first ever use of electric shock torture, mass murder, mass deportations of Jews to concentration camps and so on.

There's no doubt about it, Barbie was among the nastiest of all the racists and fascists who assisted in the Nazi terror. But why is it that he is only being brought to trial now? Has he been in hiding all these years? The truth is slowly creeping out. Barbie has in fact been harboured by the major force which was supposedly fighting fascism during the 2nd world war, i.e. America.

If it was true that the governments and state machines of the "allied powers" headed by the Pentagon and the CIA were motivated by a desire to root out fascism, Klaus Barbie would have been brought to justice long ago. Instead when they caught him, they used him to further their own ends. American authorities were more interested in getting rid of the Left than in defeating fascism. Barbie was an ideal candidate to aid them in their war against Communism.

In fact as the trial continued, it became clearer that the intelligence services of the "free world" were staffed in the main by people who had been more than sympathetic to Hitler & Co.

Eugene Kolb, a Captain in US Army Intelligence, has freely admitted at the trial that he recruited Klaus Barbie as an agent for US intelligence. Barbie was paid handsomely to hand over information about communists and socialists. He lived in luxury, firstly in America and then under a false identity in South America, where he continued his murderous career, all funded by America's tax payers.

This monster, in short, was for almost all of his long life conceived of as an ally by the very government which pretended to be fighting against everything he stood for.

Only when he was old, partially blind and no more use to the struggle against subversion did the freedom fighters of the Pentagon finally stop protecting him.

It says a lot about the history books that tell us that Britain and America fought Germany in the second world war because they detested fascism!

CREA RYDER

Holy Joe from Cork ITGWU

THE TRADE unions in Cork have covered themselves in sectarianism once again. Last month saw them springing to attack the President of the Trades Council for his refusal to take part in the annual Corpus procession — a triumphant procession of sectarian bigotry

It is strange then that the trade union movement many of whose leading members have at some stage or other been excommunicated, should be seen to support the sectarian street demonstrations of the Church.

However, that has been the case in Cork where for the last forty years or so the Council of Trade Unions have taken part in the annual Corpus Christi procession.

This year the President of the Council, Brendan O'Neill, announced two weeks in advance that he would not be participating in either a private or an official capacity out of a sensitivity for the minority who do not belong either to the particular church organising the parade, or to none.

He was lit on by church mili-

tants on the Council of Trade Unions itself and this was taken up by the local media to try and isolate him. He has in the past been attacked for his support for the H Block Hunger Strike and this time the heading on the local "Evening Echo" was "Holy War Man Left To Walk Alone".

Failed Labour Party politician and full time official of the ITGWU Joe O'Callaghan stepped in to announce that HE would be marching as a representative of the District Council of the union. He said

"Over forty years ago, the District Council decided to have representation. The precedent is there, and has been there for over 40 years."

Joe will be seeking nomination for a Labour Party seat again. Maybe the Church might scratch his back.

Incidentally, women are excluded from participating in the parade by proclamation from the pulpit.

JIM BLAKE



Dr Death's moralistic campaign

I HAVE absolutely nothing to fear from AIDS, not according to the government information booklet, that is. I am not homosexual or bisexual, nor am I an I.V. drug user. I am not a haemophilic, nor a new born baby, neither have I had sex with any of the above. Under the section 'Groups At High Risk From AIDS' I'm safe.

My position deteriorates somewhat under "How Can You Catch The Virus" as "intimate sexual contact" (whatever that means) puts me at risk. Under "safe sex" I am advised to stay with one partner or avoid sex altogether if I wish to avoid the disease.

I was too frightened for a long time to read any further, figuring with my chances of catching the disease increasing with the turn of each page, I could well be dead by page 14.

The government pamphlet is confusing and vague. It fails to educate and inform about prevention of AIDS, instead it reiterates useless moralism about the 'virtues' of heterosexual monogamy. People now know AIDS is a sexually transmitted disease, they don't know how to protect themselves from the virus, and this campaign does not attempt to tell us how to realistically combat AIDS.

It is not casual sex that spreads AIDS but unsafe SEX. According to this 'Information' booklet safe sex is limited sex, the con-

dom being the last resort if you happen to be a frothing-at-the-mouth type nympho, who can't stick to the monogamous path.

SEX is not a minority activity, monogamy is the exception not the rule. Yet they prioritise celibacy before condoms; there is no explanation of how to use a condom effectively, no mention of the fact that ingredient Nonoxynol 9 present in some spermicidal contraceptive creams kills the virus and acts as a good backup to condoms, nor is there any comprehensive guide to what safe sex actually involves (besides a habit or white collar).

Our rulers use AIDS as yet another excuse to strengthen their own ideological position. With very little reference to drug addicts and nothing written to dispel the myth that AIDS is the "gay plague", we are subjected to a barrage of "values" to which we should comply.

SISTERS NO HELP

THE SISTERS OF SION IN Co. Meath do not discriminate. They ran a workshop recently on death and dying. Two AIDS sufferers arrived to participate in the workshop. They were denied admittance. But the Sisters of Sion assure us they do NOT discriminate against AIDS patients.

"Casual Sex Spreads AIDS" scream the posters, in reality it is this type of moralistic misinformation and scare tactics which create the environment in which sex-related diseases have always flourished.



KURT WALDHEIM' THE former Nazi officer and now President of Austria, finally managed to get himself a junket abroad. The Vatican was the first state in the world to welcome Waldheim — he even got a special audience with the Pope.

And who are the other two gentlemen having a quiet chat with John Paul?

They are none other than Monsieur Jean Paul Le Pen,

leader of the fascist National Front party in France and Signor Almirante, leader of the Italian fascist party — the MSI.

According to Newsweek International, the Pope urged them to "struggle against the decline in moral values in Europe". This was not taken as a reference to their thugs attacking immigrants, burning down mosques etc.

ICTU backs gays

THE IRISH Congress of Trade Unions has just issued guidelines on Lesbian and Gay Rights in the workplace. It makes excellent reading.

It spells out in a clear, direct way how lesbians and gays are discriminated against in Ireland. In the South all sexual acts between men are illegal. In the North, there is only a limited form of decriminalisation and the RUC still actively harrasses gays.

Yet estimates from other countries suggest that there may be as many as 300,000 lesbians and gays in Ireland. That means in any large workplace there will be a handful of gays.

In recent times they have been subject to a battery of discrimination and bigotry. The AIDS panic has reinforced many of those prejudices.

These attacks not only divide workers, they generally encourage an authoritarian and pro-boss outlook. In the end

they strengthen all the old ideas that keep workers down. The ICTU guidelines recommend that:

- * discrimination be taken up as a trade union issue;
- * equality agreements be negotiated which outlaw discriminatory practices;
- * one member of each branch or section committee be named as responsible for handling all complaints of discrimination.

There is one weakness in these excellent guidelines. The ICTU has a habit of producing marvellous documents which are then left on the union officials' shelves.

Socialists should make sure this does not happen. Order the guidelines from the ICTU. Raise them in your branch for discussion. Distribute them in your workplace.

* The ICTU guidelines can be ordered from; 19 Raglan Road, Dublin 4.

WE THINK

It's a National Government!

ALL THE ARGUMENTS back and forward across the floor of the Dail over the health cuts did a good job of disguising a very simple, but important fact: we now have, in effect, a national government in the South of Ireland. Fianna Fail is ruling in coalition with Fine Gael. Fianna Fail is very much the senior partner in this coalition and so Fine Gael has to be seen to huff and puff and threaten to bring the House down once in a while. But Fianna Fail has shown that it can call their bluff and bring Fine Gael to heel when required. When two sections of the ruling class co-operate as closely as FF and FG are doing, the working class has to look out. National governments have always spelt danger for those over whom they rule. Britain saw a National government in the thirties which came close to smashing trade union organisation. The

dole queues of the Thirties are still remembered with horror. It is vital that the working class in the 26 Counties doesn't allow the same to happen here in the 1980s. Unfortunately, there is no sign at present of this threat being taken seriously by the trade union leadership. They see only that Fianna Fail is in power and they have always considered FF governments to be more open to union influence than Fine Gael. The problem is that FF has always used this rose-tinted view of itself to dampen down working class militancy by keeping down wages through National Wage Agreements and the like. The anger over the health cuts was the ideal opportunity to break

from Fianna Fail some of that section of the working class which has traditionally supported the party and at the same time to stop the health cuts. The manner in which Phil Flynn and the LGPSU leadership ignored the willingness of the health workers NOT to collect the £10 00 outpatients charge was the first major indication that this was not to be. The Irish Nurses Organisation had shown its willingness to fight when nurses voted two to one in favour of industrial action against the cuts. But Gen. Sec. Madden decided that he 'knew better' and refused to call the nurses out in the vain hope that the government might negotiate the type and pace of the cuts with them. In spite of frequent denunciations of Fianna Fail as 'heartless'

and 'cruel' for closing maternity hospitals and refusing operations to children who need them, the ICTU executive continues to sit across the table from the government Ministers working out a new 'National Plan'. Haughey is clearly determined to follow the path taken by Reagan, Thatcher, Kohl and Chirac and to increase again the profits of the class he represents. As the rich regain their confidence, there is bound to be a return of the 'Fine Man, Charlie' and "Charlie the Chancer can do it" attitude. But the price of lining the pockets of the few will be more cuts in services. Public sector pay will have

to be held down and, after that, private sector wages too. To take the side of the Irish working class in this situation — to oppose the cuts and wage freezes — is to stand against the interests of Irish capitalism and, eventually, against the international banking system. In this situation, the ICTU's insistence on trying to negotiate a 'National Plan' between the capitalist government and the representatives of the working class is an utter nonsense. The inevitable outcome of such negotiations must be to subordinate the interests of the working class to the interests of capitalism. The trade union leaders should break off these talks immediately and start to organise the fightback which is vital if the living standards of Irish workers are to be protected.

Campaign for Job Scheme rights

A SOCIAL Employment Scheme Action Group has been set up in Dublin to fight for the rights of workers on SE schemes. There is now a huge number of these schemes; another example, like Job-search and forced AnCO 'training' courses, of the government's cynical exploitation of the long-term unemployed — using them as extremely cheap labour, without the most basic workers' rights. At the same time they are taken off the unemployed register and this gives the illusion of lower unemployment figures. The first meeting of the SES Action Group involved scheme workers from some of the Dublin unemployed centres, a digging and construction scheme, general social and community work schemes in Loughlinstown/Ballybrack and Sean McDermott Street areas, and one in Ballymun which deals with tenants' associations.



There was much anger expressed at the meeting, and a determination to fight all the insulting and degrading aspects of SES. The immediate specific issues will be:

- * The massive £10 cut in wages, down to £60 from £70 a week, itself far below a minimum living wage
- * The fact that SES workers must pay PRSI and tax, but receive no social insurance credits — are basically treated as charity cases, rather than insured workers;
- * The lack of any normal workers' entitlements, such as sick pay or holiday leave;
- * The total lack of job security — many at the meeting told of people being fired for being late once, or for responding verbally to insults from supervisors etc.

pay the wages — and the interest on these loans had to be paid from the already tiny grants for materials that are paid to schemes. The meeting decided that the Action Group should build towards large scale action — and that becoming unionised was a vital first step. Some of the unemployed centres' workers have already joined the FWUI but the Action Group decided to aim for getting large numbers into one union. Which union to join will be decided at a public meeting that is planned for about the third week in July. As we go to press, the group plans to get the major unions to write submissions for that meeting on how they would propose to represent scheme-workers' interests.

