

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

**100,000
emigrate;
250,000
unemployed;
Bigger
school classes;
10 pound
hospital charge**

*"The Whole Country's
Winning"*



FIANNA FAIL... Party of the rich

AS hospital after hospital closes, as parents and teachers take to the streets to defend the education service, Fianna Fail promises yet more cuts over the coming years.

When the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) issued a report on the Irish economy which proposed more cuts in health, education and social welfare, there was naturally a lot of opposition to their suggestions.

Ray Mc Sharry, the FF Minister for Finance, however, rejected criticism of the report and said that the OECD was right in its suggestions! He has admitted that there will be spending cuts of nearly £500 million announced in his January budget.

It's difficult to imagine where such cuts can be made with all services already pared right to the bone but Fianna Fail have made it

clear that they are determined to continue their belt-tightening whoever gets choked in the process:

At the same time as they are slashing the living standards of workers, Fianna Fail are making very sure that their rich friends do not suffer in any way from the recession.

BLOODSTOCK

Massive profits are made every year, for example, by the bloodstock industry. Horses bred in Irish studs are sold for hundreds of thousands of pounds—yet there's no VAT charged on such sales. We pay VAT on luxuries like food and clothes but the rich who buy and sell thoroughbred horses get off scot free.

For nearly ten years now, the EEC has been trying to impose VAT on such bloodstock sales. From 1989 the EEC will insist on some VAT being paid. But Haughey has assured

his rich cronies that he will protect their interests and at most make them pay 1.7 per cent VAT—food and clothes have 23 per cent VAT.

Over the last year most people have come to recognise the Fianna Fail party for what it is—the party of the rich. Yet for fifty years it was seen as being more sympathetic to the working class than Fine Gael, it was by far and away the most popular party in the Twenty Six Counties and even had the support of much of the Left as well as the Republican movement.

Inside on pages six and seven we look at how Fianna Fail were able to get away with this elaborate con-trick for so long. The history of Fianna Fail is examined and it becomes obvious that nothing has changed in recent years.

Fianna Fail may have been seen as "the party of the people" in the past. But it was always what it has today been shown to be—the party of the rich.



Abortion clamp-down threat

BRITISH LIBERAL MP

David Alton is sponsoring a private member's bill which aims to reduce the maximum time limit on abortion from 28 to 18 weeks. In 1986, just 5,665 of the 172,000 abortions in Britain were performed after 18 weeks and only 29 after 24 weeks. So, the proposed change will only affect a minority of women needing an abortion.

Women have late abortions for a number of reasons—almost all of them medical or therapeutic. Many late abortions occur because the foetus is found to be grossly deformed.

The test (amniocentesis) which is used to detect severe abnormalities cannot be performed until around the 20th week. Anencephaly (total absence of a brain) cannot be detected until 16-18 weeks. Babies born with this condition can only survive at most a few hours. Yet, if Alton's bill is passed a woman carrying an anencephalic foetus would be forced to endure months of pregnancy knowing that her baby can't possibly survive.

In 20% of all abortions performed after 20 weeks, the woman went to her doctor before week 12. So the best way to reduce late abortions would be to cut down on delays in the NHS.

When calculating the start of a pregnancy, doctors allow a margin of 4 weeks error, so if the time limit is reduced to 18 weeks, this will, in reality, mean a 14 weeks limit.

Over 50% of abortions after 20 weeks are performed on women under 20 years of age, many of whom were unaware that they were pregnant, or afraid to tell anyone.

All of these reasons means that it is essential that the time limit of 28 weeks remains.

Before its legalisation in Britain in 1967, abortion was still common. Every year, an estimated 100,000-200,000 women had abortions. While rich women could have easy and safe abortions in discreet private clinics, the majority of women had to go to, often unskilled backstreet abortionists where all too often they suffered physical damage or died as a result.

If Alton's bill goes through it will mean that

working class women will, again, have no choice but to have unsafe back street abortions because they won't be able to afford the private clinics. It is working class women who are always the worst victims of such attacks on women's rights. Alton is deliberately using the tiny percentage of late abortions to attack the very idea of a woman's right to abortion.

It isn't only British women who would be affected by the bill. An estimated 10,000 Irish women seek abortion in Britain every year. Already this year the pregnancy counselling services of the Well Woman and Open Line clinics have been closed down as a result of the Hamilton ruling. The decision makes it an offence to supply information on how to get an abortion. The Defend the Clinics Campaign was launched to fight that ruling. The campaign has compiled an information pack on abortion, containing phone numbers of abortion clinics. The packs have been distributed through women's groups and other groups.

The campaign has compiled a list of 100 "prominent" people willing to defy the law and give information if requested.

DEMONSTRATION

A demonstration last February against the clinics' closure drew 700 people—a measure of the support the campaign could have. This potential support was squandered, however, by shying away from a militant, broad-based campaign which would involve the mass defiance of the law thereby making it unworkable. Instead, the leaders of the campaign argued for making the issue more "acceptable", by, for example, dropping the word "abortion" from slogans.

It has always been the mass mobilisation of thousands of women and men, particularly through the trade union movement that has assured that such attempts to attack women's rights have been defeated. A good example was the protest against the Corrie Bill in Britain in 1979, where 80,000 came out on a TUC-



Several hundred women students marched from Queens University to Belfast city centre last month in a Reclaim the Night protest over the numerous rapes and attacks on women in the University area.

organised march in London and stopped the bill.

Just as SPUC's victory in the anti-abortion amendment in 1983 gave them the confidence to go on the offensive against the clinics, so they could now carry on to have the IUD and "morning-after" pill banned.

Every gain that SPUC makes strengthens the hand of the anti-contraception brigade and the anti-sex education moralists and every shade of anti-woman conservatism.

The closure of the clinics increases the possibility that Irish women who go to Britain for abortions (that member hasn't been reduced) will have to have more expensive, unsafe, perhaps even illegal backstreet abortions. This, coupled with the Alton bill, has disastrous implications for Irish women seeking abortions.

That is why it is essential that the campaign to have the clinics reopened be stepped up and broadened to include as many people as possible who will defy the law, display phone numbers and addresses of abortion clinics and invite prosecution.

In defending the clinics we have to expose the hypocrisy of SPUC and the anti-abortionists. Many of

these "pro-life" people, including Alton are also in favour of bringing back the death penalty—so much for the sanctity of human life!

These right-wing bigots rely on emotive sensationalism to convey their message. Their "concern" for the foetus doesn't transfer to concern for children. You won't find them campaigning for proper child care facilities, decent housing or decent health and education services. They ignore the real reasons why most women have abortions, financial, physical or emotional inability to have another child.

The availability of abortion is a basic right for women and is necessary if women are to have full control over their own fertility, their own bodies and therefore, their own lives.

GER TUOHY

If you want information on how to get an abortion, phone: (01) 794700
(01) 680043 Dublin
(091) 24682
Tuesdays 7-9pm Galway
(021) 502848 Cork
(084) 324914
249696
667345 Belfast
(031) 2516332 London

No Mercy in Cork

CUTBACKS IN THE Southern Health Board mean the closure of six hospitals within the region. The North Infirmary in Cork's generally working class northside has already closed with local Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and Labour unable to deliver on their rhetoric by actually stopping the closure.

What hospitals are left are faced with less staff and cuts in spending so that nurses are running raffles to try and buy equipment for the wards.

A recent scandalous situation in Cork highlighted the deadly effects of the cuts when Mr. Jeremiah O Mahoney, a sixty year old man who slept rough was taken by Gardai to the mis-named Mercy Hospital when he was found in a collapsed state on the street.

A doctor who examined him said he was OK but admitted that the man was unable to walk. Later that night a nurse from the Mercy

rang the Simon shelter and asked if they would take him as there was no reason to keep him in hospital. Although they had no room Simon reluctantly agreed they would talk to him.

When they discovered the man was very ill they rang the hospital to take him back and were twice refused.

Jeremiah O Mahoney died in the Simon shelter at 8.45 the next morning. The hospital had thrown out, dumped a dying man apparently because he was homeless and without status. It is hard to imagine them doing the same if the man had been a businessman, policeman, priest or teacher. In the society we live human life has little value despite the hypocritical wringing of hands by the pillars of the establishment over the Enniskillen atrocity.

The Simon Community have called for a public inquiry into the man's death.

E numbers spell health hazard

WHAT are "E" additives?

People have recently become more aware of them. Along with that awareness there is a sneaking feeling that there is something not quite right about them. But most people are not exactly sure what is wrong with them. Surely dangerous additives wouldn't be put into our food.

The EEC introduced the classifying of all additives that are put into manufactured foods, whether to assist the manufacturing process, enhance the colour or flavour or to add water, etc. All these additives are now given an E number.

This all sounds like a good idea. It would seem that we can now look at any manufactured foodstuff we buy and know that, even if it has been imported, it is regulated by EEC law.

But EEC laws have rarely been for the benefit of the ordinary consumer but to maintain the profits of the bosses within that community. And the E additives are doing just that—making big profits.

Manufacturers use additives to make their products more attractive, to give it a more "natural" colour, the lengthen the "best before" date, so that more consumers will buy their products and so make fat profits for the company.

Bosses are not particularly worried if these additives are harmful to consumers. They just worry when consumers stop buying their product and cause a fall in profits.

There has been quite a lot of research done on the effects of colourings and additives used in the food industry. Many of them have been found to be

harmful or dangerous. And the list is growing.

Children are particularly at risk. Hyperactivity in some children has been found to have been a direct result of taking certain E additives. The list is long. One in particular, E102, the code number for Tartrazine, is found in about 20 commonly used products. These include chewing gum, sweets and fizzy drinks—items which children just love.

Hyperactivity can cause strain and exhaustion to parents. As these children grow older they come even more active and carelessly be hurt. Difficulties are experienced with speech, balance and learning, even if the IQ is high. Often these children are ostracised, because they are "bold" and their parents blamed for the difficulties.

Other hazards of E additives include skin and digestive disorders, cold sores, blood pressure problems and cancer.

As always it is working class people who suffer most from these additives. Most foods with additives are cheaper, easier to cook and eat and more readily available because they are popular and widely advertised. So naturally if your budget is low you will go for the cheaper product on the supermarket shelf.

Treat all these E additives with suspicion. They should not be allowed into our foods until proven innocent—they are completely harmless. There is plenty of food in the world to feed all in a healthy manner—witness the growing food mountains of the EEC.

—CREA RYDER

WE THINK



Irish reformists and Ken

KEN LIVINGSTONE has been getting a hard time from the British tabloid press. Under a banner headline "Widow-maker", the Star denounced him as "vermin" who supports the IRA.

Livingstone's crime has been to call for the withdrawal of the British Army from Northern Ireland.

But the attacks on Livingstone have not been confined to the Star. The self-proclaimed leaders of Irish Socialism—Thomas McGiolla, (Workers Party), Dick Spring, (Labour Party), and Jim Kemmy of the tiny DSP—have sent a letter to British Labour leader Neil Kinnock to complain about his activities.

They pointed out that Kinnock's rebukes of Livingstone were noted with respect. But they did not believe Kinnock went far enough. Livingstone's activities were "extremely offensive for Irish socialists". They charged that he had been involved in supporting a fascist campaign of violence and would be responsible for "part of the blame for future atrocities".

