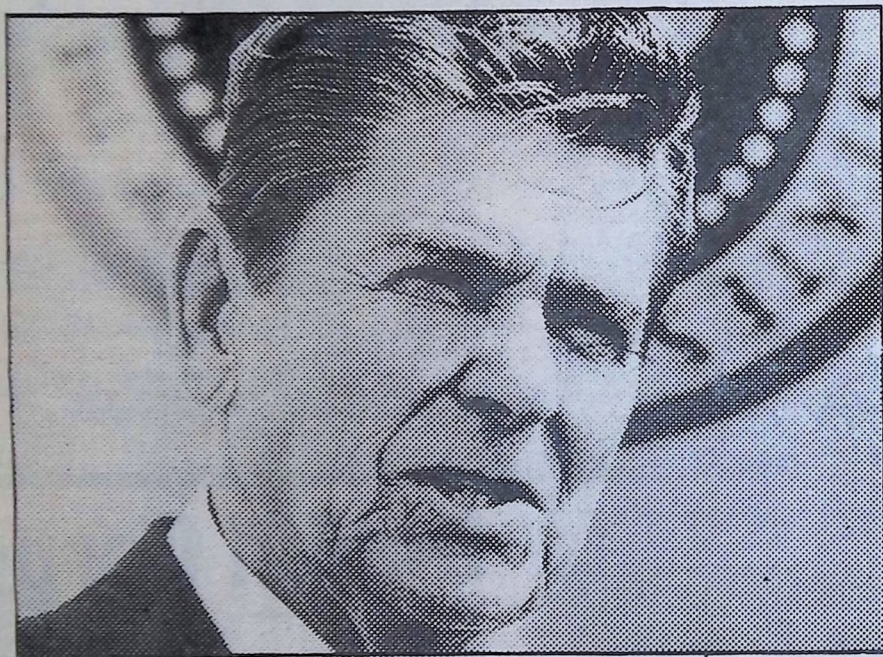


Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

REAGAN IS



THE REAL

TERRORIST

"Today we have done what we had to do. If necessary we shall do it again". So said mad-dog Reagan to justify his murderous bombing of Libya.

Margaret Thatcher said that it is "inconceivable" that she should refuse Reagan permission to use US bases in Britain for his murder missions.

Thatcher's connivance in the murder of men, women and children comes as no surprise to anti-imperialists in Ireland who know her record here.

The horror and revulsion to the bombing felt by every decent person shocked the EEC governments to the extent of throwing them all together in defence of the British role in Reagan's terrorism.

Peter Barry, normally so quick to condemn any act of violence, refused to condemn Reagan's. Through the media, the US and the EEC has started a campaign against Libya in an attempt to depersonalise the Libyan people and so to make it seem that killing Libyan children is not quite the same as killing Irish or American kids.

MURDER

Reagan's attack was, in fact, indiscriminate — the kind of bombing that the people he has the cheek to call "terrorists" would never dream of carrying out.

Anyone who saw the television

pictures of the men, women and children who were killed and maimed when their houses in Tripoli and Benghazi were bombed will know that the targets were not chosen for their military value. Even the French embassy in Tripoli was hit by mistake!

Yet such indiscriminate attacks on civilians are the stock-in-trade of American bullying of the regimes it doesn't like. The Bully's Diary inside

VIOLENCE

gives numerous examples of such attacks dating back to the Fifties.

Yet in spite of the American record Reagan insists that the attack was necessary to defend the US against "international terrorism".

The Irish government is, through the EEC, now committed to anti-Libyan measures. Any attempt to expel a single Libyan student from here must be fought and every socialist must resist the attempt to make it seem as if it was Libya that bombed America and not vice-versa.

On page four inside we explain what was really behind the attack. In the last analysis, however, the bombing of Libya leaves only one answer to the question "who is the real terrorist?" — the answer can only be REAGAN.

Cork: housing list lengthens as Corpo workers face dole

AT PRESENT there are about 3,000 families on the housing transfer list in Cork. There are many more living in sub-standard housing and flats in the NBA complexes of Mayfield, Togher and the Glen. Most of these NBA houses were built as a stopgap measure with a planned life of ten years.

In the Mahon peninsula where they have built much better quality housing there are between 15 and 20 houses lying idle of which most are already starting to fall into disrepair.

It has also come to light now that Cork Corporation plan on cutting back on the direct labour unit which has been responsible for the best built and finished houses in the city. This would mean a loss of 80 jobs. The Corpo is under fierce pressure from the working class areas to drop the service and rate charges so it is looking around desperately to make cuts.

In March, the Corporation members voted by a majority not to implement service charges which meant that the government could have put in a Commissioner to administer the authority for the next four years. Fear of losing their perks however, caused the so-called "Progressive

Democrats" to back up the Coalition parties to reverse that vote and strike a rate which, once again, will mean a cut in living standards for working class people in Cork.