SUBMISSIONS

The submissions will be read to the meeting, and a decision taken at that meeting on which union to join and on how best to push the officials into responding to the demands of scheme workers.

Proposals for united action on the basis of common demands will also be discussed and planned at that meeting — to which all workers on SES, "Team" schemes etc who can be contacted will be invited. It is vital that this campaign works from the beginning through the self organisation of rank and file scheme workers. At present, the ICTU although it acts as "sponsor" of many schemes has refused to take up the case of SES exploitation. It says that, as these are basically cheap labour schemes with dreadful conditions, it cannot fight for them. This is another example of ICTU officials using ultra-left rhetoric to cop out on their responsibilities to workers. Of course it suits capitalism during periods of high unemployment to force people to work on exploitative schemes — but that doesn't mean that we can't fight for better conditions on them. This copping out of ICTU officials should surprise no one. They are the same ICTU officials who are at this time trying to forge a "friendly

agreement" with Haughey, which if agreed will tie down all public service workers for FIVE YEARS. They are the same officials who have used their positions to dissuade health workers from taking militant action against the health cuts — while everywhere around us we see misery caused by the closures of wards and hospitals and the wholesale sacking of nurses and health workers. SES workers should build for the largest possible rank-and-file militancy focussing on the government and the Dept. of Labour to push their demand for proper work with proper pay. They should unionise and through this build links with other rank and file workers and with "Team" workers, compulsory trainees in AnCO, etc — to build a base of solidarity from which to fight. Planning meetings for the SES Action public meeting take place regularly and all are welcome to attend — information about these can be had from Phil Byrne at 826345 (work). MARY KILLIAN

VIGILANTE RACISM

RIGHT-WINGERS cheered when the US Supreme Court found Bernhard Goetz, the "Subway Vigilante", not guilty of attempted murder. For the past two years, since his "self defence" shooting of four black youths in New York, Goetz has been regarded as a "hero" in the fight against crime. Yet despite the verdict of "not guilty" his trial revealed facts about Bernhard Goetz which proved that he was anything but a hero. In an early interview with police he admitted that far from shooting in self defence, he actually wanted to kill the four youths. He said his only problem was that he ran out of bullets. One of the four, Darrell Cabey, is paralysed for life because Goetz shot him while he was on the ground and

severed his spinal cord. Goetz was also a racist who was obsessed with "cleaning up the spics and niggers" outside of his home. Racism and demands for "law and order" have often gone hand in hand. Vigilantes base themselves on the idea that the police are not repressive enough. Right-wing solutions like this only serve to strengthen our enemies, the capitalist class. The four youths in this case were involved in some horrible crimes, including rape. Yet there is no substitute for recognising that such crimes have their roots in poverty and alienation. These, in turn, are rooted in the biggest criminal conspiracy of all, capitalism itself. —DAVE McDONAGH

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INTERNATIONAL

Revolt in Korea

SOUTH KOREA has experienced weeks of mounting unrest. Last month 64,000 students from 45 universities demonstrated, chanting "Down with the military dictatorship" as they confronted riot police armed with batons and tear gas. A six day occupation of Seoul Cathedral by 300 students was ended only after priests negotiated a police amnesty.

This followed student protests in which riot police attacked demonstrators leaving one dead. Earlier students commandeered a subway train, occupied a major hotel and forced a international football match to be abandoned. In one incident thirty police who ran out of tear gas were overpowered and beaten up by students. Passing motorists stopped their cars to cheer.

Korea's "miracle economy" has transformed the country - in 1960 two-thirds of population was engaged in agriculture, today two-thirds work in industry. And Korean textiles, electronics, steel and ship-building now dominate the world. Last year a surge in exports produced a 12 per cent real growth in gross national product, three or four times better than even the stronger economies in today's crisis racked world.

This transformation has produced the desire in the mass of Koreans for a freer society with more civil rights. Since 1960, South Korea has been ruled by a succession of ruthless military strong-men. The last president, the notorious tyrant General Park, was killed by the military in 1979. Eighteen months of confusion followed until the milit-



Protesters in Seoul overpowered and disarmed a squad of riot police and later set fire to its riot equipment.

ary brought President Chun to power. Within weeks President Reagan had met with and established warm relations with Chun.

The present unrest was sparked by the decision of Chun, head of the ruling Democratic Justice party, to postpone the promised debate on constitutional reform until after the Olympics next year. He broke off talks with "moderate" opposition leaders and had them committed to house-arrest. Chun has nominated his successor - Roh Tae Woo - an old chum from military school in arrogant disregard of any pretence at democratic process.

Unfortunately the class with the potential power to really transform Korean society - the workers - has not yet been involved in the current rebellion. This is because its organisations are extremely weak. Strikes in all state owned and defence industries are banned. The government and employers routinely collaborate to frustrate workers from organising by imprisoning and killing militants. Strict censorship is in force, and the jails contain at least 2,000 political prisoners. In addition over 2,000 labour activists have been placed on employers' blacklists for organising strikes and other activities.

Nonetheless, the fact that masses of Koreans from a wide variety of backgrounds are prepared to risk imprisonment by demonstrating indicates the deep crisis in Korean Political life. Even the opposition leaders fear an alliance of workers and students with its revolutionary implications.

The Korean economy is vulnerable to a widely-predicted downturn in the US market, its biggest customer, and the possible explosion of working class militancy which that could detonate. It is that fear which lies behind Reagan's warnings to Chun not to over-react to the student protests.

BRITISH LABOUR PARTY Kinnock lets Thatcher off hook

THE BRITISH GENERAL election result showed that "designer socialism" is no substitute for class politics.

"Designer socialism" is the name given to that view which says that image matters more than politics. Neil Kinnock is one of the strongest supporters of this view and as a result the Labour Party used all the advertising tricks and publicity ploys that a modern political party is supposed to use in an election campaign. Kinnock was presented as a British Kennedy. Every other Labour leader swung in behind the red rose emblazoned razamataz of the new TV centred political campaign.

Labour claimed it 'cared' more than Thatcher, but it didn't present arguments to show that it had an alternative to the crisis riven capitalist system. It even dropped its predictions of a few weeks before that the British economy was about to run into trouble again.

As a result it let the Tories get away with the biggest con of all - the pretence that they had produced economic boom and a prosperous Britain.

The advertising whizz kids who ran Labour's campaign were insistent that no "difficult" arguments should be put, such is their contempt for the working class people of Britain who have traditionally voted Labour.

The gloss of Labour's campaign could not reverse the decline in its vote which has been taking place for the last 12 years or so.

This decline was caused by the experience of disastrous Labour governments in Britain in 1964-70 and 1974-79. Both these Labour governments saw record increases in unemployment, cuts in public expenditure, assaults on the Health service and education and a deterioration in conditions in the industrial areas of the North and inner city areas of the midlands and the South.

Above all, ministers in both Labour governments pioneered many of the arguments heard today from the Tories - the need for greater profitability in private industry, blaming strikers for everything that goes wrong and claiming that Britain cannot afford decent welfare provisions.

Socialists in Britain must now learn the lessons of the catastrophic election result. The Tories won't be beaten by clever advertising industry tricks. Support CAN be won for socialist ideas if people hear clear, idealist arguments as they are forced into struggle. Such struggles can beat the Tories, without the need to wait five years more.

CIA hand in Fiji coup

FIJI's pro-Western dictator Ratu Sir Kamisese Maru was prime minister for 17 years until he was ousted by Timoci Bavada's Labour Party earlier this year. However within four weeks he was back in power as minister of foreign affairs in the military government, restored in a coup led by Colonel Lt. Col. Sitiveni Rabuka with more than a suspicion of CIA backing. General Vernon Walters, the US ambassador to the United Nations, with a long history of links to CIA-backed coups, recently visited the islands.

The US distrusted the new, popularly elected government's nuclear policies and feared it would build links with Russia, which has increased its influence in the region by signing the Treaty of Tlatelcoac banning nuclear operations in the South Pacific and which has also been signed by Australia and New Zealand (although not by Britain, France and the US).

Even before the election Ratu Sir Kamisese Maru's government planned to bring in constitutional changes to ensure that the majority Indian population, which largely backed the Labour Party, could never have control of the country. Ethnic Indians make up slightly more than half of the island's population of 714,000. The ethnic divide is a classic legacy of British colonial rule.

The Indians are the direct descendants of indentured labourers taken there to work the British owned sugar plantations.

The British then ensured that divisions were exploited to the full by allowing Indians to develop businesses on the one hand, and installing ethnic Fijians to staff the state bureaucracies on the other.

Since the coup the military government have put their previously planned constitutional changes into effect, trying to turn the fight into a racial conflict. In fact large numbers of native Fijians also voted for the Labour Party and the short-lived Labour government had an equal number of Fijian and Indian ministers. Many trade unionists - ethnic Fijian as well as Indian - supported the Labour Government to such an extent that a general strike in protest at the coup last month drew support from large numbers of both communities.

Immediately after the coup the newly elected Labour government was locked up. The British government - despite its close alliance with Reagan in most international affairs - has been embarrassed into condemning the coup. Fiji is part of the Commonwealth, after all.

NAN DALTON



Soldiers outside the Fijian parliament after coup. The coup, led by Lt Col Sitiveni Rabuka (right), saw the arrest of the entire month old cabinet of Timoci Bavada, and the reinstatement of the former prime minister, Ratu Sir Kamisese Maru (far right) - now as foreign minister.

OUR HISTORY

Revolution dawns!

IT'S SEVENTY years since the revolution in Russia which brought the working class there to power. It was the existence of the Bolshevik Party that ensured that the revolution was brought to a successful conclusion. Yet at the start of 1917 the Bolsheviks themselves had no idea that revolution was on the cards.

Lenin, the leader of the Bolshevik Party, wrote at the start of 1917: "We of the older generation may not live to see the decisive battles of the coming revolution. But I can, I believe, express the confident hope that the youth will be fortunate enough not only to fight, but also to win, in the coming proletarian revolution."

Within weeks of Lenin writing this, the workers of Russia had taken over the factories and united with the war-weary soldiers to overthrow the Tsar. Their action was clear proof that only the working class itself can bring about the revolution. The revolutionary party is needed to lead workers to smash the state and to start building socialism but the party cannot substitute itself for the working class.

In this article, the first of a series about the Russian revolution, Socialist Worker examines the events of early 1917.

AFTER the long years of reaction which followed the defeat of the 1905 revolution, when workers were imprisoned and banished for striking, unions were illegal and the power of the Tsar supreme, the years after 1912 saw a flowering of working class consciousness and militancy.

The economy recovered and the number of workers involved in strikes shot up. Workers regained their confidence and started taking on their bosses. At first there were economic strikes and then political stoppages. The workers were again starting to threaten the power of the Tsar and the state.

From 1912-14 workers went from strength to strength, developing their ability to organise strikes in their own workplace and to win solidarity in other workplaces. The vast modern factories of Petrograd were ripe for socialist ideas and were breeding-grounds for revolutionaries.

In the first half of 1914, 1,059,000 workers went on strike, nearly as many as during the revolution of 1905, and three times the number of 1913. In July 200,000 workers in Petrograd struck against police repression of the Putilov strikers who were out in support of the Baku oil strike. Workers marched carrying red flags and singing revolutionary songs. On the 11th July barricades were erected and it took the police four days to restore order.