Strong words indeed. About the only strong words recently from the same gentlemen since FF came to power after February 1987. They have refused to issue any joint statement calling for active resistance to the cuts.

But when the gutter press were baying for blood against one of the few Troops Out supporters in the British Labour movement, they sprang into action. Their open letter was in fact an

act of treachery against socialism. But it is not altogether surprising. The Dail socialists have an appalling record on Northern Ireland and on repression in the South.

They have supported a revival of a Stormont-type Assembly—pretending that it could bring "local democracy".

They have stayed silent on the numerous atrocities of the British army against republicans.

With some minor modifications they have supported extradition, the Special Criminal Courts and even Section 31.

When an innocent man, Nicky Kelly was jailed on a trumped-up charge, there was not a "socialist" in the Dail (bar Tony Gregory) who would defend him. All because he was tainted with "republican connections". Hence the vitriol about Livingstone.

Livingstone is an embarrassment. He personally has done more to question the activities of the British army in the North than all the socialists in Dail Eireann.

How has this come about? Spring, McGiolla and Kemmy will say that they have broken with nationalism whereas Livingstone, being a foreigner, is fooled by it.

But this is rubbish. As recently as last year Spring had joined a Coalition claiming he had put "the interests of the Irish nation above any sectional interest".

McGiolla and the Workers Party has

consistently backed import controls to protect "Irish industry". Nothing here about the unity of the workers of the world.

Spring and McGiolla have not broken from nationalism. It is just that they have developed a different strand to the revolutionary nationalism of Sinn Féin and the IRA.

Their nationalism consists in the defence of their own state. In this they behave no differently from reformists elsewhere. The programme for reforming capitalism—rather than overthrowing it—depends on the viability and defence of the capitalist state. But in Ireland, to defend the Twenty Six County state, will also mean defending partition. And if partition is under attack it means lining up with the British army and the RUC.

Spring and McGiolla say that they oppose withdrawing the British army because it will cause a bloodbath. But could the same army that shot 13 people on Bloody Sunday have any interest in peace? The very presence of the British army is a guarantee that the Six County state will survive—and with it all the bigotry and violence that accompany it.

That is why we stand with Ken Livingstone against the gutter press and the self-styled leaders of "Irish socialism".

Schools cuts hit poorest

The present government has expressed its desire that the cuts should not fall on the disadvantaged. A high proportion of working class children go to public (vocational) schools. Yet these have already suffered a one % cut in grants. This means that basics, such as chalk, photo-copying paper, and heating have been cut. The child who will most feel the cold is the child who has had no breakfast.

The cuts also mean that no new schools will be built for years. Yet we have repeatedly been promised that better educational facilities are coming. The political parties have no intention of keeping their promises on this front; if they keep any promises it will not be to the poor.

The Minister says that she wants to "equalise the

number of pupils per teacher in all schools, because all schools cater for all (social) classes". This is blatantly untrue—most pupils from poor homes go to public (vocational) schools. If this proposal goes through, it will reduce the quality of education to these pupils.

FALSE WORDS

For example, remedial teachers will have less time to deal with individual pupils. This is another example of hitting the weakest. Amazingly, the government says that these cuts will encourage more working class pupils to complete the Leaving Certificate and to go on to third level education. The facts behind these false words tell another story.

Already public schools have a lesser choice of subjects on offer to students. One of the most common subjects to disappear from time-tables has been French, yet this is required for entry to most third level courses. Also abandoning building of the planned new Regional Technical Colleges will mean that their entry to third level is restricted, because there will not be places available to those who get as far as the starting gate.

The cuts have also hit adults. A Department of Education Report in 1984 said 400,000 adults needed help with reading and writing. The umbrella group of all the literacy groups in Ireland (NALA) in a 1987 survey reported that only one % of these are getting any help at all; The

government say that they are committed to community based adult literacy schemes—yet they have cut the budget for adult literacy by an enormous 20% in the "Programme for National Recovery".

No, actions speak louder than words, and the government is not going to deliver on promises to look after the disadvantaged. All these cuts are done with the one aim of repaying the debts of our ruling class—the so-called "National debt".

50% of this "debt" is owed to our own rich. So these education cuts mean that the government are proposing to pay these parasites off by abandoning the rights of our children, that they will sacrifice the helpless young to make greedy people richer.

* Primary school cuts and INTO:-
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Irish taxpayers fund Sellafield

AS THE criminal concept of an acceptable level of nuclear radiation in our environment is questioned by a recent report on Sellafield, disclosures by British Nuclear Fuels Ltd (BNFL) reveal the hypocrisy of various Dublin governments' supposed opposition to the disgraced reprocessing plant.

According to BNFL Sellafield has received £1.5 Billion in low interest loans from the European Investment Bank, an EEC body whose policy is decided by the 12 finance ministers of the member states. Ireland contributes £172 million to this noble body, and last year the coalition raised not a whisper of protest, as £200

million was lent to develop the Nuclear waste cavern project under the Irish Sea—a project in direct conflict with the stated policy of Fitzgerald and Spring.

Don't expect much fuss from Haughey either. His buddy Ray McSharry is Ireland's rep on the board of governors of the EIB, while a Second Secretary at the department of finance David McCutcheon sits on the board of directors.

BNFL say that a part of the loan will also be used to fund the expansion of the THORP project which reprocesses Nuclear weapon grade plutonium for the US and UK military. Well done lads!

PAT O'SULLIVAN

Belfast Groups fight British political vetting

Community groups have been organising in Belfast to fight the continued political vetting used against them by the British government. This attack has been stepped up in the past year as the government withdrew funding for several local projects in nationalist areas in the North.

Political vetting, inferring paramilitary involvement, has been used to withdraw ACE workers from the Naiscoil in the Short Strand and the Twinbrook Tenants and Community Association. Twinbrook has had one of the most active tenants' groups in Belfast. It is no coincidence that they lost their funding just one month after they pulled out of talks with the Housing Executive. They had realised they weren't getting anywhere in dealing with local housing problems. 12 jobs in Belfast, including nursery school teachers and housing workers have been lost.

This political vetting exposes the government strategy of punishing areas for SF support and placing any government funds in "safe hands"—that is with groups and parties like the Church and SDLP that are not going to challenge the status quo in the North—either British rule or the increased use of ACE schemes to compensate for the government cutbacks in health and social welfare spending.

Since 1981, £106.31m has been spent on Action for Community Employment, a scheme intended to help the long term unemployed by giving them a job for one year in community related employment. Organisations such as Gingerbread, the Rape Crisis Centre, women's centres, Irish language schools, and local tenants and community groups were able to boost their work through this programme which was almost entirely funded by the government.

As a result of changes in 1986, the ACE scheme doubled in size. ACE is now big business with over 6,000

places. But there's also been an increase in government say over who gets the jobs and what work should be done in the community.

One of the biggest beneficiaries of the ACE scheme has been the Catholic Church. Cathedral Community Enterprises, an amalgamation of parish schemes in West Belfast, has 175 ACE workers. In its fight against community activists, who are often Sinn Féin supporters, the Church has been very quick to move to gain control of this new form of job patronage. They've already been trying to take over the Twinbrook ACE work. For some time now, the church has been increasing its activities in the Divis area in an attempt to remove power from the local political activists who have for years campaigned for the demolition of the flats and for better conditions in the area.

Government directives now state that ACE work should provide services like preventative health care as responsibility for health and social services is moved back into the community. The priests and bishops are quite willing to undertake these tasks which ought to be done by trained people fully employed by the state. Church ACE workers are involved in visiting the elderly, running a laundry and play-group in Divis Flats, doing home decorating—nothing that will help people organise or challenge the system. This is far different from a women's or community group being able to decide what their own needs are and organising for change.

At the same time ACE isn't doing much for the unemployed. Two percent of the long term unemployed are given a years break before they go back to a miserable existence on the dole. And the British government, the Church and SDLP are quite willing to use them as a political football as they attempt to regain control of nationalist areas of the North.

—JOAN MCKIERNAN

Summit offers no peace

WHATEVER THE press and the politicians say, the world is no safer after December's "historic" superpower summit.

The Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty signed by Reagan and Gorbachov on 7th December agreed to remove all medium range land-based nuclear missiles from Europe—including cruise missiles.

It has been hailed as the first ever treaty to reduce the number of nuclear warheads, although 96 per cent of the world's nuclear stockpile will remain untouched.

Now we're being told that they're planning to cut long range strategic missiles. But both superpower leaders made a nonsense of such "peace" talks by announcing plans to press on with the Star War systems.

The Star War systems being developed by both sides are not, as we are always being told, defensive weapons—they are offensive weapons and represent a massive escalation of the arms race.

The fact is that leaders of Imperial powers great and small have always made peace and arms limitation agreements. From the turn of the century to 1914, all of one hundred solemn treaties of peace between Britain, Germany, France and the US were signed. Not one had any effect on the huge state armament drives, which with the growing crisis pushed helter skelter towards world war.

The International court of the Hague set up on the turn of the century, has carried on pronouncing international law without the slightest impact. The reality is that it would be impossible for our rulers to collude together to stop war. The insane anarchy of capitalism,



now one globally intergrated system, by its very nature creates war. Its dynamic leads capitalists and corporations, through states ruling classes and militaries, to seek new markets and spheres of interest—basically new "territory".

WAR ECONOMY

The beginning of the Cold War started by more "peace" agreements between Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill, meant that by 1948 the world was set up as a permanent war economy. Each superpower and its allies spend millions of dollars on arms just to keep the other side out. In the insanity of the rotten world system, armed competition has come to equal or even supercede competition for

profits. Probably the most horrible example of the drive to war today is the Iran-Iraq war—one that has been likened to World War I for its killing of generations of men and boys. Stalemate was decided to be in the best interests of western imperialism—so arms are sold to both sides by Britain, France and the rest. Reagan tried to do the same but got his fingers burnt by leaving the trail of his terrorism too clearly visible.

Today the smallest bomb in their nuclear arsenal is many times greater than those that caused the world tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Other arms limitations treaties like SALT SALT-1, SALT-2 have passed by without leaving the slightest dent. Indeed, it has been argued that after SALT-1 more research was put in

to devise new means of killing that were not strategic arms! This present agreement, on "medium range" weapons, will go the same way.

But no amount of rhetoric from the world rulers can hide the fact that their system is in serious difficulties. Stock markets and the dollar are in continuous decline and the scramble of national and international banks to buy up dollars to keep it "buoyant" denies their claims that the system runs by the free market.

STATE CAPITALISM

Militarily also they are in difficulties. Russia's state capitalism, with its weaker economy, has problems now keeping its arms spending high. The defeat of the US

by little Vietnam still resonates today. They wanted to send in the American army to Angola and Nicaragua, but didn't dare. In Lebanon they sent in the Marines but when the first hand-bomb hit a truck-load of 250 marines, they pulled out fast. The bombing of Libya, and the full-scale invasion of the tiny island of Grenada were just big noises by Reagan to cover the fear of another Vietnam.

Of course problems for the capitalists means problems for the working class. In the US and Britain, just as here, unemployment and attacks on wages have led in this period to temporary demoralisation. With little or no fightback, workers feel tempted to accept their summit as "something positive". It

would be misguided to do so. Arms deals talks and high-level summits are the cosmetic cover-up of a system which means always more and bigger arsenals and more research on newer and more horrible means of killing.