While the direct labour unit remains under threat the private contractors are building 400 corpo houses at Lotabeg near Mayfield. It's the usual set up of low wages and price work with all sorts of cowboy operations. The corpo insists on taking the lowest price tender without any control over whether union labour is employed. So the corpo creates unemployment.

At the same time, the corpo is employing other workers on various schemes at £70 per week before tax and while all of these have union membership absolutely no union rights apply, there is no PRSI and then to top it all after one year's employment they are thrown back on the dole.

Cork Corporation workers must fight to hold on to jobs now. The recent insistence on balloting these workers whether to seek parity with Dublin Corpo workers on travelling and meal allowances only helped local government and union officials to dampen down militancy of a sizable number of workers who were prepared to fight. That

confidence must be rebuilt if there is any hope of saving jobs and building more and better houses.

Tenants, particularly those living in the NBA complexes must demand of the Assistant City Manager, Matt O Connor that he do something about the disgraceful squalor of the NBA houses. He had the cheek to say in the "Evening Echo" recently that people were refusing to transfer into certain areas like the Mahon. He should ask any of the tenants round where I live if they would transfer.

Matt O Connor lives in a highly prized middle class area of Bishopstown far removed from the sordidness of life in the NBA complexes of which he has lorded over all these years.

In the meantime he could do something about spending the £7 million that was promised to tart up the NBA complexes.

Tenants must continue to demand better housing, nurseries, sanitation, heating and properly fitted doors and windows. They should demand now a better life for the working class of this city for so long now wrecked by unemployment and poverty.

—EAMONN LEWSLEY
Mayfield tenant and Cork SWM



THE GOVERNMENT has proposed the amalgamation of the Schools of Art and Music with the Regional Technical College in Cork. This is designed specifically to centralise practically all Fine Art education in Dublin. The Crawford School of Art is the only independent provincial Art School left with relative control over its administration, it's budget and it's own students Union. An amalgamation would bring an abrupt end to this autonomy. Art students being a minority in this situation,

would receive little if any representation.

A merger would limit Cork's Fine Art Faculty which would gradually be replaced with commercially orientated courses. Fine Art is not considered economically profitable. However, the government refuses to acknowledge it's value in a social, cultural, educational and progressive context.

If an amalgamation takes place, obtaining degree status for Cork's Art School seems more remote than ever. It may also put the validity of our

diplomas in jeopardy and reduce international recognition of these certificates.

Finally this amalgamation endangers Irish Art standards by eliminating competition. It is also in danger of creating an exclusive institution of the National College of Art and Design in Dublin.

Students dependent on grants or who are self-supporting will be left with a second-rate education in Fine Art, due to lack of funding and representation.

Oil firms attack



THE BIG oil companies are a slithery lot. They used the oil shortage of the 70s to boost their already large profits into superprofits and OPEC took the blame in most people's minds.

Their propaganda about oil shortages was so good that people everywhere switched to using a lot less oil. People bought smaller, more economical cars while businessmen switched away from oil to things like coal, as the ESB did at Money Point power station.

North Sea oil came on stream. The result is that the oil markets are awash with the stuff that was supposed to have disappeared off the face of the earth by the year 1980.

The oil companies have achieved one of their aims which was to break the power of OPEC, the organisation of oil producing countries. In March, a meeting of OPEC broke up in disarray in Switzerland, as the world price of oil headed for \$10 a barrel from a one-time high of \$40.

The oil companies do not like any challenge to their massive economic power. In Ireland they constantly and persistently challenge the right of Irish workers to belong to a trade union.

Last year was a good year for exploration for the oil companies. BP found oil and gas in Block 48/18 and Gulf found oil and gas in Block 50/6. This year ten holes are planned but there are rumblings and threats coming from the oil companies through their agents, the FUE.

They have singled out two workers whom they say they will not employ despite the fact that these two men have had several years experience with different companies. They accuse them of a long list of industrial misbehaviour incidents but have no definite charges and neither of the two men were ever dismissed for anything.

The union reply has been that if the companies had a case against the men, then why did they not try to sack them when they were in work? Their case has been before an arbitrator who stated privately that he was not prepared to give anyone a life sentence of blacklisted. Oil rig workers are not saints and if the union makes any concession on these men then the employers will have a longer list of undesirables next year. The employers are, in effect, trying to get the union to sack its own members. Then they would have a clear field to get rid of unions altogether, as American companies have done elsewhere. It is difficult to see how a confrontation can be avoided if the employers insist on sticking their heels in.

Meanwhile, Labour Party Minister for Energy, Dick Spring is under pressure to make concessions to the oil companies in order that the oil may be brought ashore.

The fact is that the slump in prices means less interest in marginal operations such as Ireland. Gulf Oil have been ordered to stop all exploration by their parent company, Chevron. This leaves Tony O'Reilly and the Atlantic company free to put even more pressure on Spring.