On July 19th war broke out. A thousand Bolsheviks were arrested, thousands of "unruly" workers were drafted and sent to the front. Forty per cent of workers in Petrograd were mobilised and their jobs filled by peasants fresh from the land and unused to collective action. The workers were filled with patriotic zeal and, for a while, identified with the regime. Thus on Bloody Sunday in 1915 (commemorating the murder of demonstrators in January 1905) only 14 factories took any action and only 2,528 workers went on strike, on Mayday only 859 strikers took part.

Even the Bolsheviks wavered; their five members of the Duma (the Russian parliament) adopted a proposal together with the Mensheviks to "defend the cultural treasures" of Russia. Lenin's hard, clear position of "revolutionary defeatism" — which argued that the enemy was at home, that the imperialist war should be converted into a civil war and that the defeat of Russia would speed that process — was greeted with perplexity at first.

But the awakening workers' movement was soon back on course and with the re-birth of political awareness followed the Bolshevik commitment to anti-war internationalism, which in turn strengthened the workers movement. In the second half of 1915 there were bitter strikes: 17 factories and 14,490 workers were involved in economic disputes. In August and September major political strikes broke out; 27,000 workers struck demanding the withdrawal of cossacks from the factories, the release of the five exiled Bolshevik deputies and freedom of the press. On Bloody Sunday in 1916,

53,000 workers were on strike — 85 per cent of them in Petrograd — throughout 1916, 280,943 workers were involved in political strikes and 221,136 in economic strikes. In January and February of 1917 256,253 workers were involved and 35,829 in economic strikes. In other words, 88 per cent of all workers involved were striking for political reasons. The political temperature was rising.

Meanwhile the government was in disarray. Military defeats were mounting up and Tsarism became a regime of permanent crisis. Ministers were chosen on the most dubious of credentials. In 1914 Gorenkyin was made Prime Minister — an old monarchist who said he was pulled "like a winter coat out of mothballs". He was replaced in 1916 by Sturmer — a man of second-rate intelligence and a sycophant with extensive ambitions — his qualification was that he was a friend of Rasputin. The Minister of War, Sukholinov, was dismissed for embezzlement. During two and a half years of war there were four different Prime Ministers, five ministers of interior, four ministers of agriculture and three minister of war!

A corrupt clique held power — at their centre was Rasputin, the "man of god" who debauched whilst workers, peasants and soldiers starved. In 1913 and 1914 all high appointments, posts and contracts depended on this clique. Police reports described Rasputin as being "pretty drunk", "very drunk" and "completely drunk". Enormous fortunes arose out of bloody foam. Never had so many diamonds been bought as in the winter of 1915-16.

The Tsar departed to army HQ, the Tsarina "took charge" of internal affairs and eventually military affairs too. They conspired against even the minimal power the Duma possessed.

RECOGNISED

The right-wing generals and the Tsar's family recognised the need for a revolution from above to pre-empt the revolution from below which they could see brewing. There was endless talk of a coup but nobody dared act. The Tsar's family prayed for a coup, the Duma waited for the generals and the generals waited for the Duma. A palace revolution was openly discussed, yet under the old regime it was impossible either to conclude the war or to achieve victory. This lack of resolve led to Rasputin's assassination but instead of blunting the crisis the assassination sharpened it. Tsarism survived the murder of Rasputin by only ten weeks.

The workers were getting ever more confident. On February 18th one section of the Putilov metal demanded a 50 per cent wage increase, management refused and the workers started a sit-down strike. On February 21 they were sacked and the strike spread to other sections of the factory. The next day the Putilov workers were locked out and 30,000 well-organised workers hit the streets.

At the same time there was only ten day's supply of flour left in Petrograd and the workers heard that rationing would start. On February 16th there were bread queues, the shops emptied and closed mini riots developed. On February 23 —



International Women's Day (in the old calendar) women textile workers went on strike demanding "bread". Red flags appeared and the slogan "Down with the Autocracy!" emerged. The movement began in the Vyborg district with its large factories and high concentration of workers and spread to the Petrograd side — 90,000 workers were on strike. They stopped the trams and took away the keys 15 trains quit. Order was restored only at 7.00pm.

On the 24th 131 industries were out, 161,000 workers — they were joined by high school students. On the 25th the crowd beat up the chief of police and the cossacks made no attempt to stop workers, indeed cossacks winked knowingly at workers. The police hit on the 26th — firing on the crowd in four separate places, and 40 people were killed by the machine guns of the training reservists of the Pavlovski regiment.

DEVELOPING

But at the same time a new relation of forces was developing among the workers and soldiers. As Trotsky wrote: "The worker looked thirstily and commandingly into the eye of the soldier and the soldier anxiously and diffidently looked away. The soldier sullenly, but without hostility — guiltily rather — refused to answer. Or sometimes and more often — he answered with pretended severity in order to conceal how anxiously his heat was beating . . . Thus the change was accomplished. The soldier was clearly shaking off his soldiery."

And so workers complained to the Pavlovski regiment — a burning reproach that their comrades from a training unit had fired on the workers. So the Fourth Company left the barracks without permission and marched to the Nevsky to recall the training squad. When they returned to the barracks they were imprisoned — but 21 escaped with their

rifles, to seek allies among the workers.

The soldiers had no desire to go to the front. Already five and a half million soldiers were dead or wounded. They wanted to go now to their farms and factories. They didn't want to fight the Germans and still less the workers of Petrograd. So they were ripe for revolt.

Next day, 27th February, the Volinsky regiment revolted and went from barracks to barracks "calling out" the soldiers. They joined with the workers and wrecked the police barracks. The workers from the Vyborg district had a plan — together with the best soldiers — to seize police stations, rout the government troops, unite with still inactive troops and with workers of other districts. The only garrisons who failed to mutiny by that evening had not got round to it. The mutiny had become endemic.

February 28 saw the final collapse of the Tsarist forces — the last "loyal" troops at the fortress of Peter and Paul surrendered — they gave up without firing a shot. The Tsar's ministers were arrested or surrendered.

TREMBLING

The Russian bourgeoisie was cowardly and counter-revolutionary — they were trembling for their fortunes. They wanted to keep their distance from the revolution and betray the Tsar at the same time thus using the revolution for their own ends. Rodzianko of the Duma (a landlord and monarchist) demanded the Tsar's abdication. Nikolai abdicated, offered the crown to his brother who refused to accept it without guarantees of safety — and so the monarchy ended.

The Soviet of Petrograd was born of the 22nd February and within days 77 soviets (excluding soldiers and factories) existed. No town in Russia was without.

The February revolution was spontaneous — unplanned. One worker-leader of the Vyborg district committee

of the Bolsheviks said "No-one thought of such an immense possibility of revolution". On February 23rd Kayurov had argued against the women workers' plan for International Women's Day, asking them to refrain from hasty action. The Bolsheviks reacted to the strike with surprise and indignation and only reluctantly agreed to spread it. Although lagging behind the workers they recognised the need in a potential mass strike to call everybody onto the streets, — but it took until the 25th, when 200,000 workers were out on strike, for them to make the call. Shliapnikov from the central committee refused to issue arms and either foresightedly, or afraid to accept responsibility, he said soldiers should be drawn in to get arms for all workers.

It was not, then, the Bolsheviks who let the February revolution — but the workers themselves, conscious of their class and tempered by years of economic and political struggle against their bosses and the state.

Yet the spontaneity of the revolution was at the same time its weakness. Within a few days the leadership of the Petrograd soviet had called on the liberal bourgeoisie to take on the running of the country, to form a Provisional Government.

It was then that a revolutionary party with roots in the working class was needed — to explain to the revolution the mass of workers, soldiers and poor peasants, that their interests and those of the Provisional Government were irreconcilably opposed.

Over the next few months, Socialist Worker will be looking at how from April to October 1917 the Bolsheviks were the piston which harnessed the steam of the revolutionary working class to bring about workers power. While February 1917 showed that only the working class itself can start that process, it took a revolutionary party to bring it to fruition.

— J. SPRAGUE

FIGHT THE HEALTH

Press hides the horror stories

"PENSIONERS KILLED BY POLITICIANS!"; "BABIES ABUSED BY BUREAUCRATS!"

Why can't we have some really alarming headlines from the press? They manage the hysterical reports of joyriders or muggers well enough.

The most vulnerable people in our society are under government attack — "Health cuts hurt the old, the sick and the handicapped", as the Fianna Fail election poster explained before going in for the kill.

The health service in the South will cost £1115 million to run this year. The Fianna Fail government has cut it by £65 million. The figures are too big and the lies and half truths surrounding them too confusing for most people to take in. But translated into what they mean for hundreds of thousands of individual cases, the misery they cause is enough to make your blood boil.

Take Angela for instance. She is a bright little girl who attends a

special school because she suffers from spina bifida, a birth defect that, among other things, means she is incontinent and needs a nappy change several times daily. Her nappy allowance has been reduced from 144 nappies to 60 per month. It would cost her mother £30 to make up the difference. She can't afford it. So she has to keep her little girl at home. No more school.

Or Molly — she's a pensioner, widowed, living by herself. She's been waiting two years, in pain, for a hip replacement operation. With the closure of Cappagh hospital she'll wait even longer. She's house-bound and has few callers. Her home-help used to drop in three times a week. It costs £7 per person per week for a home help. That's been cut — she'll now get one visit a fortnight if she's lucky. So much for a lifetime of hard work.

A man needing treatment in the outpatients' department of Stevens hospital in Dublin travelled up from Waterford. He was asked for the £10 payment. He didn't have it but offered all he did have — £7. He was turned away.