That picture is grim. But it is not the only picture. As the system of the rich gets into more and more difficulties, and they turn to the workers to make us carry their burdens, we will see workers fighting back.

It is vital we prepare for that now. Because it is only the workers, in every country of the world that have the both the genuine interest and the power to end the threat of world destruction for good.

MARY KILLIAN

Russia: strikes under Glasnost

THE restructuring of the Russian economy and the political changes necessary in that country are something we have been hearing a lot of since Gorbachev took power.

He and the people around him recognise that the system must be made more efficient if Russia is to take its proper place in the world economy.

Other sections of Russia's rulers, particularly in the administration and the Party, are doing OK as things are and many are unenthusiastic about reform.

Gorbachev is therefore trying to win popular support for the reforms in order to exert pressure on the more conservative elements.

But for the reforms to be successful workers' living standards must be attacked. Gorbachev's problem is that workers may defend their conditions.

Already there are signs that there may be trouble ahead. Although there are no independent unions and strikes are illegal, they still occur. The last big wave of strikes was in

1980 and was not reported by the Russian media. But today the number of reported "stoppages" is rising.

During October 700 workers were out for three days in Linko. Because of ageing equipment, the plant was unable to meet its production norm. As a result workers' earnings suffered from cuts in bonus payments. Eventually the factory director was replaced and the strike ended.

In September bus drivers in Chekhov, near Moscow, struck. Drivers were fined if their bus ran late. Constant breakdowns, because of the bad state of the buses made it impossible to keep to time.

One driver described them as being his grandmother's age and looking like tanks after a battle.

In a way Chekhov displays all the problems facing Gorbachev. The drive to revitalise the economy means improved efficiency is required by Russia's rulers. To achieve this tighter quality control is being introduced and wages are being linked to the quality of work done.

But the state of Russia's technology means that the gains can only be made by reducing labour costs. In short, Perestroika (or restructuring) is an attack on the living standards of Russian workers.

The problem for Russia's rulers is this: the rise in workers' expectations following the rhetoric of reform may lead to an increase in workers' confidence and to resistance to the attacks on the working class necessary if the reform process is to be successful.

The experience of Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland has shown us in 1956, 1968 and 1980 how even small reforms can give workers and students confidence to strike and take to the streets, threatening the whole ruling order.

Perestroika and Glasnost may cause those experiences to be repeated in Russia itself.

MIKE SCULLY

Tamils: Victims of failures of the Left

down the rebels.

This changes nothing. It is merely an attempt to stabilise Sri Lanka so that its capitalists can exploit both Tamil and Sinhalese workers in peace. Rajiv Gandhi is happy to lend a hand as the representative of Indian capital.

Like the Anglo-Irish agreement it is an attempt to stabilise the rule of the bosses.

And just as that agreement provoked a Loyalist backlash the Sri Lankan pact has led to riots by Sinhalese bigots and more programs against the Tamils.

The Tamils have rejected the deal and rightly so. They recognise that Tamil oppression cannot be reformed out of existence within the framework of the Sri Lanka state. The Tigers plan to fight on despite heavy defeats by the Indian army.

But their strategy leads to failure because it places no hope in unity with the Sinhalese. It is up to Sri Lankan socialists to point out that such unity comes from the struggle of workers where both groups begin to see that their common enemy is the Sri Lankan boss.

—DAVE McDONAGH

THE PRESENT bloodbath in Sri Lanka is being blamed on the Tamil guerrillas. They are seen "terrorists" making "unreasonable" demands and rejecting a "sensible" agreement signed by the Sri Lankan and Indian governments who, of course, know what's best for the Tamils. Meanwhile the Indian Army are the "peacemakers" doing their Sri Lankan neighbours a good turn.

This view conveniently ignores the viciousness of the Indian army itself. Far from "keeping the peace" the army has been engaged in a murderous assault on the Tamil region in the north of Sri Lanka.

In May and June the Sri Lankan army was slaughtering Tamils and now Rajiv Ghandhi's troops are doing the job and proving to be even more barbarous. In its attempts to "root out terrorists" it imposes curfews and searches houses at will. No Tamil is safe.

The Liberation Tigers of

Tamil Eelam and the other separatist groups are fighting for an independent Tamil state in the North.

This is a relatively new demand. It arose as Sri Lanka's rulers encouraged sectarianism against the Tamil minority by the Sinhalese majority.

Socialists hold that a separate Tamil state is not the answer. There is much more to be gained from Tamils and Sinhalese uniting to fight the capitalists who exploit and oppress both groups.

But we defend the Tamils' RIGHT to self-determination. When an oppressed group fights for its own state and its oppressors try to put down that fight socialists MUST stand on the side of the rebels.

Sadly the left in Sri Lanka failed to do this, failed even to fight against sectarianism. If socialists had given a lead the fight could have become one for a socialist Sri Lanka uniting workers of all ethnic groups. As discrimination against



Tamil turned into programs, individual Sinhalese often sheltered their Tamil neighbours but the Tamils found no support from organised Sinhalese or socialists.

The Tigers appealed to the Sri Lankan soldiers to side with the oppressed against the state but the left failed to echo this call.

The left's failures had tragic results. Tamil activists saw no hope of Sinhalese support and the struggle degenerated into communal attacks on the Sinhalese. The burning and

looting of Sinhalese homes and shops in Norther Sri Lanka mirrors anti-Tamil programs in the South.

It took many years for this degeneration to occur. Now it has given the Indian army the excuse to begin an onslaught on Tamil areas.

Meanwhile a "peace accord" signed by President Jaywardene of Sri Lanka and Indian Prime Minister Gandhi has been ratified in Colombo. It gives limited autonomy to Tamils in the North and allows the Indian troops a free hand in putting

WHO WAS CHE?

TWENTY YEARS ago, on the 9 October, the body of Ernesto "Che" Guevara was proudly presented to the world's press by the Bolivian military leaders who had killed him.

ALAN GIBSON looks at Che's life, and the influence he had on a generation looking for change.

THE NAME of Che Guevara today is more associated with flash fashion stores than revolution. But 20 years ago his ideas influenced a whole generation of people throughout Europe, the USA and South America. For years his face adorned the rooms of students and young workers.

For them, caught up in the political excitement of the late 60s and early 70s, Guevara presented a new and completely different way to change the world from that of the old traditional left.

Social democracy, represented by the Labour Party in this country, was too associated with government to offer any way forward for the rapidly radicalised youth.

And the Communist Parties were too associated with the grey bureaucracy of Eastern Europe and the tanks sent in to Czechoslovakia for them to offer a model for revolution.

The bearded Guevara with gun in hand presented a road to change based on action. "If you are a revolutionary make the revolution" was the slogan. "Make two, three, four Vietnams" the political message.

Where did Guevara's ideas come from in the first place, and what did they really amount to?

Born into the Argentinian middle class in 1928, Guevara started his political life through concern for the sufferings of the country's mass of urban and rural poor.

Towards the end of 1951 his medical studies took him on a prolonged journey, by motorbike and foot, across the South American continent.

It was this experience that gradually transformed Guevara into a revolutionary. It also provided an internationalist basis to his political thinking.

He finally ended up in Guatemala. He arrived at the end of 1953, six months before the reforming regime of Juan Jose Arevalo—which had redistributed land belonging to the giant US fruit company, United Fruit—was toppled by a CIA backed coup.

Guevara fled to Mexico City where, some months later, he met Fidel Castro.

Castro had just been released from a Cuban jail after serving a two year sentence for his role in an attempted assault on one of Cuba's most important military centres, the Moncada barracks.

The date of that assault—the 26 July—was the name given to the small band of revolutionaries Castro recruited during his stay in Mexico. After an all night conversation Guevara was made the 26 July Movement's doctor.

The Movement's aim was clear—the overthrow of the then 22 year old corrupt and repressive regime of Fulgencio Batista.

Early in December 1956 the band of 83 landed on the coast of Cuba. Within three days Batista's troops had badly mauled it. Legend has it that only 12 survived, though up to 20 is probably nearer the truth.



Guevara's ingenuity in ensuring the survival of himself and seven others greatly impressed Castro. He soon became one of the Movement's leaders—second only to Castro.

The next two years were momentous for the Movement, and for Cuban history. It was during this period that Castro and Guevara developed and deepened the theory and practice of guerilla warfare, and the strategy of the Foco.

These were centres of influence among peasants in the countryside, where both sustenance and, ultimately, recruits could be found.

But it is also from this period that Guevara developed a mistrust for socialists and revolutionaries in the towns and cities, whom he referred to as petty bourgeois. Even more crucial, however, was his refusal to acknowledge the power of collective class action.

For Guevara the revolution was to be carried out by a small band of dedicated, incorruptible revolutionaries. The role of workers and peasants was that of merely providing passive support.

This position was basic to the 26 July Movement before it landed in Cuba. Its experiences in the years following confirmed it. The working class was not central to the overthrow of Batista.

It seemed Batista was forced to flee

the country almost purely through action by a band of, at most, 1,000 dedicated revolutionaries facing a 40,000 strong army. In fact, Batista's army, demoralised and wracked with corruption, began collapsing as soon as it suffered its first casualties.

Guevara believed the Movement's strategy could be taken up by revolutionaries throughout South America.

In his book *Guerilla Warfare*, Guevara argued, "Given suitable operating terrain, land hunger, enemy injustices etc, a hard core of 30 to 50 men is, in my opinion, enough to initiate revolutions in any Latin American country."

Tragically a whole generation of South American revolutionaries were to agree with him.

In the years that followed small bands of former students and young members of the middle class tried to copy the example of the 26 July Movement. They took to the mountains and jungles across the continent, trying desperately to build foci and battle with the forces of corrupt regimes.

But the conditions of Batista's downfall—his isolation, Castro's fame and popularity, the weakness of the police force and army, the nationalist feelings engendered by years of ruthless dominance by the US—were unique.

The bands operating in Argentina,

Peru, Colombia and so on encountered one unexpected factor after another. Isolated from any other political or working class organisation, one by one they were wiped out, sometimes before shooting one bullet at the enemy.

Only in the exceptional circumstances—such as Somoza's downfall in Nicaragua in 1979—has guerilla struggle had any real success. And even here it was the mass uprising of peasants and workers that finally ensured victory.

Guevara, however, was not only a theorist and practitioner of guerilla warfare.

He was responsible for the first radical reforms of Cuban society. The nationalisation of companies, expropriation of land without compensation—much of it owned by US companies—the running of shops, welfare centres and schools were all carried out by the agency he headed.

It was as Minister for Industry, however, that Guevara came more and more into conflict with the Cuban Communist Party and Russian bureaucrats. His plan for state controlled industry clashed with those of the technocrats.

What these disagreements reflected, however, was Guevara's feeling that, unless the Cuban revolution was internationalised it would be stifled through its growing dependency on Russia.

He was more and more running into the limitations of trying to build socialism in one country.

By late 1964 Guevara was publicly

voicing his disagreements, not just with the bureaucrats, but with Castro himself.

It was these criticisms that helped spark rumours that Guevara had been murdered when he finally disappeared in April 1965.

In fact he was travelling. He almost certainly went to North Vietnam, and took part in guerilla operations in the Congo.