—JIM BLAKE

Dublin Corpo shop steward witchhunt

LAST MONTH'S issue of Socialist Worker carried an interview with an SWM member who is a shop steward in Dublin Corporation. It was about the witchhunt by union officials of shop steward militants.

This situation is probably not unique, given the general attitude of union officials towards their members. But it is worth looking at as a concrete example of what is happening in one industry and how the militants are fighting it.

The credentials of five shop stewards were withdrawn without any consultation at all with the membership who elected them. Union officials did however, consult Corpo management seeking their assistance in the witchhunt. Now the ICTU has issued a circular (unsigned) urging members of its affiliated unions not to support the Local Authority Workers

(LAW) group in its current action on the travelling time issue.

Given the timing of this circular, it amounts to Congress supporting the witchhunt.

The response of the LAW group, in which 90% of shop stewards in the Corpo are active, has been to re-establish their base of support at shop floor level. This means that the witchhunt, although still potentially dangerous has lost any power, at least for the moment.

As a further measure to stop the witchhunt, a general Public meeting of all Local Authority Workers in the Dublin Co areas is to be organised by the LAW group in the near future.

This will be open to all workers, and will hopefully provide a badly needed alternative to the type of leadership our union officials offer.

Fight for divorce

ANYONE WHO hates the power of the Catholic Church in this country must welcome the forthcoming referendum on divorce. A "Yes" vote in that referendum will signal the weakening hold on the Church on the lives of the majority of working class people in the 26 Counties.

Increasingly, people want to have some say about what happens in their own lives and reject the Church's teachings which take away even that little bit of control over our personal lives which capitalism leaves us.

For over 70,000 separated people living in the South, their decision to leave a dead marriage has placed them in a kind of limbo—not married but unable to marry again.

Thousands of separated people are now in new, longterm relationships, often with children of the new union. Those children are, like their parents, in a legal limbo. A "yes" vote in the referendum will give those people who want to regularise the positions of their relationship and their children the

opportunity to do so.

The proposal to introduce some measure of divorce must, then, be supported and actively campaigned for. The Divorce Action Group has already set up Action Groups in many areas and they will need a lot more people on the ground to ensure that the arguments for divorce are carried in the face of the massive Church backed campaign against which will soon emerge from the Parish Halls.

Every socialist knows that it is crucial that this vote is won and won massively. Yet we must also be quite clear that its not even nearly enough. Socialists believe that marriages should be based solely and entirely on love, friendship and mutual respect.

The idea that two people should continue to share their lives for economic reasons, for fear of social disapproval or even for the sake of their children is to condemn them unfulfilled, unhappy and wasted personal lives. Worse, for many women it imprisons them in violent relationships where they are subject to frequent beatings and

regular rape.

We believe that it should be as easy to end a marriage as it is to enter into it. This is not to say that men, or indeed women, should be able to walk away from their responsibilities to the children of a relationship. But then, it is not your children that you no longer love and wish to divorce but your spouse.

The rights of children in a divorce should always be top of the list—and usually are.

If marriages were viewed in the way that socialists try to view them—as freely entered into relationships, not as a binding contract by which each partner becomes the property of the other—then there would be a lot less unhappy women, children and men in the world.

Children, too, suffer in loveless marriages. They never get to see the joy of a loving relationship between adults and have to put up with frequent bouts of tension and arguments between their parents. But children, like most adults, have accepted the Catholic and capitalist view of marriage—that it is forever or

else there is something horribly wrong.

The proposed change in the law, while it is a clear step forward, goes nowhere towards changing that view of marriage and divorce. The insistence on a five year separation, before a divorce is granted, is an example of the "divorce is a disaster which must be avoided for as long as possible" approach.

But the details of the proposed law are not much of a hindrance to divorce for most working class couples as is the economics of divorce.

Today, the "traditional" family in which the husband is the sole breadwinner and the wife stays home to take care of the children is a luxury few can afford and many married women work outside the home, at least on a part-time basis.

But even with this extra money coming in, most working class families find it difficult to make ends meet. How much more difficult then to contemplate separating and setting up two homes when they can hardly afford one. For most couples who don't actually hate each other, the solution is to soldier on until a growing hatred forces them to separate.

All the legal dealings in the proposed divorce legislation will add just one more insurmountable obstacle to many

couples—the only one to profit from such dealings will, of course be the lawyers.

There will be much talk over the coming weeks about the economics of divorce in relation to women. The Responsible Society and Family Solidarity will tell us that it is women and children who will lose out. For women who have accepted the right-wing ideas that "a woman's place is in the home", this will be true until she can get back into the workforce, or come to some satisfactory arrangement with her ex-husband.

But we must very clear on what divorce means for women: divorce available free and on demand is absolutely necessary if women are ever to be liberated. Because the roots of women's oppression lie in the family, any break with the capitalist notions of the "sacredness" of the family is a step forward on the road to women's liberation.