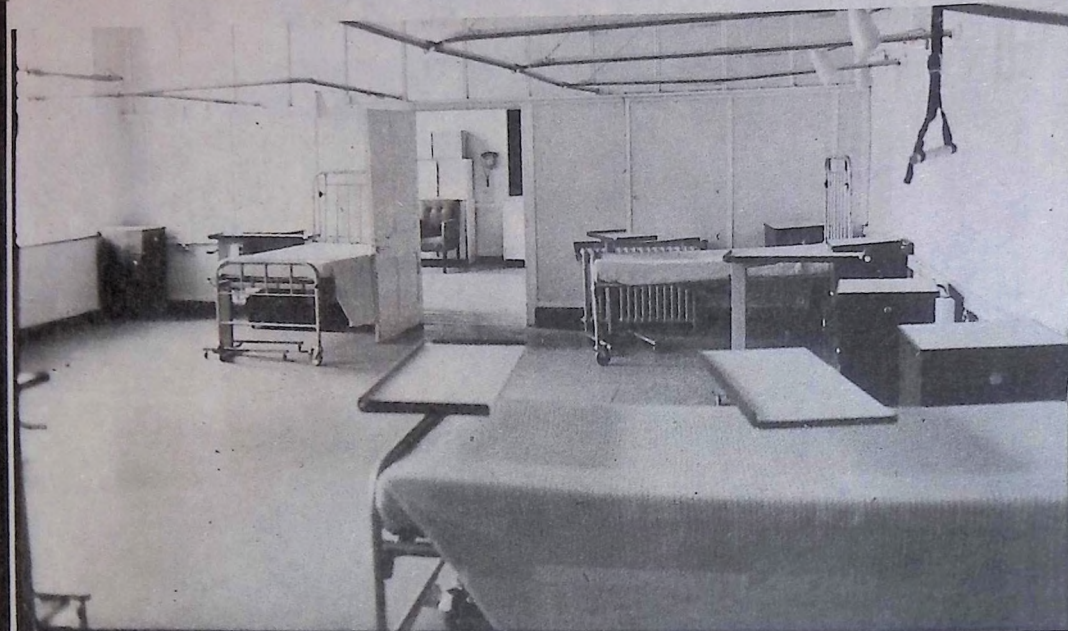
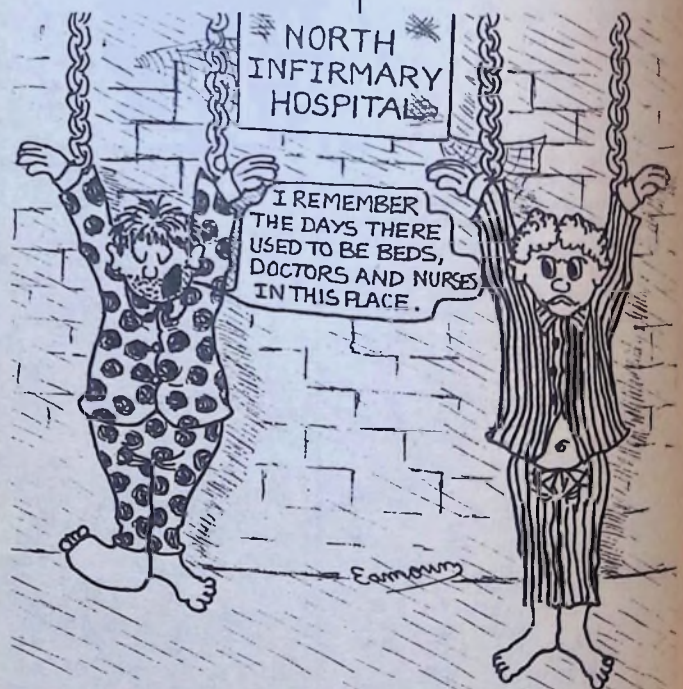


Photo: DEREK SPEIRS/REPORT

HEALTH CARE is a right, not a luxury. Winning our rights and defending them has ever been a battle for working people.

Health workers must lead the fight against the cuts, it's their jobs, but they need the active support of all Irish workers.

But any fightback must begin with a clear idea of the kind of fight it has to be. First, it must be a fight against all cutbacks. There is no place for playing off one geographic region, or one part of the service, against the other. The old trade union principle of "an injury to one is an injury to all" has never been more true.

The government itself has thrown out a few red herrings. It talks of the "modern and progressive role" of community-based care, and how Southern Ireland is one of the highest spenders on hospitalisation in Europe. This then becomes the "justification" for closing down hospitals.

Any change-over from hospital to community care would need careful planning, gradual implementation, and most importantly, an enormous expansion of our scant community and domiciliary services. But the exact opposite is happening. District nurses in the South Eastern Health region, for instance, have been told to cut their mileage by a third and more than 500 hospital beds are being lost through a series of sudden closures.

WASTEFUL

Then there are those within the health service itself who accept the need to cut "waste". Two wasteful areas often quoted are drugs and administration.

Let's just look at drugs for a minute. The World Health Organisation reckons there are around 25,000 drugs on the market, only 200 of which are actually needed. The rest are competing brands of the same combinations of basic pharmaceutical components, on which the giant drug companies make enormous profits. It's reckoned that £30 million a year could be saved in Ireland if doctors prescribed drugs by their generic (pharmaceutical) name, rather than by a

Private sector booms as public health hit

HEALTH CARE, and the government's attitude toward it, shows just how insane the system is.

We have empty wards — empty hospitals even — like Beaumont: brand new, costing £55 million, never a patient in it yet. We have doctors and nurses on the dole. We have factories that manufacture medical requisites closing down — like Travener in Castlebar — and we have literally thousands of people, sick, in pain, needing hospitals, doctors, nurses, medical requisites.

Would it not be logical to put it all together and call it a health service? Of course it would.

But where's the profit? The capitalist system requires that above all other considerations a profit must be made. Closing hospitals in itself does not create a profit but it leaves more taxpayers' money to pay the bankers, and banks make very large profits indeed.

And of course there's plenty of profit to be made in private medicine. It's the great advantage of a "two tier" health service, that the governments — Coalition and Fianna Fail alike — have all given the green light to. Private medicine gets £30 million in tax relief a year — the VHI is subsidised by PAYE workers, who themselves, in the main, cannot

afford the premiums.

The exclusive Blackrock Clinic has submitted a planning application to Dun Laoghaire Corporation looking for two additional floors 58 beds, costing £3 million. Business is booming too at the luxurious Mater Private Clinic, not least for the consultants, who on top of the £38,000 per annum they get from the health service, cream off another £70,000 collecting it on the basis of transfer payments in relation to VHI taxation.

Public medicine — and those of us dependant on it — are the ones who are being hit. It used to be the case that anyone earning up to £15,000 per annum was entitled to a free hospital bed. About 38 per cent of the population have the medical card, and are also entitled to free doctors' visits and prescriptions. Medical card holders are in the main earning less than £5,000 per annum. But new restrictions mean that fewer qualify for it — students, for instance, are being excluded.

So the cuts mostly affect those earning between £5000 and £15000. That's the majority of PAYE workers, who have already paid dearly for the medical care through their taxes. Now they must pay again — £10 per day if they need to stay in hospital, £10 if they need to visit the outpatients. Few can afford expensive health insurance that would entitle them to prompt attention in a private hospital, and now our "own" public hospitals and services are being closed or run down to save the government money.

brand name. Fine, let's do that — why subsidise the drug giants? But the money saved should be used to provide cheaper drugs for more people. What the government means is that it should be given back the money — so that it can be passed on to the bankers.

And as for administrators... No doubt the bureaucracy is top-heavy. But calls to cut down on the cost of administration in the past have usually resulted in job losses for medical secretaries, clerks, typists, record-keepers, etc; in other words, those genuinely working to keep the service running, not the fat-cats who

get huge salaries for the onerous task of making decisions to axe the service on our behalf. Administration needs fewer bosses, more workers, and no cuts.

INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Second, but just as important, we need to understand that industrial action is the way to win. Certainly, a hospital is not like a factory. It's not simply a case of "down tools and everybody out". But while those whose job it is to look after the sick and the helpless understand this, very often they have let themselves

be emotionally blackmailed by the hierarchy in the hospitals and by the media into taking no action at all. A strike in a hospital can work when the staff themselves through their own elected committees, take over the running of the hospital.

That way, they can organise patient care, without causing unnecessary suffering. It's not "business as usual" under new management, not quite. Restrictions on routine work would be necessary, while providing urgent or emergency care, in order to allow workers not needed on the ward/lab/phones, to go out and demand support from workers in industry, transport, power, etc.

That is the key — solidarity action — because, whereas health workers have little economic clout themselves, they have an excellent case, and a health workers' picket line can put that case in a powerful and emotive way.

PRIVATISATION

In Britain in 1982 during the strikes against cuts and privatisation in the Health Service, nurses and other health workers picketed out miners and dockers. The health minister sat up and took notice — because the action was eating into

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JOHN MOLYNEUX

Teach yourself
MARXISM

The case against anarchism



MARXISM has always had to compete with rival theories in its struggle over the influence over the working class and the oppressed. Its main rivals, apart from straightforward capitalist ideology, have been social democratic reformism and Stalinism but there has usually been an alternative standing, apparently, to the left of Marxism, namely anarchism.

disagreement is a different view of the root cause of exploitation and oppression. To the anarchist the root cause is power. Power, in and of itself, power in all its forms—state power, the power of political parties and unions and every other kind of authority and leadership. Anarchists believe that it is the existence of this power and authority which creates class divisions and all other kinds of inequality and oppression.

It is this last point which arouses the particular ire of the anarchists who echo the bourgeois arguments that revolutionary power leads inevitably to tyranny (that Leninism leads inevitably to Stalinism etc). However, anarchism has failed to come up with any serious alternative way of dealing with the resistance of the capitalists and their efforts to restore the old order.

Their strategy therefore is to denounce and renounce, on principle, all manifestations of power and authority, and above all every kind of state power. To these they counterpose the absolute freedom of the individual and the purely spontaneous rebellion of the masses.

So far we have been discussing 'pure' anarchism which has its social basis in the radical petty bourgeoisie which feels alienated from both the power of big capital and the power of the working class.

Anarchism clearly is not an important political force today, but at various times in the history of the revolutionary movement (most notably in the Spanish Civil War) it has exercised some considerable influence. Even now it has definite attractions for the young and rebellious.

Merge

Anarchism is thus essentially a moral stance. It lacks any historical analysis of how the things it opposes came about or of why it should be possible to get rid of them now, rather than any time in the past. It simply condemns 'evil' and fights for 'good'.

So far as anarchism has attempted to gain a base in the working class, it has had to abandon some of its individualist principles and accept the need for collective organisation. Thus it has tended to merge with syndicalism, ie revolutionary trade unionism which rejects participation in 'bourgeois' politics and the role of the revolutionary party.

Absurd

Consequently it is quite likely that at some point *Socialist Worker* readers will come up against some anarchist arguments. What then are the main differences between Marxism and anarchism and what is the Marxist case against it?

In contrast Marxism does not regard the state (or 'power' in general) as the fundamental problem. Rather it explains the emergence of the state as the product of the division of society into antagonistic classes. This in turn is explained as the consequence of a certain stage in the development of the forces of production.

It is as anarcho-syndicalism that anarchism has come closest to Marxism, and in the wake of the Russian Revolution many anarcho-syndicalists were drawn to the Communist International. Nevertheless, its lack of theory, its absenteeism from politics which leaves the field to the reformists, and its failure to think through the realities of workers' power, continue to make anarchism even in its syndicalist form inadequate for the working class.

First let us be clear that Marxists cannot afford simply to scorn anarchism in the way capitalist 'common sense' does. This is because the ultimate goal of anarchism—a society of real freedom and equality in which there is no longer a state or any form of oppression of people—is one that Marxists share.

The central task therefore is the abolition of class divisions. This can be achieved only through the victory of the working class over the capitalist class. For this the working class requires organisation and leadership (trade unions, the revolutionary party etc), and the use of power—from the mass picket up to and including the creation of its own workers' state to combat counter-revolution.

Thus in general anarchism remains a negative and marginal doctrine. It condemns capitalism, condemns the reformists, and condemns the Marxists.

Supporters of the present order dismiss such an aim as absurd. Marxists do not. Our disagreements with anarchism are not over the ultimate aim but over how to achieve it, that is, how society is to be changed.

The starting point of this



Anarchism exercised considerable influence during the Spanish Civil War. Although now they are not an important political force

HEALTH CUTS!



Bleeding the hospitals to pay off the bankers

HEALTH CUTS are not new. Between 1982 and 1987 £120 million was cut from the health budget. Nor are they peculiar to Ireland, as even a cursory look at the run-up to the British election showed.

Health is a major part of any social welfare programme and as such a major item of government spending. The economic recession — the predictable crisis in the capitalist system — means that governments can't spend freely but have to make a choice as to how they are going to allocate funds. Either they spend to suit business interests — pay huge amounts of interest to bankers in servicing the National Debt, keep company and wealth taxes down, maintain a strong property protection squad (the police); or they spend on things the majority of the citizens — the workers — need, like health, education, public transport etc, etc. Socialists have long argued that governments *always* act in the interests of big-business and the bankers. So the choice they do make need not surprise us.