But more and more he and, at this point, Castro, were developing the idea that, by provoking a US invasion in a South American country, revolution throughout the continent would be sparked.

It is for this reason that landlocked Bolivia, surrounded by five other countries, was chosen for Guevara's guerilla provocations.

But like the students he had fired into guerilla struggle, his operations proved disastrous.

No account was taken of the country's social conditions. For example, peasants had only recently been allowed to own whole tracts of land, 70 percent of the population was Indian with few if any political traditions, the middle class was tiny, the government of Barrientos had recently been re-elected winning 62 percent of the vote, and army was still seen as friendly by the mass of people.

After weeks of trying to build influence in the countryside, of trying to recruit Bolivians, of trying to find a Bolivian to front the organisation, the band of some 40 men and one woman—half of them Cuban—set off to do battle.

Six terrible, hungry months later, with little if any support from the peasantry, Guevara's band was finally tracked down and butchered by US trained Bolivian troops.

The romanticism surrounding Guevara eventually withered away for those influenced by him in the West, but not before it had helped to divert the political energies of thousands away from any strategy based on the working class.

Apart from cheering on the small bands of guerillas fighting in the Third World, or those caught up in the dead end of urban terrorism, there was little of any real practical use on offer.

Guevara did, however, begin to break with something that still afflicts significant sections of the left throughout the world—the idea that revolutions could be carried out and sustained in one country.

But he never understood that the central force for internationalising a revolution isn't small bands of guerillas—no matter how dedicated and courageous.

Organising a mass movement of rural and urban workers is often a slow and difficult task. But the working class is the only social force with the power to make and spread the revolution. This is the lesson that Che never learnt. Instead he spent his life trying to substitute for that force.

Today in Ireland Che Guevara is little more than a legend, a folk hero of the Left, a face on the trendy poster or badge. Yet the dedication and courage of Guevara and his followers can be seen again in the many young Republicans who selflessly give their lives to fighting injustice.

The point is that those who admire Che Guevara, who—whether they realise it or not—are following in his footsteps, must learn from Guevara's life. That means realising that there's no force, neither the armalite nor the ballot box, which can substitute for the mass action of the working class. Because only the working class itself can turn the world upside down and start to build a socialist society.

FIANNA FAIL: THE BOOM

FOR almost sixty years, Fianna Fail has had a stranglehold on Irish political life.

In the forty years between 1932 and 1972 it was out of government for only six years.

Today over 40 per cent of Southern workers continue to vote Fianna Fail, making the party a major block to class politics in the Twenty Six Counties.

It was such widespread support across the classes that allowed de Valera to boast that Fianna Fail "is more a national movement than a political party".

It is not easy to explain how a die-hard Green Tory party could win the support of a massive section of the working class—and worse, continue to hold it even in the face of some of the most vicious cuts and attacks on living standards we've seen.

The traditional argument has been that it is Fianna Fail's "republicanism" which made it popular. It is, after all, called "The Republican Party". It is supposed to be vehemently opposed to partition, supposed to be harder on the British than the pro-Treaty Fine Gaelers, even supposed to be "ambivalent" about republican violence. All of this, it is argued, fits in well with the nationalist instincts of the Irish people.

But while it is true that ordinary members of FF are more likely to be nationalists than are, say, Fine Gaelers, this republican explanation of why Southern workers vote FF simply doesn't fit the facts.

Fianna Fail has a vicious record of repressing republicans and defending the border. In 1935 it banned the IRA and introduced military courts to deal with its members. In the 1940s Fianna Fail hung republicans, in the fifties it interned them. In recent decades it continued to introduce repressive legislation and has, according to RUC Chief Constable Jack Hermon, "an excellent

record on border security".

Nor has any attempt by the Left to steal FF's green clothes ever been successful. In the thirties the left wing Republican Congress decided to take "the high road to the Republic" back from Fianna Fail—and failed to win support. In the sixties the Labour Party posed in green for a while, denouncing FF for "dropping our nationalism" by signing the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement. It too failed to win support for its short lived nationalism.

In 1973 every republican and socialist group came together to oppose EEC entry on a left nationalist basis. The unified movement was decimated. In every election where Sinn Fein, FF's major nationalist rival, has stood it has not won more than five per cent of the vote.

Since Fianna Fail's appeal, then, is clearly not based primarily on militant nationalism, we need to look deeper—to the material reasons on which its support is based. When we do look deeper, we find that there are three major factors which help explain the dominance of FF over Southern politics.

- They are: 1. The objective appeal which FF's radical nationalism of the thirties had for all classes in the Free State; and 2. FF's association with the boom of the sixties and with the start of the welfare state—free education, the health service etc. and 3. The co-operation of the Labour movement with FF which encouraged illusions by workers in the right-wing party.

KIERAN ALLEN looks at the phenomenon that is Fianna Fail.



Radical origins

WHEN Fianna Fail came to government in 1932 it was a radical republican party with the support of the dispossessed classes.

According to de Valera: "In those days I believe we could be called socialists, but not communists."

This radicalism ran through the ranks of FF. Sean Lemass, later Taoiseach, proudly proclaimed that "it was a slightly constitutional party". Its TDs arrived in Leinster House with revolvers in their pockets to protect themselves against any right wing coup d'état.

FF's radicalism in the thirties can only be understood by looking at the government that had gone before it. The Cumman na nGael government of Willie Cosgrove was an openly neo-colonial regime. It accepted the role of a "dominion" of the empire. It gave Britain control of the ports and undertook to repay the British Treasury the land annuities that dated back to the settlement of the Land War in the 1880s.

It was a government drawn from the only class that benefited from the neo-colonial relationship—the big farmers, graziers and commercial interests. They were content to supply the British mainland with cattle on the hoof and allow British industrial goods to dominate the Irish market. They had no interest in industrialising the country and therefore supported free trade. As a result only 13 per cent of the southern population were employed in industry in 1926.

Fianna Fail on the other hand stood for—verbally at least—a full democratic settlement of the national question. Their's was to be a fight for the republic and not just the Free State.

And this stance had a direct and immediate economic relevance. FF diagnosed the roots of Ireland's

economic ills as the British connection, pointing to land annuities and the way cheap British goods stifled emerging Irish industry. Once in government they set out on a major programme of protectionism. In this they were no different from countless governments from Brazil through to Stalin's Russia all of which reacted to the crisis of the thirties by withdrawing from world markets. In Ireland however this protectionist programme had the added thrust of "completing the national revolution."

In 1934 Fianna Fail passed the Control Of Manufacturers Act to limit foreign capital in Ireland. It refused to pay the land annuities to Britain. It attacked the big farmers and sought to subsidise a shift to tillage farming for the home market. It held out the promise of a further re-division of the land by developing the Land Commission.

This was combined with measures that appealed to the urban working class. Under pressure from the Republican Congress, FF set about a programme of slum clearance and house building. It introduced a social



insurance and pension scheme. More importantly, it created jobs. Between 1932 and 1939 industrial employment rose by 50 per cent.

None of this takes away from the fact that Fianna Fail was the party of small businessmen. All the measures it took were designed to subsidise this class and expand the home market for its products. But the nature of the neo-colonial link with Britain meant that what was good for the small businessman could be presented as being in the interests of the Irish nation.

Ultimately, the radical nationalist programme was only partially successful. As early as 1935, a coal-cattle agreement was signed which accepted the necessity to exchange Irish agricultural for British industrial goods. The shift to tillage never materialised. The harsh truth was that the class that FF championed was weak, starved of capital and confined to an impoverished home market.

Despite this weakness there was a political bonus. In its early rhetoric FF denounced the Free State as "illegitimate". But faced now with the inability of native capitalism to make a breakthrough, FF proved that it could at least take on the reins of the state to guarantee law and order. It crushed the IRA through a mixture of repression and incorporation. It cemented its alliance with the Catholic Church by passing the sectarian constitution of 1937.

FF's success was to isolate Fine Gael—portraying it as the defenders of neo-colonialism with no interest in Irish industrialisation. In 1927 the FG vote stood at 39 per cent. After 1940 it was halved. FF became the centre ground party, because in the absence of working class politics it could unite all classes around a programme of political and economic nationalism. Furthermore it proved to the middle classes that this did not prevent it defending the Southern state. In doing so FF gave rise to the ideology of "constitutional nationalism" which has been backed up by Church run schools, the Irish owned press, TV and radio. It has become the ground which all right wing and reformist parties are forced to fight on.

The sixties boom

THE radical origins of Fianna Fail had not set it up for all time.

The weakness of the class it represented brought about a massive economic crisis in the fifties.

Between 1950 and 1960 tens of thousands of people emigrated from the South. The protectionist programme to build up small scale Irish industry was in a shambles.

The way FF pulled out of the crisis was to help rebuild its base throughout the South. In 1958 Sean Lemass, the then leader of FF, did an about turn. The protectionist programme was thrown out of the window. The Control of Manufacturers Act was repealed and foreign capital was invited in.

The boom in the world economy meant that surplus capital was available in abundance. It was attracted by the cheap labour, tax breaks and grants offered by the IDA. More crucially, its main interest in Ireland was to use the country as a platform for exporting to other European countries—it wasn't particularly interested in cutting native Irish capital out of their home market. Lemass, therefore, had little difficulty in winning the mass of small businessmen and the FF rank and file to the new turn.

FF nationalist ideology now underwent a major change. It was no longer about facing up to the Brits or protecting "our" industry from foreign competition. To be patriotic was now to pull together and compete for Ireland in the wider world.

According to Lemass: "The requirement of patriotism may change. We need to build in Ireland a willing homeland for the Irish people—a place where they can grow in Christian virtue and where Irish men and women can hope to improve living standards as a reward for reasonable efforts."

In line with this shift in FF ideology, Lemass brought in the Anglo-Irish Free Trade agreement in 1965. In 1967 he even proposed that Articles 2 and 3 of the constitution should be dropped.

The new turn brought with it a major improvement in living standards. Between 1961 and 1973 Gross Domestic Product rose by an average of 4½ per cent per year compared with 1½ per cent per year for the previous decade. Rising working class militancy meant that real personal disposable income doubled. Emigration came to a virtual standstill and by the end of the seventies there was net immigration into Ireland.

BCOM

This boom in the economy allowed FF to expand the welfare state. Between 1961 and 1973 social expenditure grew from 14 per cent of GDP to 22 per cent. There was an increase in house building, road construction secondary education was made free. The expansion in social welfare was presented as another case of "love your neighbour Christian virtue. So the industrialisation programme was able to combine an expansion in jobs with welfare while maintaining traditional values.

FF was therefore the party of expansion, the "friend of the building industry", the party that cared for all the people. It boasted that it was "the natural party of government" able to set things right. But the image was only possible because of the absence of a real challenge from the Left. The hard left around Noel Browne and the left-moving Sinn Fein could only attack FF for "betraying" its nationalist past. The union leaders meanwhile were involved in an open alliance with FF to help it continue its expansionist programme. The key to FF's success was the failure of its opposition.

BOSSSES' PARTY

The Left and Fianna Fail

FIANNA Fail could not have maintained its popular support through its many twists and turns had it not been for the failure of the Labour movement to oppose it consistently and to build a real alternative.