For too long, these oppressive ideas have been reinforced by the rule of the Catholic Church in this country. The divorce referendum will give us all a chance to challenge those ideas at the same time as giving the power of the Church a good hammering. We urge all our readers and supporters to join the campaign for divorce and take advantage of this opportunity.

High rates - lots of cuts

ECONOMIC CRISIS manifests itself at national level—in large numbers of unemployed, worsening wages and working conditions, and cuts in education and health services.

This is precisely what has been happening in Waterford over the last four to five years.

Each year the City Council has made cutbacks which have slashed housing maintenance programmes, services for the handicapped and the elderly, care and maintenance of amenity areas, library facilities cleansing services as well as as cuts in grants to community sporting and social and cultural organisations.

Cuts in services have brought with them huge job losses. One quarter of all those employed on general municipal services—masons, carpenters, plumbers and general operatives have lost their jobs since 1980.

In this same period it has been estimated that Councillors from all parties (with the exception of the Waterford People's Party) have benefitted from the £100,000 of public money spent on foreign junkets.

Michael Doody, the City Manager, has admitted that

the cuts over the last few years are draconian and freely states "The council has reached a critical point and future reductions are not possible without actual abandonment of some services altogether".

His solution is to bring in water and other service charges. When capitalism enters crisis it always tries to shift the burden of solving it onto the shoulders of ordinary working people at both local and national level.

Charges for services would affect those without jobs and others on lower incomes much more than the rich.

Fortunately the working people of Waterford, spear-headed by community organisations and others linked to the trade union movement forced the City Manager and Council to drop all service charges, but not before a bitter battle which saw trade unionists dragged before the courts for defaulting on payment of water-rates.

It is interesting to note, that although the business community in Waterford owe the Corporation a staggering £390,000 in rate arrears, none of them have ever been threatened in the same way. Obviously there's one law for

the rich and another for us.

In the past, local councils raised funds for services through rates etc. But in 1977 Fianna Fail got to power by promising to abolish Domestic Rates. They were to increase income centrally by broadening the tax base and hiking up basic tax rates to compensate for loss of income at local level. The plan was that central government would refund local authorities through grants and subsidies.

Although the rates increased, needless to say, neither Fianna Fail nor Coalition ever refunded councils fully. It is estimated that Waterford City Council should have got £3 million from central funds under this scheme since 1980.

Every year in the run up to the annual estimates meeting there is a ritualistic public agonising over cuts in services by the local councillors.

"Will they—won't they" strike a rate?" scream the papers. Invariably they do at the eleventh hour meetings.

The excuse in Waterford this year for striking a rate and accepting more cuts, was that the money saved on ESB bills and oil, (because of the fall in international prices) has enabled the councillors to curb the worst excesses of the proposed cuts.

Nothing else points up more clearly the futility of socialists trying to change the system by getting themselves elected to local councils.

Since the early 70s the Workers Party have had representatives on Waterford City Council and have been unable to do anything about the job losses and cuts which have gone on apace over the last few years.

Even if socialists had a majority on the council and the rate was not struck, the Council would have been disbanded and run by a commissioner.

Not only that, but as the

Militant experience in Liverpool proved, this strategy ends up getting socialism a bad name.

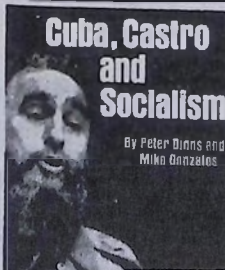
That's why SWM argues that working people should rely on their own ability, militancy, organisational and industrial strength, to ensure that proper services and council jobs are maintained.

Over the years the Waterford Branch of the SWM have been trying to hammer home this message by leaflets press statements, meetings and demonstrations outside City Council meetings. Time and time again the Council has shown that working class people cannot rely on anyone but ourselves.

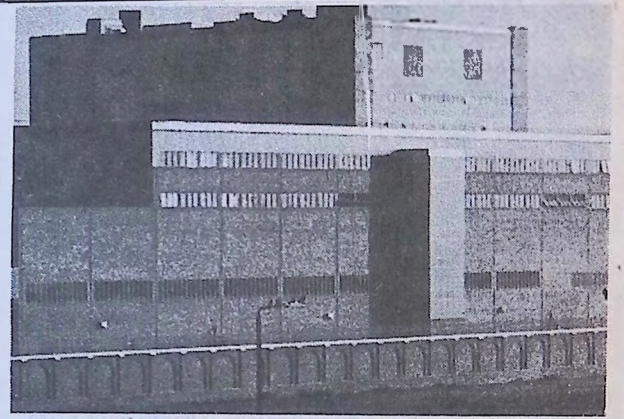
Waterford SWM



Michael Doody



£1.20 post free from SWM PO Box 1648 Dublin 8



High tech job loss

RUPERT MURDOCH and the rest of the British newspaper bosses have brought New Technology in the print and newspaper industry into the news of late.

In the city by the Lee, print workers have already learnt what new technology on the bosses' terms can mean.