What is causing such hardship in the Twenty-six Counties at present is the scale of the cuts — £65 million this year alone. And to add insult to injury, they are lying about it. Fianna Fail say it is spending an extra £13 million on health. The

£13 million referred to comes the new £10 payment at hospitals £6 million from charges to outpatients and £7 million from charges (£10 per day) to inpatients. Southern Ireland is already the second lowest spender in Europe on health care, at 6.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) this year.

"But where is the money to come from?" the supporters of the cuts argue. All right, let's leave aside for the moment that we could recind the "National Debt". Let's concentrate on the fact that we have the highest number of police per head of the population in the world

We have one of the highest proportions of government officials in the world — who have one of the cushiest pension schemes imaginable.

PRIORITIES

The government has spending priorities that range from £100 million on border security, to £200 million to bail out Allied Irish Banks when they got their fingers burnt gambling on the London stock market. There's £700 million in uncollected VAT. In 1985 the government discovered that £2½ billion had left the Irish economy — disappeared down a mysterious "black-hole" created by re-patriating profiteers and big-time money movers. It was three years before the

government even realised it was gone. Where is the money to come from? Those are some obvious places.

A hospital like St James in Dublin costs £30 million a year to run — Jervis Street £11 million. Vital to patient care are not just major hospitals like these but "support hospitals" — like Bagnelstown, Co. Carlow costing half a million to run. Equally vital are the "support services", like chiropody — which effectively prevent serious conditions developing, such as gangrene in diabetic patients. It is expected that this year 20 hospitals and other institutions will close, 2,100 beds will be lost, 800 acute, 1,000 geriatric and 300 psychiatric.

The health services employ 58,000 people — doctors, nurses lab technicians, clerical staff, cooks cleaners and maintenance workers. This year 3,700 jobs will go, with more to follow.

The waste of skills and training is appalling — the South turns out 450 trained doctors each year. There will be fewer than 50 jobs for doctors this year. The hospitals turn out 600 trained nurses every six months — but there are no nursing jobs now available. Nursing agencies in the Dublin area have been contacted and told that they can send staff to a hospital if that hospital so requests — but the health board wont pay them.

industrial profits. The argument is as clear as day. The health service is for all working class people — it's in their interests to defend it.

But we must understand the strengths and weaknesses of hospital workers. Union organisation in the hospitals is weak. Mass meetings involving all health workers are needed in each hospital, to discuss the cuts and the way to fight them. The shameful fudging and then the failure of the LGPSU leadership to block the £10 charge was a bad start. Token stoppages are all right as a short-term way to build support but eventually going out the gate and

going back in again for the umpteenth time only leads to demoralisation. Rank-and-file hospital workers must be prepared to organise themselves if the official leadership fails to lead in the ways that can win.

ALARMING

Thus the half-day stoppage on June 24th called by the Alliance of Health Service Unions and Dublin Trades Council should be seen as only a start. Next we must step up and spread the action.

Most alarming to health workers should be the attitude of the ICTU,

which is falling over itself to sit down with the government to work out a five year "National Plan". What are they planning for heaven's sake? More cuts — first health, then education, then the unemployed.

The demand must be made: Cancel the Talks — Organise the Fightback!

This year's ICTU conference should be the beginning of the real fightback which will challenge the priorities of the Fianna Fail government and its system and pose the alternative of workers themselves organising for the full, free health service which only a socialist system can provide.

ANALYSIS

TRADE UNION LEADERSHIP :

Why are they not fighting ?

FOR THE first time in the history of the 26-Counties, the three right-wing parties, Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and the Progressive Democrats are united in their response to the economic crisis.

Despite election promises to the contrary, cuts in health and social services and increasing attacks on the living standards of the working class — both those at work and the unemployed — are their solutions.

There have been differences of emphasis between the parties and also within them as to how these cuts should be implemented. But at no stage have these differences been pushed to the point of bringing down the Fianna Fail government. The three parties now act as a coalition in everything but name.

This should, in theory, present an ideal opportunity for the building of a real fightback and a socialist alternative to the bosses' parties. During the last teachers' strike many teachers believed that the way to winning their demands was by electing a Fianna Fail government. Those type of illusions, at the moment in any case, are no longer possible. However, although the right-wing parties now stand stripped of their rhetoric and their naked viciousness is exposed, there is no sign as yet of an organised fightback.

This is not because workers have not been prepared to fight. Quite the opposite. The stoppages and demonstrations against Dr Death O'Hanlon's health cuts show the real anger that exists and the potential for a fightback. But rather than mobilise and direct that anger, the union leaders have done all in their power to contain it.

As Pat Rabbitte, Workers Party member and secretary of the Alliance of Health Service Unions, put it after a meeting with Dr Death: "We made it very clear to the Minister that we would prefer to use the existing negotiating machinery . . . and we stressed the role of the Alliance of Health Service Unions as a positive and restraining force on the spontaneous reaction of health workers on the ground".

In other words: if the government works with us, we'll do our best to hold workers back.

Similarly on the question of the £10 hospital charge. Militants at the LGPSU conference, unhappy with the vague resolution passed opposing the charges, proposed and got through a resolution instructing members not to collect the charges. The following day the union leadership manoeuvred to have this position changed to an instruction not to collect the charges until such time as negotiations were held on procedures for collecting them.

The £10 charge was the first step in the government's attack on the health service — part of a strategy to push an increasing number of people into the clutches of private medicine. By pushing through this resolution the union leadership gave a clear sign to the government that it did not oppose the charges in principle and that minor changes in working arrangements would ensure that the charges would be collected. The grand resolutions passed over the years calling for a "comprehensive national health service" were conveniently forgotten.

To add further insult at that same LGPSU conference Phil Flynn, former Vice President of the Sinn Féin and general secretary of the Union, spoke in favour of allowing Dr Death himself to address the conference. If the matter was not so serious you'd have to laugh. Dr Death must have felt that he was fighting a punch-drunk boxer shouting "Go on, hit me! . . . hit me! . . . hit me again!"



Photo: DEREK SPEIRS/REPORT

Flynn's excuse for this little exercise in masochism was that nothing should be done that would threaten the talks between the government and the ICTU bosses on the new "National Plan". Now these talks are a strange animal indeed. Following the budget Haughey and his ministers clearly said they would stick rigidly to the proposals in the budget, including cuts and pay restraint. Now you might think that the ICTU would have said "No way, Haughey, we will defend the living standards of our members," and organised some form of token action to back them up. No, instead they immediately called for "urgent" talks to discuss their proposals for the economy. You may have noticed that talks are always urgent, nothing else ever seems to be.

The government agreed to the talks and they have been talking ever since. What they can be talking about is anybody's guess, but the "deal" that they may finally stitch up should be of concern to all workers.

INVESTMENTS

What does this present crisis consist of? It is quite simply that the bosses' rate of profit has fallen. They are getting less return on their investments. As profits are the motor force of capitalism, when profits fall there is a "crisis".

As for the so-called "national" debt, this was money that was borrowed in the interest of the bosses of this country, certainly not our interest. You have only to look at the recent example of the millions given to Hysters to get some idea of the scale of the hand-outs given to these people. The £20 odd million given to Hysters in grants would have saved many hospitals. Of course, we are told that this money is given to "create jobs" Jobs are created, but this is just a side effect. The fundamental reason for developing these industries and giving these grants is to ensure that more and

more profits can be made.

Where does the ICTU come into all of this? The Irish ruling class's objective is to restore profitability. This objective is not something unique to them. In fact, as the crisis is international, other ruling classes are faced with similar problems. By looking at what happened in other countries we can get some idea of what we face.

Whether it was Britain or France, Poland or Russia, Korea or the Philippines, the ruling class's response has been basically the same — cuts in health and social services, increased unemployment, pushing down of wages and the weakening or if possible breaking, of working class organisation through mandatory ballots, restrictions on picketing, etc. The only other way out of the crisis is socialism — production on the basis of need not profit.

Faced with the task of returning capitalism to profitability, Haughey and his ministers have very little room for manoeuvre. There are two possible outcomes to the talks with the ICTU. First for some shoddy deal to be stitched together involving a small pay increase with a long pay pause, in return for the privilege of having a few ICTU bureaucrats on some state economic advisory board or other and the agreement of the ICTU to some restrictions on trade union rights. Without a crystal ball the exact details are impossible to forecast, but some sort of deal of that nature is possible.

The second alternative is that the talks will continue and eventually break down, by which stage much of the anger and militancy that exists at the moment will have died down. For these reasons, trade unionists should be demanding that the ICTU ends the talks immediately and begins to lead a real fight against the government's policies.

The question is why this lack of fight by the union leaders? It is not a new phenomenon. Any militant who has been active in union affairs will know of examples of the officials selling out their members. The solutions to this problem have included splitting off to form new,

more militant unions or trying to elect more left-wing officials. But these are no solutions at all. Within years of new unions being formed, the same problems arise again. Similarly, even the most left wing official can be forced to compromise if he or she wants to keep their job.

Take the example of Arthur Scargill during the miners' strike. He knew well that the only way to victory was by stopping the supply of coal to the steel plants and by winning solidarity action by other workers. But because he was not prepared to confront the area leaders of his own union who were against mass picketing or to appeal to rank-and-file workers for solidarity action over the heads of their leaders and the TUC, he had to remain silent.

COMPROMISES

Writing almost a hundred years ago, Sidney and Beatrice Webb who were not by any stretch of the imagination left-wingers, had this to say on the subject:

"To the ordinary trade unionist the claim of the workman is to Justice. He believes, almost as a matter of principle, that in any dispute the capitalist is in the wrong and the workman in the right. But when as a District Delegate, it becomes his business to be perpetually investigating the exact circumstances of the men's quarrels, negotiating with employers, and arranging compromises, he begins more and more to recognise that there is something to be urged on the other side. There is also an unconscious bias at work. Whilst the points at issue no longer affect his own earnings or conditions of employment, any disputes between his members and their employers increase his work and add to his worry. The former vivid sense of the privations and subjections of the artisan's life gradually fades from his mind, and he begins more and more to regard all complaints as perverse and unreasonable."

The sexist language in this passage is

old fashioned but the meaning is bang up-to-date.

The union official rather than seeing him/herself as a leader of struggle regards him/herself as a professional negotiator who by clever talking can win concessions for the membership. Whilst this was certainly so in times of boom, today with the working class under attack, those concessions are no longer to be had.

All this might lead you to believe that we are against union officials as such. Nothing could be further from the truth. You have only to look at the development of COSATU in South Africa to see the essential role that officials play as organisers of the union. It is because of this role that so many of them have been detained by the racist South African state.

We have been the first to criticise John Mitchell of IDATU for certain actions in the past. But, for example, we unreservedly support his fight against his expulsion from the executive of the ICTU. He was expelled for saying something which we believe to be true — that some of the unions in the Six Counties have in fact collaborated with sectarian hiring policies in certain firms.

And there are times when even the most right-wing official will be forced to fight. This may be a half or one-day stoppage or some other limited action. Union militants are often justifiably cynical of the reasons for this. Nevertheless, it is important both to support and build for this activity while at the same time arguing that it is not enough and needs to go further.

We support the officials when they reflect the interests of the working class. When they are against those interests we oppose them.