The image of Fianna Fail as an "anti-imperialist" party that should be supported against the "blueshirt" Fine Gael brought it support from the Left. This tradition dates back to the radical origins of FF in the thirties. Jim Larkin gave unconditional support to FF in 1932.

In the fifties, left winger Noel Browne actually joined the party. And even in recent elections, the Irish Communist Party has called for votes for Fianna Fail. Tony Gregory refused to vote against Haughey for Taoiseach for fear he would end up supporting the right—the implication is that FF, with its green rhetoric, its economic nationalism, is somehow more progressive than the rest.

The union leaders have also promoted this idea, seeking alliances with Fianna Fail whenever possible. They saw FF's expansion of the state sector in the sixties as a way to win influence within the system. So they go along with whatever schemes FF come up with to put them into the state. In the seventies it was the National Wage Agreements, in the eighties it's the Plan for National Recovery.

And there has been no opposite pole to that of FF's class interests. The Labour Party careerists opted for coalition with Fine Gael spelling disaster for the Left. In 1968 the Labour vote stood at 19 per cent. Today it has fallen to 8 per cent after three periods in coalition. Labour's disgraceful record has allowed FF to cover up its naked class interest.

What has been missing all along is a clear class opposition to Fianna

Fail. Such opposition would mean breaking the labour movement from the nationalist and corporatist traditions of Fianna Fail. It would have meant breaking the illusions in FF by encouraging struggles against it instead of constantly appealing to it.

The Left in Ireland has now been presented with a major opportunity to break the hold of Fianna Fail and open the way for class politics.

The industrialisation programme of the 60s and 70s has come to a dead end. The scale of the borrowing and the knowledge of the forthcoming recession have produced an ever closer consensus between the parties of the Right. All of them are now seen to stand for:

- the scapegoating of public sector workers;
- officially supported emigration health cuts and hospital charges
- the re-introduction of water rates and refuse charges
- the raising of primary school classes to levels not seen since the fifties.

On all of these issues there has been massive opposition. In the most recent case, that of primary school cuts, parents have marched in their thousands to Fianna Fail clinics to protest. But these opposition movements in themselves do not guarantee a political break of the mass of workers from Fianna Fail. Something else is required.

CAMPAIGNING

First, there has to be open socialist campaigning against the cuts. Too often the opposition to the outpatient charges, hospital closures and primary school cuts has been on a community level only. Various dignitaries from the parish priest down to opportunist politicians have been able to

associate themselves with the protests.

What has been missing has been a clear political message that the cuts are inevitable given the state of Irish capitalism; that they are not simply the result of the TDs corruption and that there is a socialist alternative to the cuts.

Unfortunately, the Workers Party and the Labour Party have not raised these types of issues because they are interested mainly with short term electoral gain. It is because the community protests have not been politicised that FF politicians such as Doherty in Roscommon, or Lawlor in Dublin West can pretend to try to get concessions for their local area.

Secondly, the anger which is organised at local level at the moment has to link up with the strength of organised workers. You can lobby all you want on the school cuts, you can march to all the FF clinics—but the only force that will stop the cuts in the face of the FF and Fg alliance is the industrial power of teachers. It is only when thousands of workers fight back against FF policies that it becomes possible to break them voting Fianna Fail.

Thirdly, we need to be aware that the scale of the crisis will mean that FF will retreat into its traditional values. In some cases this will mean more open defence of Catholic sectarian positions—that this country does not need divorce, abortion or homosexuality but the strengthening of family values etc. These issues cannot be ducked by the left but must be challenged head on.

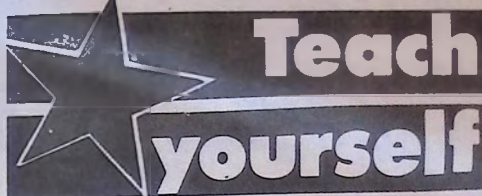
The other way in which FF can be expected to return to "traditional values" is by taking a seemingly more nationalist position on the North. The rumpus on extradition in FF is in marked contrast to the silence of FF backbenchers on the health cuts and it is a sign of things to come. Here FF is on stronger ground. The left has run away from the Northern issue. Parties like the Workers Party and the Labour Party take a softer stance on extradition than do elements of FF.

The only way to under cut FF on the North is for the left to take up the national question from a clear socialist stance. That means being for a fight against the Orange state and standing shoulder to shoulder with those who oppose that state. It is only from this standpoint that it is possible to show that FF, for all its green rhetoric, has always been the best defenders of the border and all the oppression that goes with partition. Unfortunately, this opportunity to take on FF will be lost as long as the Left is dominated by reformist politics.

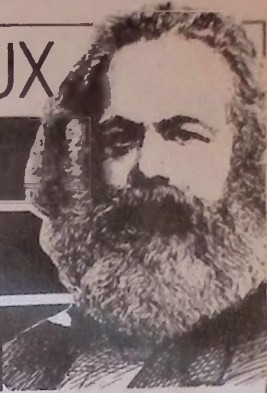
The experience in other countries where right-wing governments have come to power was that unless they were fought by workers taking industrial action, then the right wing arguments gradually came to be accepted. That is why the talk of the Workers Party and of the union leaders to do nothing now—but to get the politicians back at the next election is such rubbish. It has been shown time and again in other countries that the only way to break illusions in right wing parties is to involve workers in taking action themselves.

The same applies here if the hold of FF on Southern Irish workers is finally to be broken. But such a break needs a clear revolutionary socialist current arguing against both FF and against the reformist politics which have left the way open to FF for so long. Now, more than ever, a sizeable revolutionary organisation needs to be built in Ireland.

JOHN MOLYNEUX



Teach yourself Marxism



"KNOW YOUR enemy" is a useful maxim for anyone engaged in a battle. But for socialists it is absolutely essential. Unless we know what we are up against, we have no chance of winning. And what we are up against is not just a group of people—the Tories, the bosses, the ruling class etc—but a whole system: capitalism.

Unfortunately a clear view of capitalism is completely missing among wide sections of the left and the labour movement at present and this confusion often leads to the most serious political mistakes.

Failure to grasp what capitalism is means failure to realise what is necessary to defeat it, and often leads to the illusion that it has been defeated when it has merely changed some of its superficial features.

For example there are some in the labour movement, mostly in the right wing, who regard capitalism primarily as an attitude of mind—a matter of personal greed and selfishness.

This can lead either to the defeatist view that capitalism is somehow an expression of "human nature" which can never be changed, or to the absurdly complacent notion that it is enough to replace the greedy, selfish Tories with caring and concerned Labour.

False

Others do at least recognise that capitalism is a definite economic system. But they think of it primarily as a national affair existing within the boundaries of particular countries, so that it can be overthrown within one country while remaining intact in the rest of the world.

However, the most serious misconception prevalent on the left is the view that capitalism is defined simply as a system of private ownership of the means of production.

This definition is historically false because it fails to distinguish capitalism from feudalism and from the slave societies of the ancient world in which there was also private ownership.

It supports the right wing "revisionist" view developed by Crosland and others that Britain and similar countries are no longer really capitalist because of the existence of nationalised industries.

It can lead to the idea that workers in nationalised industries should moderate their struggles within these supposed "islands of socialism" and it discredits socialism by associating it with Russia and Eastern Europe where there is state ownership but also obviously tyranny.

In fact capitalism is neither an attitude of mind nor national, nor primarily

WHAT IS CAPITALISM?



THE EARLY days of capitalism—women colliery workers in 1865

characterised by private ownership.

Rather it is an international economic system which has developed from roughly the 16th century onwards, and whose main characteristic is that it is dominated by the drive to accumulate capital, or, to put it more simply, to maximise profit.

Maximise

A primacy of capital accumulation derives from three fundamental facts: The first is the separation of the immediate producers, ie the vast majority of ordinary working people, from any ownership or control of the land, tools or machinery necessary for production. The second is the concentration of all the major means of production in the hands of a privileged minority. And the third is the division of the total means of production into independent units (small or large, private or state owned) which produce in competition with each other.

The first of these facts forces the working people to sell their ability to work, their labour power, to the class that does possess the means of production. That is, it transforms them into wage labourers, or proletarians, as Marx called them.

The third fact forces the owners to maximise capital accumulation, not out of personal greed, but on pain of extinction in the competitive battle. This in turn forces the owners to exploit the workers as ferociously as they possibly can.

This iron logic applies whether governments call themselves conservative or socialist, or even Marxist-Leninist, and whether the controllers of the means of production are individual owners, anonymous shareholders or state bureaucrats.

It can be broken only when the mass of the producers themselves take possession and real control of the huge industries and corporations that constitute the major means of production in the modern world.

To do this they must first take on and defeat the state structures which the capitalists have constructed for the defence of their system.

In short, a clear understanding of what capitalism is demonstrates beyond doubt that it cannot be defeated by means of parliamentary reform, or any kind of action from above, but only by workers' revolution from below, ultimately on an international scale.

Pamphlets by

Alexandra Kollontai

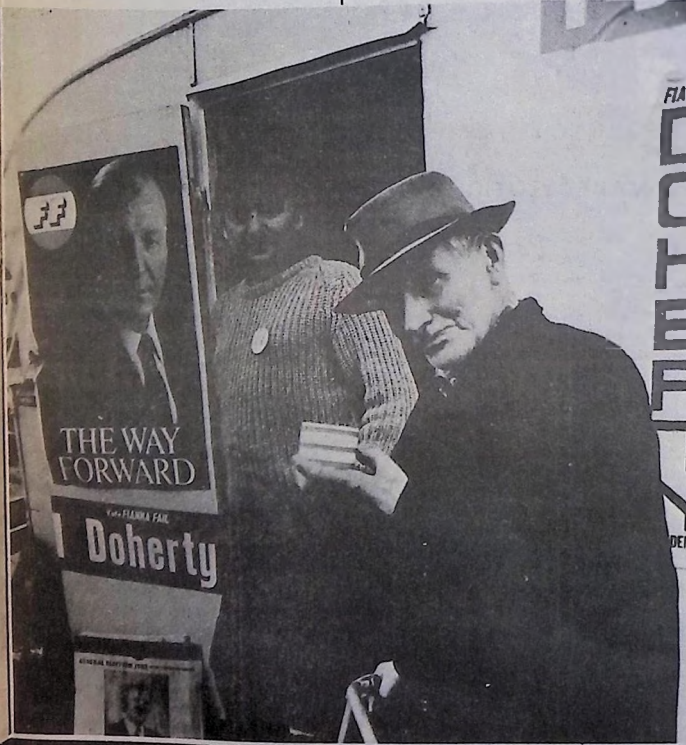
Sexual relations and class struggle

A discussion of how capitalism distorts sexual relationships—written in 1919 when Kollontai was deeply involved in the struggle to create a new society in Russia which would remove such distortions.

£1.50 including postage for the two from SWM PO Box 1648 Dublin 8.



Communism and the family
Written in 1918, this pamphlet shows how the family has changed with different class societies, and how it will change with socialism.



ANALYSIS

SINN FEIN AND FHEIS:

Politics of the cul de sac

by PAT STACK

EVEN before Enniskillen, Sinn Fein had big problems. The strategy of bullets and ballots had suffered a series of setbacks both on the military and electoral front.

The Sinn Fein Ard Fheis last November did not come to grips with these problems.