The Cork Examiner pushed through new technology in printing 15 years ago when they moved from traditional hot metal printing to phototypesetting and offset litho printing.

They got an IDA grant towards that and since then they have moved on to instal a Linotype System Six integrated computer system.

This has meant the reduction in the number of workers from 476 to 416 principally through voluntary redundancies. The agreement on this was chiefly with the NGA since it is mainly typesetters who have lost their jobs.

The computer system takes over the traditional skills of the compositor and the engraver. Photographs and print can be stored in the computer and manipulated in such a way as to fill each page. It means that journalists can now type their material

directly into the computer producing laid out pages without the print workers.

More redundancies are certain in the future in what is essentially a cost cutting exercise.

The result is that the Crosbie family make more profits (wage costs have already been reduced from 55% of total cost to 45%) and workers get pawned off with what amounts to a few quid redundancy.

The Crosbie family are in a better position than ever to push their own business politics through their three newspapers, Cork Examiner Evening Echo and the weekly Waterford News and Star. An example of this was when they attacked the recent strike of ESB workers with an editorial "Despicable Pickets".

Technology in itself is a good thing in that it can lighten loads and do away with drudgery. Unfortunately in a capitalist society it is the bosses who gain the benefits and workers who suffer. If it could be made clear that the new technology was going to mean no job losses then workers would welcome it with open arms.

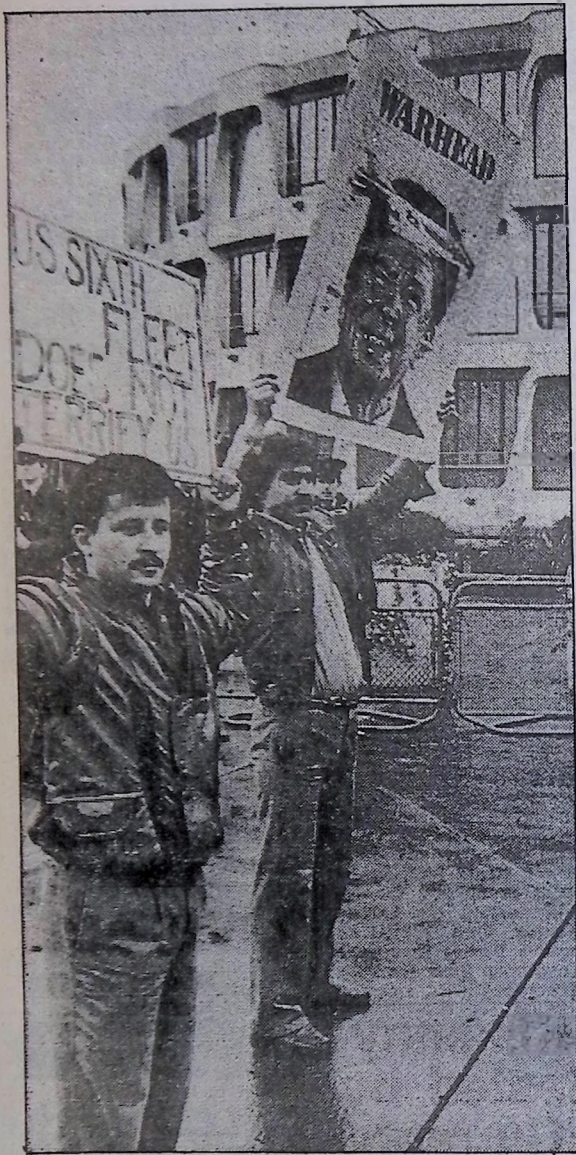
—JIM BLAKE



Davy Walsh and Paddy Gallagher

INTERNATIONAL

Why Reagan bombed Libya



"Today we have done what we had to do. If necessary we shall do it again". With these words, Reagan tried to justify his murderous bombing raid on Libya. Here, GORETTI HORGAN looks at Libya and why the U.S. and its allies hate it.

A GASP OF HORROR was the response of most workers to news of the U.S. bombing of Libya. That horror was heightened when it emerged that most of the targets hit were not even military and that most of the people killed and injured were civilians, including small children.

This reaction was despite a relentless campaign over recent years to portray Libya as a haven for terrorists and its leader, Col. Gaddafi, as the "godfather of terrorism".

This portrayal of Libya is mainly the result of Gaddafi's consistent support for the oppressed Palestinian people since he took power in Libya in Sept. 1969.

Libya had been granted formal independence from Italy in 1951. It was then ruled by King Idris, a corrupt tribal leader. At that time, the country was one of the poorest in the world. Nine out of ten of its people were illiterate, the child mortality rate was massive, poverty was widespread.

In the late Fifties, vast reserves of oil were discovered. Libya became a fabulously wealthy country, among the world's most important oil producers. But none of this wealth went to relieve the poverty of the country. The mass of the people continued to live in huts and shacks as the profits of the

multinational oil companies soared and King Idris' swiss bank accounts bulged.