Or as Connolly put it, officials should be elected "from the standpoint of their responsiveness to the call for solidarity, and having got such officials, to retain them only as they can show results in the amelioration of the conditions of their members and the development of their union as a weapon of class warfare."

— WILLIE CUMMING

EAMONN McCANN

It's only rock 'n' roll

ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHEERS at U2's Croke Park concert on June 27th came when Bono interrupted 'Bullet in the Blue Sky' to talk about coming back to Ireland and finding hospitals closing down, beds being emptied out from wards and nurses on the streets demonstrating.

Sitting in the VIP enclosure of the Hogan Stand, Garrett FitzGerald didn't seem at all put out. After all, it's only rock 'n' roll.

The incident highlighted one of the central contradictions in rock music - the extent to which it can express anger and frustration, particularly that of young people, while posing no threat at all to the establishment against which the anger would have to be directed if change is to be brought about.

The vast numbers of young, mainly working class people who thronged to Croke Park for the two U2 concerts do, potentially, pose a threat to everything that FitzGerald (and Dukes, Haughey, O'Malley - the rest of them) stand for. In a crude way that was expressed in the nervous demands of politicians around the Croke Park area for a strong garda presence and a variety of other measures to ensure that good order prevailed. Tony Gregory, for example, leafletted houses in the locality on the day before the concerts assuring residents (voters) that he had been on the ball. The leaflet quoted in full two Dail questions he had put to Justice Minister Gerry Collins - demanding an "adequate" garda presence and that all off-licences in the area be closed for the weekend. For his part, Christy Burke of Sinn Fein toured the off-licences asking owners not to sell cider to young people.

Both men were demanding in effect that the young people who gathered should be kept *under control*. Which says quite a lot about the basic reformism Gregory and Burke represent, despite their occasional shows of kick-over-the-traces radicalism. It could be argued that the fact that it was a rock concert rather than a political rally was the best guarantee that nothing disruptive of the establishment or its values would happen.

Music is one of the very few areas of life under capitalism in the eighties in which young working class people can dream of making it right to the top. (Sport is the only other obvious example.) Nobody growing up in the Bogside or Ballymun can seriously dream of becoming Tony O'Reilly. But they can and do dream of becoming Bono.

But such is the glamour surrounding rock stardom and so great are the amounts of money to be made by the whole industry by a successful act, that the very process by which a young person acquires 'stardom' distances him or her from the working class. Rock stars become 'representatives' of their class by rising above it. And this drastically limits the extent to which they can authentically speak for their class through their music.

If you are a young struggling band begging for a spot at the Underground in Dublin or the Gweedore in Derry it's not terribly difficult to reflect the feelings of other young people on the dole. You're quite likely to be on the dole yourself. But if you attract crowds and move onwards and upwards, you're soon surrounded by glamour and such riches that you literally lose contact with where you came from. You begin to sing about people and at them, no longer *for* them. And it's the simplest and most enticing thing in the world to sing at *another* and about them in a way which defines them not as an exploited class but as part of a vague mass of 'humanity'. Thus, as Declan O'Gorman pointed out in his review of The Joshua Tree last month, U2 quite often seem to be speaking in riddles. While their music is full of spiritual decency and a general benignity towards the oppressed, there is nothing sharp edged or specific about it and *never* any call to action in it.

This is why Bono can, no doubt meaning well, speak out against the health cuts in the honoured presence of one of the main architects of the same cuts. Why he can sing with genuine compassion about inner city people who are forever 'running to stand still' while allowing himself to be formally welcomed home from America by Charlie Haughey whose government is hammering the very same people into the ground.

For rock music to have any effect on the real world it would have to be connected with a movement dealing with real issues in the world. But that would mean rock musicians making political decisions - and decisions which would be directly *against* their commercial interests. So they siphon in to themselves and express in songs some of the deep feelings of their audiences but in such a way as to deprive these feelings of political meaning.

When thousands of young working class people join in the chorus of 'I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For' they are seemingly expressing a realisation that there's something empty at the heart of their lives.

But singing the song, while it can make you feel better for a few minutes, won't fill the gap. Only politics which pitches our class against the class which rules can change the lives of the thousands who gathered at Croke Park. Revolutionary Marxism, not rock music, is where the answer is to be found.

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REVIEWS

Connolly debates

"The Connolly-De Leon Controversy", published by Cork Workers Club. THIS LITTLE pamphlet contains the debates between Connolly and De Leon on the questions of wages, marriage and religion. Connolly needs no introduction to Irish socialists. De Leon, however, may need some description.

De Leon was the leader of the Socialist Labour Party of America. This organisation stood on the revolutionary left. Connolly had been attracted to its politics by its attacks on the growing tendency towards reformism inside the socialist movement.

As early as 1898 he was distributing their paper, the "Weekly People", in Ireland. In 1903 he was active in setting up the Socialist Labour Party in Scotland.

But De Leon and the SLP were hopeless sectarians. They held an extremely mechanical view of Marxism which reduced consciousness to the laws of history.

They saw all talk of reforms as "banana skins under the feet of the proletariat." They had no idea of how a fight for immediate demands could help transform the consciousness of workers and bring more right-wing workers over to the socialist movement.

The controversy with De Leon began when Connolly noticed a tendency in the SLP to argue that workers could not benefit, even temporarily, from a wage increase. He wrote a letter to the "Weekly



James Connolly

People" to contradict this view.

His aim was to push the party into giving a lead on trade union struggles. But De Leon stuck to a defence of the "iron law" that every wage increase was immediately offset by a rise in prices. It doomed the SLP to becoming a sect. On this issue Connolly was absolutely correct.

This was not the case with the other two issues in the debate. Connolly's and De Leon's argument on marriage was more confusing.

Both felt that there was a tendency in civilisation towards the "perfection of

monogamous marriage". Both blamed capitalism for marital break-down.

But Connolly went further in trying to "reject any attempt to identify socialism with any theory of marriage or sexual relations."

This revealed a weakness in Connolly's materialist view of the world. He limited it to certain aspects of life.

This is clear in the third issue in the debate. Connolly argued that De Leon was pandering to anti-Catholic charges when he printed an article that claimed that the "last fight" was between the Red and Black international (the Catholic Church).

Connolly had a certain point here. But he went much further. He wanted to outlaw any discussion of religion from the socialist movement in the mistaken belief that the Church would eventually make its peace with socialism as it had with capitalism itself.

Connolly had not recognised that socialism would attack the whole basis of religion by attacking the conditions of alienation.

His attempt to abstain on the religious controversy backfired. He himself in a private letter said that he "posed as a Catholic for many years".

Despite his own directness in attacking the bishops he could not build a tradition of socialist activists that could withstand their religious influence.

That remains the task for today. —KIERAN ALLEN.

Unfinished Christy Moore



●Christy Moore . . . at the National Concert Hall

IN CASE you haven't heard Christy Moore's new album is his most political to date.

"Unfinished Revolution" sees Moore standing, as always, on the side of the oppressed. He sings about Apartheid, the Church, unemployment and the struggle in the North.

As a result of criticism from feminists Moore has decided to focus on women. A song called "The Other Side" describes how "men in black declare a social order" while divorce and abortion are denied and women like Joanne Hayes are witch-hunted. The title track depicts women fighting against imperialism in Nicaragua, Afghanistan and the Six Counties.

Christy wants to open people's minds to unpopular causes. He tries to do this by gradually drawing people into the argument.

"On the Bridge" is a good example of this. The character in the song sees women protesting but walks on saying "your troubles are not mine". Half way into the song we discover

that it is about strip-searching in Armagh jail.

There is a certain moralism in this approach. It is not enough to tell people that they should morally oppose strip-searching. They must be convinced that it is in their interests to fight against it. The working class in the South will only support the struggle against the Orange state when they are fighting against their own exploitation.

But the working class is missing on Moore's new album. Christy does not mention a single strike be it by Corpo workers, ESB workers or British miners. Even "Biko Drum", a story about South Africa, fails to mention the role of the black unions in the anti-apartheid struggle.

True, Christy did not write all the songs but he chose them to present his political viewpoint. If workers' struggles are not mentioned this has to mean that Moore does not see their importance in the fight against oppression.

Instead of seeing workers as

agents of change, Christy sees them as mere victims of the system.

This was one reason why he took part in Self Aid. We were against Self Aid because it allowed capitalism to escape the blame for unemployment. Christy Moore took part because he wanted to "do something" to help the unemployed.

Christy sees bleakness and despair in the world and the mood of the album reflects this. The slow songs are sad and gentle, including "A Pair of Brown Eyes" which loses the raw edge of the Pogues' version. Elsewhere the unemployed "suffocate", Maze prisoners "dream" but very little fighting is done.

Christy Moore says he has "no solutions" to offer. He has a "muddled instinct" of what needs to be done. This lack of clarity was one reason for his participation in Self Aid.

The other reason had to do with not wanting to lose his audience by refusing to play at such a popular event. A recent interview confirms this. Moore talks about keeping certain "personal ideas" to himself because he does not want to isolate his fans. In fact he softens his politics in order to get through to his less political fans rather than "preach to the converted". This is self-defeating.

Unfinished Revolution should be a commercial success. Musically it's a brilliant record in which Moore remains a folk singer while refraining from the use of traditional instruments. Rock fans will also enjoy it.

Socialists will identify with the lyrics on the album. But finishing the revolution will require much clearer ideas than even Christy Moore can provide. —DAVE McDONAGH

TEN MEN DEAD



Black flag protesters outside government buildings in Dublin during the hunger strike

TEN DEAD MEN by David Beresford

THIS BOOK is an account of one of the most important political events in Ireland: the 1981 Hunger Strike. It was also immensely popular: there were very few parts of the world where the name of Bobby Sands was not known.

The book uses a variety of methods to tell the story. The main source of the material is the comms (communications) smuggled out by the prisoners to the outside leadership of the Republican movement. Using these David Beresford has been able to give a detailed blow by blow account of the progress of the hunger strike from the point of view of the prisoners. He also interviewed most of the people involved, except for the Sands family, who refused to co-operate on the book. Other sections are fictional passages about life inside the H-Blocks. He also blends in reports of killings, sometimes by the security forces, without any commentary.

The book gives a brilliant look at the tactical moves of the Brits and the various groups on the outside who tried to mediate, including the European Commission, Red Cross, various church figures, Southern politicians (Amadán I -

Haughey and Amadán II - Fitzgerald as the prisoners nicknamed them) and the ability of the prisoners, in particular Bik McFarlane, to see through all the attempts to con them.

It is able to answer the accusation made at the time that the outside leadership was forcing the prisoners to hunger to the death. From the comms it is clear that the Hunger Strike was led from inside.

It shows how the prisoners became aware of the potential of the Hunger Strike to broaden the appeal of the Northern situation. The prisoners' victory in elections in the North and South made this clear. From some of the comms it is also clear than an anti-abstentionist position for the South developed among the prisoners at this time.

HISTORIES

It is a very moving book at the same time. It gives detailed histories of the hunger strikers, of their families and their progress to death. It is a clear and just answer to the abuse of Thatcher and Co. and the media in general. The hunger strikers are portrayed as committed and dedicated people. They

could and did argue their position clearly.

The conditions in the cells were as bad as anywhere. And the prisoners lived in those conditions as part of the struggle to regain political status. The Hunger Strike was the final phase of this struggle. The concrete demands of the prisoners became known as the five demands.

What the book doesn't examine objectively is the tactic of the hunger strike as part of an overall political struggle.

