

WE THINK

WILL THE CEASEFIRE BRING PEACE?

People all over Ireland breathed a sigh of relief when the IRA ceasefire was declared.

As Socialists we share the desire to see a peaceful settlement of the northern conflict.

But how close are we to that goal?

After twenty-five years the armed struggle has failed to achieve a British withdrawal and has done nothing to break down the sectarian divisions that exist among Catholic and Protestant workers.

However, we have to be careful not to join with the media

euphoria that suggests an IRA ceasefire will bring an end to the conflict.

The conflict in the North arose out of the sectarianism and violence meted out to the Catholic population by the state and later British troops, when they began marching for civil rights twenty five years ago.

Despite the ceasefire, the British Army, who have killed over three hundred people, mostly Catholics, and colluded with loyalist murder gangs, remain on the streets.

Discrimination against Catholics continues, with Catholics still two and a half times more likely to be unemployed than their Protestant counterparts.

Loyalist paramilitaries and bigots like Paisley continue to incite hatred against the Catholic population in the north.

Real peace can only be achieved with a complete withdrawal of the British troops who have propped up the sectarian state which gave rise to conflict in the first place.

The Peace Process

The IRA ceasefire represents a clear admission on the part of Republicans that the armed campaign has failed to bring about any solution to the problems in the North.

The Republicans are now looking to deals with John Major and Albert Reynolds to provide some settlement.

Socialist Worker has always opposed the tactic of armed struggle, however, talking to Major and Reynolds who are busy carrying out vicious attacks on workers in British Rail and Team Aer Lingus offers no alternative to working class people in the North or anywhere else.

The Irish and British governments and now the Republicans are moving towards a settlement that will leave the vast majority of Catholic and Protestant workers no better off than before.

The likely deal involving some sort of joint British and Irish authority will leave the problems of poverty and unemployment facing Catholic and Protestant workers untouched, nor will it address the repression and discrimination faced by Catholics.

The effect of such a deal will not be to put an end to the sectarianism that divides working class people in the north. Rather it will involve policing Catholics and Protestants apart, confining them to their own ghettos-leaving politicians to fight over which side should be forced to bear the brunt of cut-backs and redundancies.

Such a situation will only further fuel sectarianism and make it easier for loyalist murder gangs to incite hatred against Catholics.

A real solution in the North can only be achieved when Catholic and Protestant workers north and south stand as a class against the orange and green Tories, and the sectarian state that divides worker from worker.

The American Connection

No worker could hope for any prospect of a better future as a result of the efforts of Albert Reynolds or John Major.

But what about the Americans, does their mediation offer the way forward?

Senator Daniel Moynihan was one of the key figures on Capitol

Hill who got Adams a visa, and encouraged him to leave America "a wiser man than when he came."

What's Moynihan's record?

At the time of the appallingly cruel Indonesian invasion of East Timor in 1975, Moynihan was the US ambassador to the UN.

In a cable to Kissinger he boasted of "considerable progress" in thwarting calls of protest at the invasion. His pride came from the fact that the US encouraged the invasion to happen.

Moynihan has since been a vocal

supporter of the Israeli invasion of the Lebanon; of the arming of the Nicaraguan Contras and of military backup for dictatorships around the globe.

The fact is that the US government is far from being a champion of the oppressed. They are the world's strongest oppressors.

Witness Clinton's recent threats to invade Haiti, or the blockade of Cuba.

No deal that Clinton or Moynihan has a hand in will be of benefit to workers in Northern Ireland.

THE SOCIALIST ANSWER

We are told that what happens next in the North depends on other people - on the reaction of the loyalist paramilitaries, on how the British, Irish or American government reacts.

In fact what happens next depends on each one of us - North or South, Catholic or Protestant.

The kind of settlement reached depends crucially on the extent to which workers unite and fight together over the coming months.

As we go to print there is not yet a loyalist backlash.

The best way to prevent one is for workers to stand shoulder to shoulder.

In the months following the Shankill and Greysteel massacres, we had a glimpse of the powerful effect that united working class action can have on marginalising the sectarian bigots that run the loyalist death squads.

The peace rallies called by the unions at the start of November, which could have been even stronger, did succeed in stopping the killings for a while.

Since then, Citybus workers went on strike and forced the UVF to withdraw death threats against them.

The most impressive action was the magnificent strike of Harland and Wolff workers in protest at the murder of Maurice O'Kane, which had the specific aim of ensuring that Catholic workers in the yard knew they had the solidarity of their Protestant workmates.

This kind of action can be built on as part of the struggle to defend our living standards.

Everywhere you look in the North, there are workers fed up with low pay and lousy working conditions. There are young people sick of not being able to claim the dole until they are 18, angry at Tory attacks on single parents, and on the right to rave. Elderly people are furious that VAT on fuel is putting their lives at risk.

If we were to start a fightback against the hated Tory government the effect would be massive. When Protestant and Catholic workers are on strike and in solidarity with one another it is very difficult for loyalist murder gangs to spread their poisonous hatred for Catholics.

Just as important are the struggles in the South.

So long as the Southern government is influenced by millionaires and Bishops it offers nothing for workers, Catholic or Protestant, in the North.

We need to challenge the way that

Reynolds and Spring are helping the rich get richer while attacking the workers at TEAM.

There's only one solution that will permanently end the threat of violence, and that's when Ireland has the jobs, housing, hospitals and society that can end poverty and meet everybody's needs.

That means a united, socialist, Ireland.

Now is the time to join us in the fight for socialism.