Britain and the US maintained their military bases. Tripoli had the biggest US air base outside of the States.

When Gaddafi and his fellow officers took power, they immediately expelled the British and American troops, as well as 30,000 Italian former colonists.

NATIONALISED

In 1971 the multinational oil companies' major assets were nationalised by Gaddafi and the state took effective control of the rest. The wealth brought in by this went to build houses, hospitals and schools.

Illiteracy was virtually abolished and the health care standards brought up to those of developed countries.

All these reforms came from above, with even the growing working class playing a passive role. Even today, as the fall in oil prices plays havoc with the Libyan economy and austerity measures are imposed on the working class, a visitor to Libya could not but be impressed by the massive improvement in the standard of living of the mass of people which Gaddafi's regime has brought about.

But it is not for this reason that Gaddafi is hated. He has done no more than many other Third World leaders. No. The hatred for Libya and Gaddafi is because of their continued and consistent support for the

Palestinian people against the racist state of Israel and its imperialist backers — the US and Britain.

Gaddafi is an Arab nationalist. He believes that all the Arab states should unite but that this cannot happen as long as the existence of the Israeli state excludes the Palestinian people from their homeland. So he supports the PLO in their struggle against Israel.

Even when all the other Arab states were willing to compromise with Israel, he stood firm against imperialism. When the PLO were expelled by other Arab leaders, Libya gave them shelter and aid.

And, quite logically, this support is extended to include any organisation which is fighting those imperialist states which, through their support for Israel, are responsible for the oppression of the Arab people.

HUMILIATED

This is why, for example, Gaddafi supports the IRA, who he sees as "striking and striking hard at the power which has humiliated the Arabs for centuries". (Support for the IRA was, in fact, dropped in the mid-70s when Libya became friendly with Britain but was resumed when relations became hostile again).

It's obvious then, why Gaddafi is called the "god father of terrorism". But the meaning of terrorism when applied to the PLO is easily called into question when you consider the massacre of thousands of women, children

Demonstration outside US Embassy on April 20th

and old men in the refugee camps of Sabra and Chatila.

In the three days of those massacres, the Israelis were responsible for the deaths of more Palestinians than the total number of victims of the PLO in the previous three DECADES! Yet it is the PLO which is called terrorist.

The bombing of Libya leaves only one question to be asked — who is the "mad dog" or the "godfather of terrorism" now?

The bully's diary

1953 IRAN: US sponsored the overthrow of the radical Mossadeq regime and replaced it with the murderous Shah regime.

1954 INDOCHINA: After the defeat of the French, Eisenhower states his intentions. 'Indochina and the whole of South East Asia are essential to the US both for strategic and military reasons.'

1954 GUATEMALA: Liberal president Arbenz removed by US invasion.

1958 LEBANON: Marines invade.

1961 CUBA: Abortive US-sponsored Bay of Pigs invasion.

1962 PERU: US backs army coup.

1964 BRAZIL: US backs right wing coup to set up regime using widespread torture.

1965 VIETNAM: Civilian targets in North Vietnam bombed as US drawn into full-scale war.

1973 CHILE: US backs military overthrow of democratically elected leftist Allende regime. Tens of thousands murdered and tortured by Pinochet.

1974: By now pro-US dictators installed in most Latin American countries. Seventy thousand Latin American officers have attended US training centres.

1983 GRENADA: American invasion. According to the Council of Hemispheric Affairs Grenada now has 'the worst human rights record in the Caribbean'.

TODAY: Aiding right wing Contras in Nicaragua and South African-backed UNITA in Angola. The US has ground troops in 69 countries around the world to back up the doctrine adopted by the House of Representatives in 1965: 'The US or any other American country has the right of unilateral intervention in order to keep Communism outside the Western Hemisphere.'

Reagan's chief of police in the Middle East

ISRAEL is the USA's favourite country in the Middle East.

Almost a third of all US foreign aid is sent to Israel. The huge grants the state receives, half from the US, amount to more per person than three times the average Indian income.

The country is also the largest recipient of US military assistance. This amounted to an astonishing \$2,798 million in 1983 alone.

In return the Israeli army is the USA's number one police force in the Middle East. Israel is also a major source of arms to countries too blood-stained for even the USA to supply directly.

It supplies missiles, fighters, transporters and small arms to South Africa. It supplied the former dictator of Nicaragua, Somoza, with arms. It sends Pinochet in Chile anti-aircraft missiles and fighter aircraft.

Other clients, such as Honduras, Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala and

Paraguay, make Israel's arms industry the second largest in the third world.

Israel's production of its own weapons systems, rather than arms produced under licence, is the largest apart from the major powers. In total, Israeli arms production was last year worth \$242 million at 1975 prices.

★ **TERRORISM** in the Middle East began with the two million people thrown out of their homes and their country almost four decades ago.

To stop the mass wave of Jewish refugees from the war landing in North America—and to guarantee the defence of its interests in the Middle East—the US backed the setting up of the new state of Israel.