ACTIVITY

The comms show its relevance within the logic of Republican politics. It also barely details the H Block campaign on the outside; or the reactions on the ground and of the working class North and South to the deaths. This might seem insignificant. But given that the change to the ballot box and armalite strategy was a direct result of the Hunger Strikes, this is significant. The battle inside the prison was, of course, important.

But even more important must be the resultant activity outside. Who was getting involved in the campaign. Why? And How? This is what it was all about in the first place: to bring about changes on the outside. That's why the prisoners were prisoners in the first place. The book creates heroes out of the hunger strikers, but forgets about the struggle on the ground, the struggle to organise the working class North and South into a political movement.

This is not just a problem with the focus of this book but also of the Republican movement itself. The poor showing in the election in the South by Sinn Féin is a direct product of this.

Anyone with any interest in the North should read this book. In fact, anyone with no interest whatsoever in the North should read this book. It is compelling reading and is very hard to put down once you've started. It is, without a doubt, the most readable book written about the North since "War in an Irish Town". Its problem is that it offers more of a narrative and impressions than political analysis.

JOE O'BYRNE

Payne gives pleasure

CENSORSHIP is becoming, once again, a major feature of Irish society. The recent High Court ruling on abortion referral, the banning of books like "The Joy of Sex" and more recently "How to Make Love to a Woman", which includes interviews and conversations with over 200 women are typical examples. And "Personal Services" was initially banned. Seeing the film, it is hard to see why.

The film is based on the true life story of Cynthia Payne. The film starts with Christine Painter played by Julie Walters working in a cafe. It shows her gradually getting drawn into the world of prostitution. It is a sordid world but which is constantly being made fun of. This is the film's quality. It takes us through the expansion of the

business from a squalid tenement to a proper brothel in a series of hilarious episodes.

The humour of the film creates sympathy for the brothel customers who are into all sorts of light perversions - schoolboys, schoolgirls, etc - and who seem to live for these. Most of them are old men who look for sex outside of their married life because they have stopped having sex with their wives.

The first half of the film which shows Christine Painter's gradual involvement with prostitution is by far the better. The second half which centres around the brothel is less interesting if funny.

The various visitors to the brothel are treated too much as types and caricatures. The film doesn't try to probe their

reasons for going to a brothel. Nor do we get a glimpse of the wives left at home.

The difficulty of focusing on a person who runs a brothel is that she is catering or providing a service for men. And the film becomes a film about men's tastes in sex. That is why the second half is less interesting too. The first half shows Christine Painter going through the contradictions of involvement in prostitution, and shows her in situation in the real world. It's a pity the second half seems to glorify prostitution and accept it as too much of a norm.

It's an amazingly funny film and is great entertainment. The fact that it was banned here is a sign of the times. It is one of the best films on at the moment and is certainly worth a look.

JOB SCHEMERS EXPOSED

THE FWUI LETTER beside this piece exposes the reality of the government's Jobsearch programme. It is a purely cosmetic exercise to hound the long-term unemployed off the dole and to artificially reduce the unemployment figures.

AnCO instructors realised this and didn't want to play any part in the charade; they were forced to, however, when the government threatened to withdraw £5 million pounds funding from ordinary AnCO courses if they didn't.

John Kirwin is the chairperson of the AnCO instructors Branch of the FWUI. He told *Socialist Worker* that the scheme is "a total scam and a farce". The government wanted to insist, he said, that people going on the Jobsearch scheme would not have the use of the canteen facilities in the training centre, nor be

allowed to use the same toilet as 'ordinary' trainees. The FWUI refused to allow such apartheid.

INSTRUCTORS

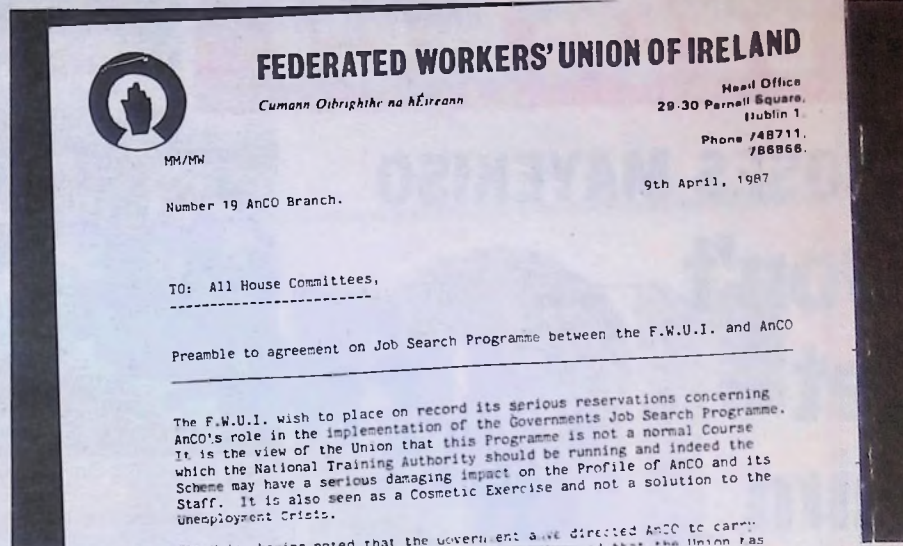
John Kirwin also explained that AnCO instructors has been asked to spy on the trainees to keep records of their time-keeping, attitudes etc. and to report them to the Social Welfare office. Once again, the FWUI instructors refused and the agreement negotiated by the FWUI includes the following clauses:

4. Clock cards will be looked after by the Tutor but no contact is to be made with Social Welfare regarding absences etc.
32. AnCO will not be involved with any person on the Live

Register losing their Social Welfare entitlements.

The Jobsearch programme is a cynical exercise in disguising the real extent of unemployment in the South. It is an exact replica of the Restart and Job Training Schemes which Thatcher has introduced in the North.

The trade unions ought to boycott such schemes altogether. In the absence of any stand being taken by the trade union leadership, the action taken by the FWUI/ AnCO instructors is a good example of the way in which employed workers can use their muscle to protect — in some little way — the rights of their unemployed fellow workers.



ISPCC strike

FORTY-SEVEN ISPCC workers around the country took strike action on Tuesday 16th June.

Strike action was decided on because the majority of workers believe that management, National Executive of the Irish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children have withdrawn their support and commitment to the work currently being carried out by the family centres of ISPCC.

We feel that management are bent on building a "quick kill" fundraising empire. We the workers have been directed to:

- * Sensationalise child abuse;
- * Ignore questions from the public relating to the mercenary fundraisers, who hassle the public to contribute.

Proof of this bias by management and national executive:

1. They have used the Task Force (86) Report selectively to create a new post, ie Financial Controller;
2. They have promoted the Dublin fundraiser to C.E.O

(Chief Executive Officer);
3. They abolished the only (senior) post of Director of Services — the only senior social work post in management.

4. Bus loads of young Dubs are regularly ferried to the provinces where they collect huge amounts of money under the guise of running Residential Centres for sexually abused children, etc.

We staff wish to state publicly that this fundraising is not supervised by professional workers and the lack of accountability could lead to huge amounts being "creamed off".

We believe that the redundancy that is now being forced on our book-keeper in Dublin is related to this new money-grabbing attitude within the society. She has proved during the past ten years of employment with this agency that she is competent and reliable.

She is also a strictly honest and honourable person — "and thereby hangs a tale".
—POC, SW, Cork Family Centre



Cork workers strike against low pay

WORKERS at Classic Windows on the Pouladuff Road have been on strike for two weeks now in protest at wages as low as £45 per week for the young workers and £110 a week for a lorry driver with five children, and for the right to belong to a union.

When a mass picket was called for, the owners took out a court injunction against individual picketers and against No. 3 Branch ITGWU official Martin Doherty.

However picketing is continuing and the strikers have leafleted other work places seeking solidarity, especially from builders who get supplies from there.

This is a classic case of workers fighting low pay, lousy working conditions and for union rights. It deserves the support of all trade unionists.

CORK SWM



Members of NIPSA picketing in Derry

NIPSA leadership climb-down

CIVIL SERVANTS IN the North have been badly sold out by the NIPSA leadership. Gen. Sec. McCusker called off all industrial action, blaming his action on the decision of NIPSA's British sister union, the CPSA to ballot its membership on all-out strike. 'We agreed that only a united campaign could win our case' he said and now the CPSA are taking independent action.

In fact, NIPSA itself had broken the consortium of Civil Service Unions by voting against selective two and three day strikes in June and July and this decision greatly weakened the collective strength of the three unions involved.

However, NIPSA members felt that they had good reasons for rejecting the proposals. The main reason was probably the experience of 1981 when

NIPSA embarked upon a similar line of action of selective stoppages. This only managed to demoralise the workforce and resulted in defeat.

The other reason was that large sections of the lower paid workers were demanding all-out strike. But at NIPSA conference, the alliance council (NEC) advised delegates that the time was not yet right for all-out action. Meanwhile the CPSA had promised Neil Kinnock that there would be no all-out action before the general election lest it weaken the chances of a Labour victory.

Although many members felt that the time for all out action was slipping away, the majority of the delegates voted with the union bureaucracy. The same bureaucracy

now thinks that the time will never be right for all action.

The vote to reject the proposed action was NOT an acceptance of the government pay offer, but rather an attempt to force the alliance Council to come up with something more effective. Paddy Byrne, from NIPSA's Executive Committee and Broad Left member told one branch meeting that by rejecting the proposal they "would tie the hands of the committee" and "we call the shots". However the feeling amongst the membership was that the proposal tied the hands of the membership and that it was time the rank and file got to call

the shots.

Finally NIPSA conference endorsed a policy of non-cooperation. This basically meant the refusal to answer telephone queries, refusal to carry out the work of those absent for any reason, refusal to carry out an "specialised" exercises (such as the implementation of the oppressive new social security reviews) and a general work to rule.

Now even this form of action has been suspended. Low paid NIPSA members are angry at the way they've been sold out and the leadership of the union has now made it even clearer that the rank-and-file members of the union need to organise themselves to protect their own interests.

—MARK McIVOR

Socialist Worker

ICTU sells out

MOSES MAYEKISO

Don't let him die



MOSES MAYEKISO, a leading South African trade unionist, is under threat of execution.

He and four others have been charged with high treason and sedition.

Moses Mayekiso is general secretary of one of the largest black unions in South Africa, the Metal and Allied Workers Union.

This is the first time a high treason charge has been laid against a senior trade union leader. If Moses hangs, or is kept indefinitely in jail, it will be a major blow to the whole trade union movement in South Africa.

Now aged 38, Moses was born in the Cala area of the Eastern Cape Province in what is now the Pretoria-sponsored "homeland" of Transkei. Like so many young men from the impoverished rural areas, he became a migrant worker in the mines living in the harsh prison-like conditions of single sex hostels.

In 1978 Moses joined the fledgling Metal and Allied Workers Union while working at the Toyota car plant. He soon became a key figure in building MAWU into a force to be reckoned with by bosses unaccustomed to having to deal with any trade unions at all.

He also became a target for victimisation and in 1979 was sacked by Toyota. By then, however, MAWU which pioneered the democratic, shop-floor based organisation now adopted by COSATU, was already one of the strongest of the emerging trade unions.

In 1980, as Transvaal secretary of MAWU, Moses played a leading role in various struggles for union recognition as well as several successful battles to improve pay and conditions.