Join Us

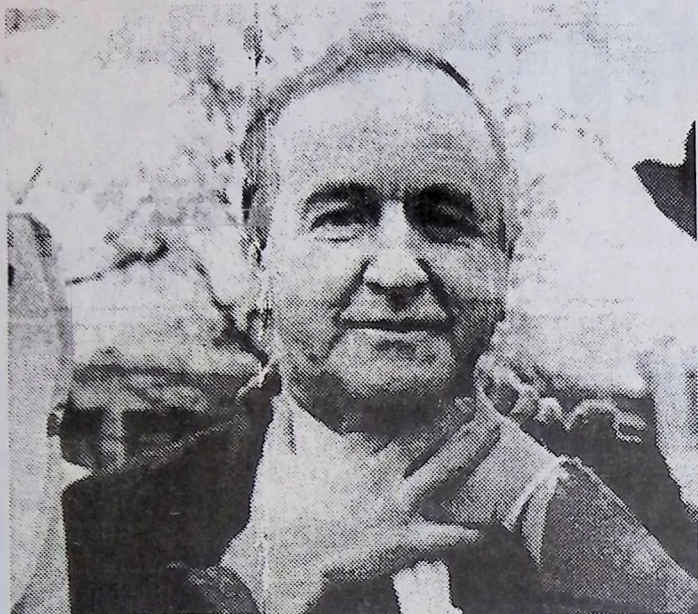
Ireland urgently needs a sizeable socialist party that can provide a real alternative. Join us today. Send this slip to: SWM PO BOX 103 Belfast 15 2AB or PO BOX 1648, Dublin 8. Or phone (01) 872 2682

Name.....

Address.....

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GREEDY HYPOCRITES!



£95,920 - Albert has some neck!

Top ministers and top civil servants have just awarded themselves a massive pay rise.

Reynolds and Spring have given themselves a 17% increase bringing them to £95,920 and £82,295 respectively.

For the top job at Aer Lingus the government has recommended an increase of £19,000, bringing the salary up to £81,750. The increase alone is more than most of the Team craftworkers earn in a year.

However, the chief executive of Aer Lingus Gary McGann, not satisfied with the government increases for semi-state executives, is on a personal contract and already earns well in excess of this figure.

Attorney General Harry Whelehan got a 17.6% rise to £76,300. Ireland's top civil servant now earns £82,295 - a rise of 17.6%

These hypocrites have some cheek after telling workers in Team Aer Lingus that they must accept a six-day week and a 16% cut in real pay or face the dole queue.

The pay hike for ministers and executives exposes government lies that there's no money to pay workers in Team, Irish Steel and other semi-states where further cuts and redundancies are planned.

The truth is that the government and their rich friends are trying to make workers pay while they use the "savings" to line their own pockets.

Its time workers in this country got organised to kick out these greedy hypocrites.

BEEF DISGRACE

Spring and Reynolds are no doubt hoping that the IRA ceasefire has drawn attention away from the Beef Tribunal.

But by going after journalist Susan O Keefe they have ensured that anger at this on-going scandal will continue.

With the plan to extradite the Granada journalist who made the programme uncovering the beef scandal, the Tribunal has become as big a scandal as the one it was set up to investigate.

Reynolds and Goodman, despite being knee deep in a scandal that involved over £80 million in tax evasion and £100 million in export credit insurance to Goodmans company, got away scot free.

Goodman's company was revealed by the report as having a policy of cheating the Exchequer by evading income tax and PRSI payments.

Goodman, who paid more in contributions to Fianna Fail party funds than he paid in tax, is now set to benefit from the tax amnesty on the tax he evaded.

Now the state intends to put Susan O Keefe, the journalist who exposed the corruption in the Beef industry, on trial and maybe send her to prison if she refuses to reveal her sources.

It is typical of this government's arrogance and cynicism that after paying judges and lawyers £35 million in the tribunal, the only person likely to go to jail is the person who uncovered the scandal in the first place.

This is a direct attack on the freedom of the press. It is also a deliberate attempt to intimidate anyone who wishes to expose the massive corruption at the top of Irish society in the future.

The Beef Tribunal shows that the real function of the law is to protect the interests of the rich not to provide justice for the mass

of ordinary people.

The National Union of Journalists should strike if any attempt is made to convict Susan O'Keefe and should be

supported by the entire trade union movement. Petitions in support of Susan O'Keefe are available from PO BOX 1648 DUBLIN 8.



NO CEASEFIRE AT TEAM

TEAM stewards are right to question the Labour Court recommendation. The proposals drastically reduce the conditions of all workers employed at TEAM Aer Lingus. They include:

*** PAY**
"The court does recommend a pay freeze (including increments due) to July, 1996"

***Overtime**
Is to be made compulsory: "employees must attend for work at the times required." And meal allowance "will be discontinued."

***Hours**
Are to lengthen. "For peak periods of up to 30 weeks p.a., staff may be rostered to alternative five and six day working weeks on the basis of an 88-

hour fortnight."

***Demarcation**
the court recommends "the total elimination of demarcation between all categories."

This vicious attack has to be opposed - not just for the sake of workers at TEAM but for all semi-state workers.

Rejecting the deal

is a serious step, and it means that the current protests will have to increase.

If SIPTU workers stand together with their colleagues in the Craft Unions, then the management and the government can be made to back down.

The airport is so important to the government, that strike action can

force a climbdown.

SOLIDARITY

Support the TEAM workers campaign.

Take a collection in your workplace.

Money can be sent to Aer Lingus Craft Unions Campaign Fund, c/o TEEU, 5 Cavendish Row, Dublin 1