There was one major problem however. The area chosen had for centuries been Palestine. Two million Palestinians had been born there.

This didn't stop the US and Britain conniving to support the minority of Jewish im-

migrants prepared to fight for the establishment of a Zionist state.

Between 1947, when the Israeli state was set up, and 1949 some 800,000 Palestinians were driven out of their homes by a combination of terrorism, military action and the sheer weight of implicit threats of violence.

The most horrific event was the massacre of 250 Palestinian men, women and children at the village of Deir Yassin by the Irgun, a terrorist gang led by the future prime minister of Israel, Begin.

Since then Israel has defended western big business interests in the area with that same concoction of violence and threats. It has used every horrible weapon at hand to do this, including cluster bombs, phosphorous bombs and napalm. It even carried out the first ever aircraft hijack in 1954.

The 1982 invasion of Lebanon is perhaps the most vivid example of Israel's barbarity. Not only did Israeli forces prevent Red Cross food and medical relief getting through to their victims. They actually bombed clearly

marked hospitals throughout the country.

'The death and mayhem caused by 'precision bombing' on Sidon, Tyre and Beirut was staggering. Thousands were killed—up to 90 percent of them civilians.

As an American nurse working in Beirut at the time said, 'They dropped bombs on everything, including hospitals, orphanages and, in one case, a school bus carrying 35 young schoolgirls.'

The situation got so bad in Beirut that at one time the Red Cross reported there 'were only 130 beds available' in the whole city. Staff at the American University Hospital were admitting only 'those who look the most salvageable'.

But the most horrific example of the Israeli army's terror was its connivance in the horrific massacres at the Sabra and Chatila refugee camps.

Given such barbarity there can be little wonder Palestinians turn to terrorist tactics to fight back.

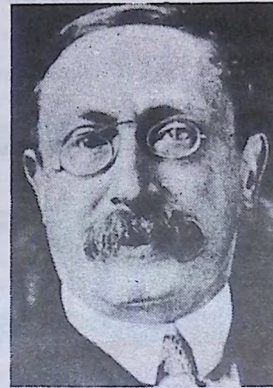
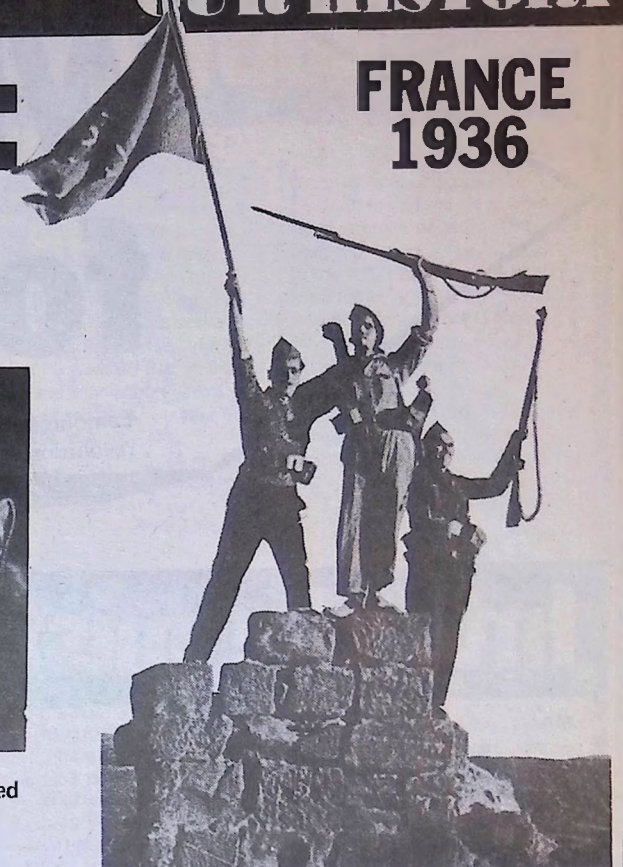
Until the Palestinian problem is solved the Middle East will continue to be an area of instability, brutality, repression, violence and terrorism.



Israeli terror in Lebanon, 1982

FRANCE
1936

Betrayal and defeat: the Popular Front



LEON BLUM: He argued against sending International Brigades to Spain

signing the agreement with the bosses, and pressing for a return to order, the Popular Front had embarked along the road of legality, to which it would now itself fall victim.

This is exactly what happened. In 1937 Blum tried to stem the outward flow of capital from France and curb speculation. The French bourgeoisie would have none of it. The radical Chautemps who had already been Prime Minister before the Popular Front became Prime Minister again. The old gang was back.

By 1939, when the second world war broke out, a large section of the French ruling class saw the main threat as being at home and the Nazi invasion the lesser evil.

Daladier who had been part of the Popular Front now imposed a ban on his erstwhile allies in the CP. The price of unity had indeed been high—for the left.