Instead the leadership sought to concentrate the minds of the delegates on general condemnations of the Haughey government, and the search for "realistic" short term aims.

This "realism" was in part expressed by Gerry Adams in his Presidential address when he spoke of building on the "small ideas" concerned with local grievances, local protests and local aspirations.

The demands around such social issues had to be realistic, Adams argued. For example he said that "Big business should be taxed effectively so that they contribute their fair share." Such sentiments could just as easily be expressed by Neil Kinnock in Britain or Dick Spring or Tomas MacGiolla here.

This sort of reasonableness was a hallmark of the Ard Fheis. Of course Adams argued that only a united Ireland could provide a solution to the problems of the people North and South. Nevertheless the stress was on the "sensible short term steps that could be taken to alleviate the crisis facing the people of the 26 Counties."

Sinn Fein's strategy is to present this sensible short-term programme to the Irish people at election time.

But what of in between elections, what do Sinn Fein members do? Well, they become involved community politics, they fight campaigns, they make propaganda.

The problem is, as was shown at the last Southern election, this community involvement pays a very limited dividend when it comes to the polls at the general election.

What is more the campaigns Sinn Fein has got itself involved in, have all run into difficulties. The Ard Fheis more or less admitted that the anti strip search campaign was bogged down and going nowhere.

The Section 31 campaign has little steam and Sinn Fein's insistence on focusing the anti extradition campaign around Fianna Fail "malcontents" ensured that the campaign never really got off the ground in most areas.

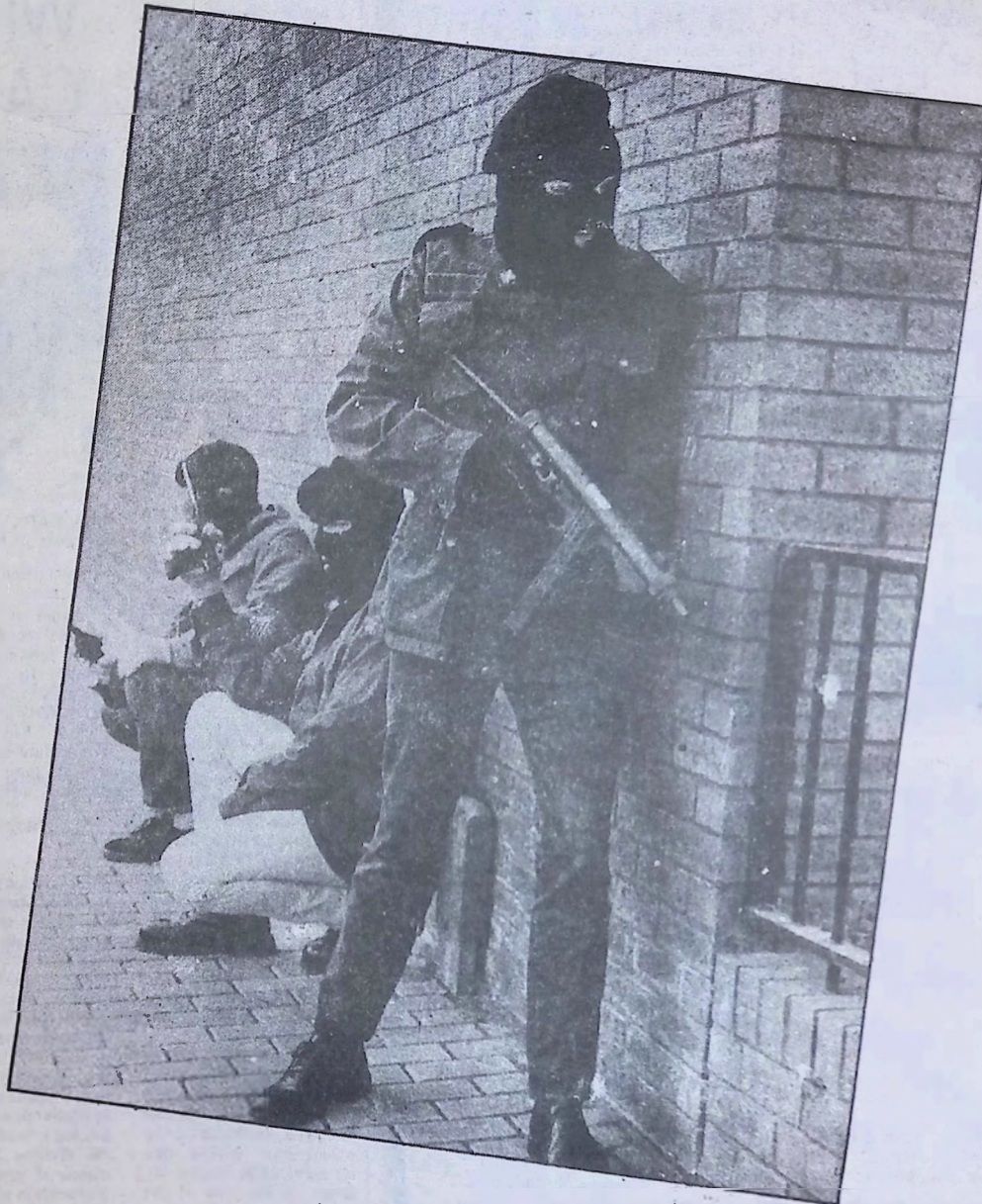
Once again the problem remains, where to take the movement on a day to day basis. Here it is clear that advances in the cultural sphere are seen as realisable—the kind of "realistic" demands that can actually be won.

One motion passed at the Ard Fheis called for the teaching of Irish to be 'compulsory' in schools in the North. An amendment arguing that it should be available, rather than compulsory, was thrown out.

(That Irish is a language unspoken by the vast majority of Catholics in the north, let alone the Protestants, didn't seem to worry anybody. Nor did the harrowing experience of compulsory learning of Irish for urban, working class kids in the South, seem to raise any questions.)

Instead, reality was lost in talk of the "language of imperialism" or "you can't understand Irish history if you don't understand the language" or the "reconquest of Ireland starts with the reconquest of the language".

The Ard Fheis voted that next year the Culture section of the



Conference will be conducted in Irish with simultaneous translation through headphones.

This is going to mean an awful lot of headphones, (if the delegates are honest) since it was obvious that only a relatively small minority had any real grip of the Gaelige. Both Adams and newly elected Belfast City Councillor Mairion O Muilleoir cracked jokes in Irish which very few delegates understood.

To back up this point, during the culture debate it was explained that only one issue of the Republican magazine in Irish "Saoirse" was printed last year, that the print run was only 1,000, yet the vast majority remained unsold.

IRISH

The problem is that while Irish is spoken by increasing numbers of Republicans in the Six Counties, and while Naiscoilleana are attracting more children in nationalist areas, the language remains the concern of a very small minority of the minority.

In fact the growing emphasis on culture is more a sign of Sinn Fein's weakness and confusion about how to resolve real problems, than it is about anything else.

There was one vote at the Ard Fheis that will probably have shocked and confused many. That was the decision to withdraw support from Solidarity and to defend the Polish "socialist" state. Up to now Sinn Fein has supported Solidarity, which was a mass movement of workers defending themselves against a repressive totalitarian state.

Why now does Sinn Fein withdraw that support and why does it suddenly view Poland as socialist. The Polish road to "socialism" was after all carved out by Stalin's tanks and the bayonets of the Russian Army.

Workers in Poland didn't create this "socialist" society, they didn't build it from below, they didn't even vote for it, it was imposed upon them, just as it was on workers throughout Eastern Europe. It had therefore nothing to do with socialism.

So why should Sinn Fein adopt a form of politics with regards to Eastern Europe, normally associated with the Workers Party?

To explain this, a couple of points need making. Firstly until recently the pro Moscow Communist Parties had no time for the Provos, denouncing them as gangsters, or even (at times)

fascists. These parties have warmed somewhat to Sinn Fein in recent times. When it comes to support for the Provo's on the left, this has been provided in the main by the, anti-Moscow Trotskyist groupings. This has been true both within and outside Ireland.

PERMANENT REVOLUTION

However central to these groups understanding of the world is Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution", which in a nutshell argues that national liberation could only be won by a movement led by the working class and that this struggle would spill over into the struggle for socialism.

Therefore the struggle for national liberation, and the struggle for working class self-emancipation have to be intertwined, they cannot be separated out, and performed in different stages.

Such a view of the world is sharply at odds with that of republicanism which believes that the class struggle must wait until the border is abolished.

Therefore as Sinn Fein moved left, at least in rhetoric, it found itself in deep conflict with those of its critical supporters on the revolutionary left and badly in need

of a set of "left-wing" ideas that would fit in with the ideas of more traditional republicanism. There was a body of "socialist" theory that seemed to meet the needs of Sinn Fein—Joseph Stalin's "stages theory".

This theory, which was devised to suit the needs of Russian foreign policy, was a break from the ideas of Lenin, Marx and Trotsky. Stalin argued that questions of national liberation or even bourgeois democracy would have to be settled first. Workers, he maintained, must wait for these problems to be resolved before they fight for their own independent interests as a class.

Such folly was to lead to the destruction of revolutions in Spain and China. Nevertheless the ideas fit into the scheme of left nationalists beautifully. In fact Sinn Fein are following a path well worn by left nationalists in Zimbabwe, Palestine, South Africa and elsewhere; as the PLO, ANC and the rest moved leftwards, they all leaned towards Stalinism since that ideology allows them to combine the all-class alliances of nationalism with socialist rhetoric.

The Enniskillen bombing was, as the Provos themselves have admitted a disaster for the republican movement.

Demoralisation among republicans in its aftermath was obvious. What little life there had been in the anti-Extradition campaign disappeared.

Enniskillen has not, of course, affected the hardcore of support for the Provos in nationalist ghettos of the Six Counties. What's more the Brits and RUC can be relied on to do something over the next few months to restore the support of waverers. But the Sinn Fein leadership has admitted that they have been set back years in their attempts to gain electoral support in the Twenty Six Counties.

As the last issue of Socialist Worker pointed out, the possibility of an Enniskillen disaster will always be present as long as republican politics are based on the idea of "stages". Republicans see the present "stage" of the struggle as the expulsion of Britain from all of Ireland and the creation of a 32-County capitalist state. During the present "stage" then, according to the Republicans, support for the struggle must be mobilised on a nationalist not on a class basis.

It is the interests of the "nationalist people" that the Provos seek to represent, not the interests of working class people within the nation. As a result, republican politics in the North are expressed in communal terms and the IRA operates as the cutting edge of communal, nationalist politics.

This communal nature of Republican politics can only be challenged by appealing to the common interests of Catholic and Protestant workers. But that, according to Republicans, is for the next "stage"—after the British get out and Ireland is united.

Thus the cul-de-sac in which the Republicans find themselves at the moment is not a blind alley that they have wandered into as a result of an unfortunate accident. And they can't manoeuvre themselves out of it.

Republicanism itself, their own most fundamental ideas, have led them into this impasse. Only a fundamental reappraisal of these most basic ideas can point a way out.

LETTERS
LETTERS
LETTERS
LETTERS

Spread it around

SOUTHERN Ireland creameries are having a fierce problem selling that over-produced, over-priced product, the pound of butter.