After a mass "stayaway" strike in 1984 Moses was arrested and kept in solitary confinement. *Following massive pressure from workers within South Africa and supporters abroad, Moses was released after a month of detention.*

In 1985 he was arrested twice more and then released, charges being brought and then dropped.

With the founding of the union federation COSATU at the end of 1985 — a development in which MAWU and Moses were centrally involved — the Apartheid regime decided to act again.

In the early hours of Tuesday February 18 last year, armed police surrounded his one-room family home. He was again arrested and threatened with serious charges but a nationwide campaign including strike action, forced the regime to release him. He was at once elected general secretary of MAWU.

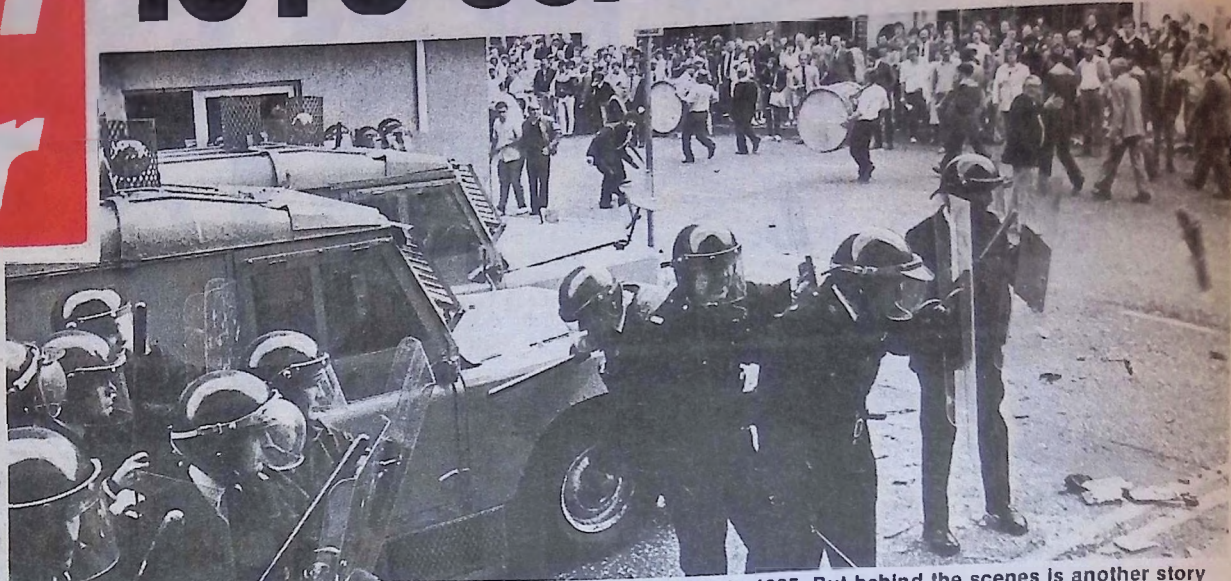
Moses visited Europe last year and was meeting with Swedish metal workers when the present State of Emergency was declared. Immediately the regime refused to renew his passport hoping to force him into exile.

But Moses returned home to be arrested on 28th June last year. He has been in jail ever since and faces charges which could result in the death penalty.

A solidarity campaign has been launched in Ireland. Its immediate aim is to publicise Moses's case and encourage a support of Irish trade unions and trade unionists.

It is collecting money to pay for a huge national newspaper advertisement in August to coincide with Moses's trial. It has leaflets and information available and a model resolution for raising in your trade union branch or meeting.

** Contact: IRISH FRIENDS OF MOSES MAYEKISO, C/o 47 Singe Street, Dublin 8*



RUC PREVENTS Orange parade passing through Catholic housing estate in 1985. But behind the scenes is another story altogether

THE CONFERENCE OF the Irish Congress of Trade Unions was dominated by two main issues this year: the ongoing talks between ICTU leaders and the Southern government to draw up a national plan despite that government's blatantly anti-working-class policies and the attitude of the trade union movement to sectarianism and discrimination in the Six Counties.

The Conference was held in Cork from 30th June to 3rd July. The first day was given over to three major debates: on the expulsion of John Mitchell and IDATU from Congress; the Northern Ireland Committee of ICTU's (NIC) Campaign against sectarianism and discrimination; and the MacBride Principles.

John Mitchell was suspended from the Executive Committee of the ICTU because of an interview he gave to the *Andersonstown News* on Sat. 17th January. In the interview, Mitchell made it clear that the union of which he is Gen. Secretary — the Irish Distributive and Administrative Trade Union (IDATU) is in favour of a united Ireland. He also criticised the trade union movement in the North as a "mafia" which "leads a comfortable sort of existence".

IDATU organises mainly shop workers; their rival union in the shops — USDAW — was described as "an Uncle Tom, reactionary union". As a result of this interview, and a complaint from Belfast Trades Council and the NIC, Mitchell was suspended for conduct "detrimental to the interests of Congress".

Mitchell's choice of language was certainly unfortunate but what he said about the NIC-ICTU was absolutely right. The NIC, and the trade union movement generally, has a shameful record on the issue of sectarianism. Debate on the question is regularly stifled, and the unions have never determinedly campaigned against the sectarianism of loyalist trade unionists, against discrimination against Catholic workers and have never taken up the national question and the need to fight British imperialism.

In fact, it is less than five years since the General Municipal and Boilermakers and Allied Trades Union (GMBATU) was found guilty not just of tolerating sectarian recruitment practices, but of actually IMPLEMENTING such practices in their operation of the closed shop principle. One Catholic union member was kept out of work for two years while more than 60 non-union members were employed. The GMBATU did not appeal the decision; they virtually admitted guilt by paying the man £10,000 compensation. The union was not expelled from Congress. Yet there was ACTION, not just words, which was clearly against the interests of the trade union movement.

The SWM has had, and continues to have, serious criticisms of John Mitchell's leadership of IDATU. The disgusting way in which the Dunnes Stores strikers were sold out and forced back to work was the subject of many articles in this paper. His attempt to poach ITGWU members during the Clergy's strike by promising them IDATU protection if they scabed on the strike was another reason for major criticism.

And his behaviour on the issue of the expulsion — taking the ICTU through the courts, thereby stifling any debate on the issue; refusing to try to defend his position and to promote debate on the role of the trade union movement in the Six Counties has frustrated the attempts of rank and file trade unionists to raise the issue and to support his position.

REFUSES

Nonetheless, Mitchell must be defended. Because he was not expelled from Congress for acting contrary to the interests of the trade union movement, he was expelled for telling the truth about the way in which the NIC-ICTU ignores the reality of sectarianism and discrimination against Catholic workers in the North and refuses to challenge the bigotry of its loyalist members.

The Campaign launched last November by the NIC/ICTU is further evidence of this failure to face up to sectarianism in the work place, to discrimination and to intimidation.

While speaker after speaker at the Conference congratulated the NIC for initiating the campaign, there were a couple of speakers who pointed out that, like all previous campaign initiatives on the issue, the present campaign has failed to address the vicious sectarianism which has kept Catholics out of major industry in the Six Counties. And it was said that it is shameful that it was mainly pressure from American big business, and not from the working class movement at home, which forced even a paper commitment to fair play out of Shorts.

This failure can be traced to the unions' reluctance to recognise the sectarian nature of the Six County state. It is not possible to be "against sectarianism" without confronting the sectarian machinery of the Northern state.

There is much talk of the violence and "intimidation" of the paramilitaries but NO mention whatsoever of the violence and intimidation of the British army and the RUC.

But because such a stance would draw a hostile response from loyalist workers, the unions have ducked the issue. In the name of "workers unity" the root cause of division has been left untouched.

The rejection by the trade union leadership of the MacBride

principles is partly for similar reasons. The Principles themselves are not remarkable. They merely outline a series of measures to help ensure equality of opportunity between Catholic and Protestant workers.

What the establishment fears are the teeth to the principles — any pension fund, finance or industrial company which adopts them agrees NOT to invest in any firm in N. Ireland which does not implement those measures (the nine MacBride principles).

A campaign of disinvestment from firms that don't operate MacBride is being urged by Irish National Caucus representatives in America.

For any normal democratic state, this would not present a problem. But then the Six County state is neither "normal" nor democratic. This artificial state depends for its existence on the loyalty given to it by Protestant workers. And that loyalty is guaranteed by the marginal privileges which Protestant workers have over their Catholic fellow workers — and the fact that they get first place in the queue for any jobs that are going is probably the most important of those privileges.

The ICTU counterposed its own Report on Equality of Opportunities in N. Ireland to the MacBride principles. In theory, this is as it should be. The trade union movement SHOULD draw up its own charter against discrimination and such a charter should be backed up by the full power of the working class instead of appealing to the consciences of American businessmen.

HOT AIR

But the document issued by the ICTU is little more than hot air and waffle. It welcomes the government proposals on future options for "Promoting Equality of Opportunity in Employment" which NUPE leader Inez McCormack described as "lazy and arrogant". McCormack pointed out in an article in last October's 'Fortnight' magazine, a deficiency in the much hailed "contract compliance" requirements. Under this, it is proposed that firms who are in receipt of government contracts would have to ensure that they afforded equality of opportunity. McCormack wrote:

"it is presented here in such a niggardly way as to indicate that employers could evade it for a long time. In any case, this sanction broadly only applies to the public sector."

This, of course, is the problem with all equality legislation. Equal pay for women has been on the statute books for more than ten years now. But women still earn on average only two thirds of men's average wage. The reality of equal

pay has been won when workers have fought for it. The same will be the case with equal opportunities for Catholic workers in the Six Counties.

Socialists have many criticisms of the MacBride principles. Often the American businesses and financial institutions which are being asked to adopt the Principles are themselves part and parcel of a racist establishment which discriminates against Black workers in America.

But socialist also defend the MacBride principles against those who argue against their adoption, not because they want stronger action against discrimination — but because they don't want ANY such action. When one looks at the list of those who oppose MacBride the British government, the Northern Ireland Office, the SDLP, DUP, OUP, the leadership of the ICTU — it is immediately clear as day that we must defend the Principles until such time as they are superseded by a tough, fighting Trade Union Charter.

Indeed it was the pressure brought by the MacBride Principles which led the ICTU to come up with their set of proposals.

In the event, a series of manoeuvres led to the situation where the resolutions on MacBride were not voted on. It is now up to all socialists and trade unionists to bring the issue into their work places and trade union branch meetings, demanding a decent trade union charter on discrimination and the adoption of the MacBride Principles until such time as that charter is produced.

Despite the obvious commitment of the ICTU leadership to the talks on a "National Plan", an undercurrent of opposition to the talks was evident throughout Conference. Many delegates were aware that the inevitable conclusion of such negotiations will only be to subordinate the interests of the working class to those of the bosses.

One bright spot at the Conference was the support given to the resolution opposing Extradition which came from Derry Trades Council. This was the culmination of the work of the SWM-initiated Trade Unionists against the Amendment which has campaigned for the trade union movement to protest action against the Extradition Act.

The motion read: "Conference instructs the Executive Council to mount a campaign of opposition to combat the anti working class Dublin Extradition Act; to organise publicity among all affiliated unions and protest action against it."

The support gained for the motion was a slight but significant example of what can be achieved by even a small revolutionary organisation like the Socialist Workers Movement.

—GORETTI HORGAN,
Delegate, Derry Trades Council
(Personal capacity)