It seems that other, cheaper brands of cream-based and margarine products are

outstripping butter sales on the market.

The obvious solution, of course, would be to sell off the millions of tons of butter already stockpiled in cold storage all over Europe at a cheap rate.

But then cheap butter flooding the market would seriously damage the creamery bosses' massive profits.

So a great brain wave was hit upon to up butter sales.

The solution is to spend £1 million on advertising throughout the year and to add a massive one penny on the social welfare butter vouchers.

So when someone says to you that "butter wouldn't melt in your mouth", you know who to blame!

EAMONN LEWSLEY
CORK

WHAT WE STAND FOR

The Socialist Workers Movement is a revolutionary socialist organisation that fights for a workers' republic and international socialism.

The system under which we live, capitalism, is based on production for profit—not for human need. It leads to poverty and war; racism and sexism. It is a system that can only be destroyed by the class which creates all the wealth—the working class.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

Capitalism cannot be patched up or reformed—it must be overthrown. That cannot be achieved through parliament as the Workers Party and the Labour Party argue. The real power in this society lies in the boardroom of big business. The structures of the present parliament, courts, army and police are designed to protect the interests of the ruling class against the workers. At most parliament can be used for propaganda against the system—it cannot be the instrument by which workers destroy the power of the rich.

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

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

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

AGAINST PARTITION

The six county Orange state is propped up by British imperialism. That state divides the working class by the guarantee of marginal privileges in housing and jobs to Loyalist workers. The struggle of Catholic workers to rid themselves of sectarianism and bigotry can only succeed by smashing that state.

The slow task of building working class unity against imperialism must be begun. However imperialism must be fought in the here and now and we support all forces engaged in that struggle regardless of our differences of programme.

We stand for:
The immediate withdrawal of the British Army
The disbandment of the RUC and UDR
No to extradition and collaboration on border security

Connolly wrote that partition would bring a carnival of reaction. He was absolutely right. Irish workers confront two reactionary states. The Southern ruling class have no longer any fundamental conflict of interest with imperialism. They have become junior players in the world capitalist system. Their state props up partition—despite their occasional nationalist rhetoric.

The "national question" will only be solved in the course of mass working class struggle against both states. Republicanism, by limiting the struggle to nationalist goals, by appealing to all classes in Irish society, can never defeat imperialism. Only a revolutionary socialist organisation that fights openly for the Workers' Republic can unite sections of the working class who have nothing to gain from a bourgeois Eire Sinn.

AGAINST ALL OPPRESSION

Revolutionaries oppose all form of oppression that divide and weaken the working class.

We are for real social, economic and political equality for women.
We are for an end to discrimination against homosexuals.
We stand for full separation of the church and state.
We stand for secular control of the hospitals and the schools.

THE UNIONS

Today the trade union movement is dominated by a caste of bureaucrats whose principal aim is to make their compromise with the system. They have destroyed solidarity between workers by the two tier picket system. They have failed to lead any fight over tax, wage cuts and unemployment.

We stand for:
100 percent trade unionism
A 35 hour week to reduce unemployment
The election of all union officials, subject to recall
Against redundancies. We say: occupy to demand nationalisation under workers' control
Full independence of the unions from the state. No reliance on the Labour Courts or the arbitration schemes in the public sector

We fight for the building of a national rank and file movement that links together the best militants to provide an alternative leadership to the trade union bureaucrats.
We fight for the formation of Right to Work committees that link the unemployed to the power of the trade union movement.

THE PARTY

To achieve socialism the most class conscious sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party. The SWM aims to build such a party around its activity in the working class movement. It stands in the tradition of Marx, Lenin, Trotsky and Connolly. We urge all those who agree with our policies to come in and join the SWM.

I would like more details about the Socialist Workers Movement

NAME

ADDRESS

Send to SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.



Irish on demand

Dear Socialist Worker, The compulsory learning Irish language has long been a source of tribulation for the schoolchildren of the twenty six counties. Anyone that has been through the joke that passes for an educational system have memories that we are likely never to forget. No-one was asked whether they were actually interested in learning the language or were informed of its "obvious" merits. Now the "leather" has become the property of Sinn Fein.

At their recent Ard Fheis a resolution was passed by Sinn Fein to campaign for Irish to be made a compulsory subject in the schools of the Six Counties.

Perhaps it would be more realistic if Sinn Fein was to push for a de-compulsorisation of the teaching of Irish and by this action instil a greater love for the language, instead of the general disregard that exists towards it today in the South.

Another major problem with Irish is its teaching. If, for instance it was taught in

a manner akin to the teaching of French and German there would be far more interest aroused. What is required is a completely new approach if the language is to survive and not the strengthening of old and dated methods.

PAUL ANTHONY
SWEENEY
DUBLIN

LETTERS
TO
SOCIALIST
WORKER
PO Box 1648,
Dublin 8

Labour Lefts do Thatcher's racist dirty work

LONDON's Borough of Camden—a notoriously "left wing" Labour stronghold—is distinguished itself by being the first authority in Britain to implement the Nazi National Front policy of repatriating immigrants.

I, like many others before me, was forced by the desperate level of unemployment at home to emigrate in order to

find work.

I was lucky—I found work and digs. But many is the Irish emigrant I know who has found that the streets of London are very far from being paved with gold.

Now those who cannot find work or a place to stay which they can afford are being turned away from the housing department of Camden

Council who refuse to consider them for emergency housing. Instead they are being sent away with a ticket for Dun Laoghaire.

See how far the great have fallen—from being fiery fighters against Tory rate-capping to becoming Thatcher's bouncers!

Roll on the revolution!
SEAN WHITE
LONDON

Nerves of steel

CRAFT AND general workers at Irish Steel in Haulbowline island near Cobh are preparing for another attack on their jobs from the government.

Last year the Fine Gael-Labour government forced through 110 redundancies with the threat to close the place unless this was agreed to. Now, the Fianna Fail government pronounces "grave disappointment" at a £5 million loss from a £5000,000 profit in 1985.

Irish Steel is a capital intensive industry starved of

capital and crippled with massive loans which it needed for the highly-innovative modernisation completed two years ago.

All steel plants throughout Europe are losing money. Irish Steel is far removed from the centre of the market and sells only 18% of its output in-Ireland. It has a turnover of only £48 million which is approximately 0.2% of EEC steel turnover. Electricity charges in Ireland are the highest in Europe.

Workers at the

Haulbowline plant struck against the redundancies last time and had the threat of closure used against them.

Any threat of closure this time must be met with a factory occupation and an immediate refusal to repay any loans or debts. Occupy and nationalise under workers control is the only way forward in a crazy anarchic system which is determined to place workers on the dole for producing too much.

JIM BLAKE
CORK

BEER STOPS

HORNS WERE blaring and lights flashing on the Glen Road in West Belfast as drivers showed their immediate support for the 166 Bass brewery workers who were striking for a wage increase.

Striking workers told SW that the brewery made £5 million profit last year, but refused to pay workers a decent rate. Management offered them 5%. In comparison they gave a 7% rise to their Welsh workers. Bass workers in the North are normally paid 2% less than those in Britain in spite of the higher costs they face here in the North.

The workers, from the T&G, AEUW, EEPTU are solidly behind the strike and are supported by the office staff who refused to cross the picket line. The men are organising a 24 hour picket to prevent any deliveries to and from the brewery and are ready for a fight. As one worker pointed out, "They say they have no money to pay us, but they just put £60,000 out to sponsor the Bass Ireland football club".

SW READER
BELFAST



BOOKS FROM SWM

Just two of the books available through the Socialist Workers Movement book service.

For a complete list of books and prices send a stamped addressed envelope to:

Books from SWM
PO Box 1648
Dublin 8.

REVIEWS

No time for love ... or politics

WHEN HUGO MEENAN appeared on the Late Late Show to launch this book he was, rather predictably, treated like some kind of non-human sub-species—King Kong, Rambo and the Elephant Man all rolled into one.

The reason for this treatment was that Hugo Meenan was, for many years, a member of the IRA and of the INLA and has served two prison sentences for his activities with those organisations. The disgraceful way he was treated by Gay Byrne, indubitably by everyone on the show except for Spike Milligan—who was the only one who seemed to understand that in a war situation people are forced to do things which they would not dream of doing otherwise—made me curious to read the novel.

I'm not sorry that I read it; I even quite enjoyed it. It was an exciting thriller—action packed and very imaginative—rather like a James Bond adventure really.

But while I enjoyed reading the book, escaping for a while from the realities of life in Derry, I became increasingly annoyed by it also. "No Time for Love" is set in Derry in the early 70s; its hero is Hugh O'Donnell, a leader of an INLA-look-alike group called Saor Eire and a fearless freedom fighter. Action Man incarnate to be exact—and a hit with the women to boot!

The adventures of Hugh O'Donnell might be thrilling reading but I kept on wondering: why is he doing this? Why is he—or any of his comrades—in Saor Eire? What is the politics of these people? The answers to these questions are never revealed.

We get the definite impression that most of the people in the Bogside and Creggan were willing to billet O'Donnell, to protect him from the RUC and army. Why should they do this—the series of events that led ordinary decent people to want to harbour the most wanted man on the island of Ireland—are never explained. The hatred of the bulk of the population for the RUC and British Army is obvious; why they hate them is not. I know why; Hugo Meenan knows why; most readers of Socialist Worker know why; but I'm quite sure most Late Late Show viewers don't.

GERRYMANDERING

They only know what they see on RTE or read in the newspapers—that all members of the IRA and other paramilitary groups are psychopathic murderers. "No Time for Love" made little or no attempt to counteract that view, to explain the decades of Unionist gerrymandering, of discrimination against Catholics in jobs and housing



Free Derry Corner in 1969

of RUC and B-Special violence against nationalists that led to the outbreak of the "Troubles" almost twenty years ago.

Similarly we are told in passing that O'Donnell is

fighting for a Workers' Republic, not just a united Ireland. But there's no indication of how his war against the Brits is any different to that being waged at the same time by either the Official IRA (now the

Workers Party) or the Provisional IRA (then sworn to counteract "communist influences".)

All in all, I found "No Time for Love" an extremely unpolitical novel, worth a read

if you want to relieve boredom or just plain enjoy some escapism. But don't expect anything more.

—GORETTI HORGAN

"No Time for Love" by Hugo Meenan, Brandon Press £4.95

The expulsion of a population

by Rod Hudson

FORTY YEARS ago the United Nations passed a motion to partition Palestine into separate Arab and Jewish states. When the immediately ensuing conflict subsided, partition was a dead letter.

Palestine was obliterated by Israel and 750,000 Palestinian refugees languished in camps across its borders—where they remain to this day.

The Palestinian Catastrophe, by Michael Palumbo, provides the first reliable study of this tragic exodus.

Using newly discovered and declassified archives, and recently published memoirs of Israeli veterans, it destroys the official Zionist claim that the Palestinians were duped into leaving by their leaders.

It shows instead how they were forcibly expelled by a premeditated terror campaign.

ZIONIST POLICY

Israel's first premier, Ben Gurion, spelt out Zionist policy: "In each attack, a decisive blow should be struck resulting in the destruction of homes and the expulsion of the population".

In thousands of Palestinian



Israeli forces send press photographers away before brutally dealing with Palestinian demonstrators recently.

villages, which were rarely defended, Zionist forces ousted peasant families at gunpoint. Their homes were dynamited behind them—to ensure they never returned.

Some of the many Zionist atrocities detailed by Palumbo, such as the attack on Haifa and the massacre of 250 villagers at Deir Yassan, are well known.

Most are not. For example in the Lydda Death March the whole Arab population of the Tel Aviv region was marched to the border in stifling mid-summer heat, and 1,000 died.

One survivor recalls: "With machine-gun fire speeding us on our way, many fell by the wayside. My aged mother passed away from sheer exhaustion." Another tells of

seeing people chew grass and drink their children's urine to survive.

The Palestinian exodus was also forced by Zionist psychological warfare. This used an Arabic language radio station and loudspeaker vans. They went round blurring out recorded "horror sounds", together with warnings in Arabic for the population to save their souls and flee.

Palumbo's study is not without weaknesses. He naively believes there was a chance of peace after the expulsion of the Palestinians in 1948, ignoring his own observation that they themselves wanted *their* land back.

More importantly, the narrow focus of his work excludes serious consideration of the role of imperialist oil interests in the Palestinian tragedy.

True, Zionism did its own dirty work, and for its own ends, but it could only succeed in driving out the Palestinians, and continue to keep them out, by allying itself with first British and then US imperialism.

Those weaknesses aside, this book provides the only serious antidote to Zionist propaganda myths about the 1948 war.

The Palestinian Catastrophe, Michael Palumbo, Faber and Faber, £12.95

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Jailed for picketing

DURING DECEMBER four Waterford dockers, members of ATGWU—Michael Madigan, Thomas Halligan, Edward Madigan and John Cloono—were jailed in Mountjoy. Their crime? Picketing NewRath Processors Ltd in Waterford in defence of trade union rights. Here Socialist Worker looks at the background to the dispute.

In 1986 Gunther Hattenhauer of NewRath Processors opened a private wharf in Waterford, north of the Suir Bridge.

He attempted to bring in a cargo of coal and discharge it without unionised dock labour. This flew in the face of union rights which dockers had fought for over the years.

Pickets were placed on the Suir Bridge and the ship was not allowed to pass through to NewRath.

Within hours the company agreed to speak to the ATGWU and an agreement was reached.

Under this agreement ten union dockers were paid the full rate by the company. But they were not physically employed because they were ATGWU members and the company claimed that if they employed the ten they would be drawn into an inter-union dispute with the Marine Port and General Workers' Union.

This arrangement was meant to be temporary. After twelve months the ATGWU demanded that its members be physically employed by NewRath. This was refused and the company then ditched the agreement to pay the ten dockers.

Meanwhile an even bigger private wharf was being opened down river. Union members faced a full battle over privatisation and union rights.

Pickets were placed on NewRath Processors and the company was closed for three weeks.

On November 9th Gunther Hattenhauer went to the High Court in Dublin to seek an injunction against the pickets. The judge granted the injunction without even listening to the workers' side of the story.

JAILED

Picketing continued at NewRath and on 4th December four dockers were jailed.

Meanwhile the ATGWU had refused to make the strike official. While the dockers were in Mountjoy official sanction was promised on condition that the four purged their contempt of court and ceased picketing.

Without official backing few workers in Waterford were prepared to take action in support of the jailed dockers. Despite their traditional militancy workers in Waterford are as demoralised as workers elsewhere. The acceptance of a major redundancy programme by Waterford Glass workers underlines this fact. In such a climate unofficial rank and file action even to demand the release of jailed trade unionists, was difficult to achieve.

Individual ATGWU members demanded official action. Support groups in Waterford and Dublin campaigned among trade unionists and the Dublin group picketed Mountjoy. But the key lay with workers in Waterford by-

unionists, being better paid and having more privileges. In the Waterford dispute they refused to defy the court injunction for fear of having union funds seized. If the choice lies between protecting the union machine and protecting workers' rights, the officials are quite prepared to ditch the fight.

This applies to left-wing officials as much as to right-wingers. The ATGWU leaders were against the National Plan yet they failed to support the fight in Waterford. Included among them are Charlie Douglas, who recently

"We have no choice but to fight it"

ON HIS release from Mountjoy, one of the dockers, SWM member Johnny Cloono, spoke at a Public Meeting organised by the Dublin Support Group.

He argued that NewRath Processors were trying to undermine the system whereby dockers were recruited from a Union Register. This system ensured that union rates were paid and proper working conditions applied. Johnny contrasted this with the early years on the docks:

"Dockers used to stand like cattle waiting to be picked out by the stevedore. The 'Buttonmen' had cards which they threw on the ground and the men fought among themselves to grab the card and get the job.

"For years and years,

advocated that the Labour Party must "once more fight for socialism", and Walter Cullen, an ex-revolutionary who was directly involved in the Waterford dispute.

Workers must put pressure on officials but clearly they cannot rely on them.

The fight against privatisation on the docks—in Waterford and elsewhere—requires the rebuilding of confidence and organisation among rank and file workers themselves. The issue is too serious to leave to the union bureaucrats.

dockers fought against this and finally won the right to have a union register.

"ATGWU officials are prepared to throw all that away simply because Hattenhauer took advantage of a High Court judgement which gave companies the right to come into any port, cordon off an area fronting a river, build a wall around it and ignore all the procedures about union pay and conditions.

The ATGWU have used the excuse that the law forbids disputes with any company by workers who are not employed by that company. But privatisation is about ensuring that you never become an employee of the company. We have no choice but to fight against it".



SCHOOLS: INDUSTRIAL ACTION IS ONLY WAY

THE ATTEMPT by the Fianna Fail government to raise class sizes in the primary school provoked a huge outcry. 30,000 took to the streets of Dublin to protest. Fianna Fail TDs faced major demonstrations at their clinics and were heckled and abused at local public meetings. One other heave that involved industrial action could have brought FF to their knees.

But just when they were at their weakest the INTO leaders came to their rescue. At a special conference held in early December they agreed to join a new Quota Review Committee that will look at how the cuts will be implemented in the primary schools. INTO General Secretary, Quigley and even the more left wing INTO backed Senator Joe O Toole argued that this committee was very broad in scope and had nothing to do with the cuts. But on a radio interview Quigley gave the game away by claiming that the INTO were joining the committee to "negotiate away the cuts".

Under pressure from the right wing in the union they postponed even the limited one day strikes due for January and February.

Meanwhile there has been no withdrawal of the infamous circular which would raise class sizes. There have been "promises" from Haughey that it will not affect the standard of education. But the circular stays in force.

REDUNDANT

The Department of Education is also pressing ahead with its plans to make teachers redundant. Within days of the INTO agreeing to go on the "Quota Review Committee" it had a detailed proposal in the post to every primary teacher in the country outlining a redundancy scheme. Clearly, if they intend to pay out redundancy money, they are also going to cut jobs. If implemented in full, the cuts circular would mean many classes in Irish schools



INTO's Gerry Quigley

with over forty pupils. It could also mean split classes where for example third and fourth class are taught together by one teacher.

Meanwhile the school building programme has come to a complete standstill with £15 million cut from the capital spending programme. Sub-standard school, where children are taught in pre-fabs' will continue in operation.

The pull back by the INTO is a result of its soft stance. For the likes of Quigley, the thought of INTO taking industrial action against an "elected" government—no matter how unpopular its decision—is a complete anathema. That is why he has come up with nonsense about parents taking a High Court case on the issue.

For the smaller left forces in the leadership grouped around Joe O Toole, industrial action is thought likely to lose parent support. They revel in a "new sophisticated" form of trade unionism, that place primary emphasis on public relations and winning public opinion.

Militants in the union must now sound the alarm on this terrible retreat. They must push for a full no cover policy where teachers refuse to take on extra children to compensate for jobs lost. They should demand that the INTO gets off the review committee and starts organising clear resistance to the FF government. And they should press even at this late stage for a campaign against the redundancy programme among the union membership.



FOUR WOMEN workers are on strike against the priests of the Obate Fathers in Inchicore, Dublin.

"After 17 years service, one of the woman, a cook was demoted. Another catering worker was fired "because you're married".

Trouble began when a Fr McSharry arrived to take control. He is completely "anti-union". The women have suffered abuse for daring to picket the priests.

Unfortunately, teacher, members of the INTO, who

work in the grounds of the building have so far refused to respect the picket.

The women get only £65 for a 40 hour week. The strike shows the hypocrisy of those who preach regularly—"Christian love and Charity".

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

FAMINE

The rotten stench of a rotten system

"AFTER ALL the money that was given last time, after all the personnel and equipment that was put into Ethiopia, after the establishment of effective early warning systems—after all this, why are things no better?"

So asked Bob Geldof—the man behind Live Aid's fund raising effort for the victims of Ethiopia's 1984 famine—of the new, equally serious famine in the same country.

The answer to his question is the same as it was last time.

The most sickening reason why people starve in Ethiopia is that our leaders pay west European and US farmers huge sums to stop growing food.

At the recent negotiations on the EEC Common Agricultural Policy Britain and West Germany demanded cash payments to farmers to leave their fields fallow. That's their solution to butter and beef mountains.

Interest payments

Similar moves are being made in the US.

But this is not the only cause of starvation.

Centuries of direct colonial plunder which bled Africa dry have



been replaced with an equally crippling economic stanglehold by rich governments and western bankers.

The clearest example of this is the enormous interest payments Ethiopia must make every year.

In 1984 that amounted to around £65 million—only £8 million less than Live Aid raised.

The World Bank now estimates that the interest payments of the 17 most heavily indebted countries in Africa—which includes Ethiopia—will grow by three times between

1985 and 1990.

So, for every £1 of famine relief to Africa in 1985, the West took back £2 in interest and debt repayments. The last figure has almost certainly doubled since.

But Ethiopia and its neighbours are even less able to pay this money than they were two years ago.

They have been hit hard by the lunatic gyrations of the commodities markets.

Last year the average price of these countries' exports fell by a third compared with their imports.



STARVATION and hope last time. Now the problems are worse

This gave the largest drop in Africa's export earnings since 1950.

50 percent of many African countries' export earnings go straight to the banks.

New loans from organisations like the International Monetary Fund have made matters even worse. Last year the IMF actually received \$1 billion more from the continent than it lent. A similar result is expected this year.

So there is now less chance for Africa to do anything to improve its capacity to produce the most basic of human needs—food.

In those countries worst hit by the latest famines, food production has fallen by 5 percent every year since 1970. And their ability to break this pattern has weakened in the last two years.

The World Bank now estimates the 14 most "debt distressed" countries on the African continent

will need around \$3 billion next year alone just to pay off interest payments.

This figure is expected to rise to at least \$5 billion a year in the 1990s.

The likelihood of world leaders agreeing to such huge amounts of aid with the world system heading towards recession is nil.

World leaders are desperately trying to shore up their ever shakier system. World bankers are working out even more complex deals to ensure their loans are paid back in full.

Meanwhile the number of people facing starvation grows every year.

The World Bank estimated the number of Africans living in poverty, and therefore in danger of death through lack of basic foods will increase by 70 percent by the year 2000.

There can be no greater indictment on the absurdity of capitalism.

World food production rises by an average of 3 per cent a year

World population rises by an average of 2 per cent a year