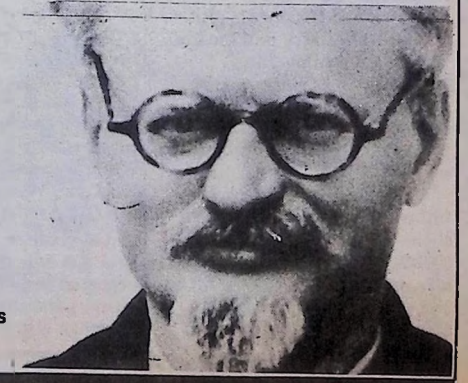
The lessons of France 1936 should be remembered 50 years on. The OP were wrong to propose unity across classes to fight fascism. Not only did they fall victim to that strategy, but also, to maintain unity with the "progressive" middle-class they had to stamp on working class militancy. Thorez showed the true parliamentarianism of the CP when he said in answer to militant workers in occupation, "No, everything is not possible. Taking hold of the factories and putting them under workers' control is not on... The main slogan of the Party remains, Everything for the Popular Front. Everything through the Popular Front". The working class movement, to which the CP so often referred meant only one thing—

voting. Parliament was everything. The factories were a time bomb that the CP did not want to alight.

Equally those militants who tried to pursue workers' action outside Parliament, as long as they had no political independence from either the SFIO or the CP, were reduced to impotence within those parties. Without an independent organisation that proposed workers' occupations and workers' councils as the way forward, they were unable to lead the workers movement forward towards taking power.

1936 in France showed just how futile are attempts of a left-wing minority to take over a Labour Party. They ended up being taken over by it. In 1936 at the peak of the workers' struggle, Pivert even conceded to join Leon Blum in arguing against sending international Brigades to Spain to fight the fascists.

It was a sorry position for the "Proletarian Left" to find itself in. Even the left had harboured illusions in what the Popular Front could achieve. Trotsky was right when he wrote at the time: "To pretend that [the Popular Front] are capable of proclaiming war against the 200 families who rule France is to dupe the people shamelessly. The 200 families do not hang suspended in mid-air but are the crown of the system of finance capital. This issue here is not a struggle of the 'nation' against a handful of magnates... but the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. It is a question which can only be resolved by revolution. The strikebreaking conspiracy of the Popular Front has become the chief obstacle on this road."



LEON TROTSKY: He argued for a united front of workers' organisations against fascism

the economic crisis and nationalisation of the Bank of France. Above all, in the words of the Socialist Party leader Leon Blum, it was a programme for "Parliamentary majority" and a "programme of Government". It was an electoral platform. In stark contrast to the militant mass workers' action developing in the factories, it proposed the safe channelling of anti-fascists into the election of a "popular" government.

It was successful. In May 1936 Leon Blum formed his government of Radicals and Communists on the tide of an electoral victory of the left.

The Popular Front had achieved what it set out to do, get a majority in the French Assembly.

For French workers though, things were just starting. The Popular Front had unleashed the expectations of millions of workers who sought far more than a change of ministers' faces. A great strike wave, such as France had never seen, unfurled over all France.

The steel workers in Le Havre, the building and chemical industry, textile mills and department stores experienced sit-ins, occupations, strikes. It involved some 2 million French workers.

OFFICIAL

"It's as if workers have been buried in a grave until now. Today the grave has been opened and they've seen the light"—was how one CGT official saw it. "Like soldiers on leave from a war" was how another commentator described the mood of occupations in the factories "where there was sheer joy at refusing to be mere instruments of production". Or as Trotsky put it, the workers action "broke through trade union craft and local bonds, raised beyond them the demands, hopes and will of the whole proletariat".

Here then was the power to defeat fascism and the system that bred it—if the left were prepared to lead.

But, at the very time that the wave of mass action swept through the factories, in the Matignon Palace in Paris, Blum was sitting down with the big bosses of French industry, working out a deal to end the strike.

On June 4, less than a month after taking office, the Popular Front government achieved what the factory occupations were rejecting—an agreement between union leaders and the bosses.

Concessions were made. 2 weeks paid holidays, a 40 hour week and an overall rise of 12% was conceded. Trade union membership was recognised a right as long as trade union activity remained within the law.

"Great reforms became the only means of avoiding bloody revolution", as Leon Blum neatly put it.

The Communists were equally as eager to see the end of the strike action. Workers with the CP and the unions who pressed for more strike action, threatened the very

more moderate printers in the CGT refused to print the papers. One million workers were on strike. Trade Union leaders and the left political parties were amazed at the extent of the strike action.

They were stung into action. They proposed a Popular Front to consist of the Socialist Party (SFIO), the Communist Party and the Radical Party—a liberal pro-capitalist party which drew its support from the lower-middle class, shopkeepers, some lawyers and civil servants. This Popular Front would lead the fight against the right. But in order to preserve unity with the Radical Party, the CP had to give guarantees of moderation.

Previously, the CP had refused unity with anyone—least of all the socialist Party who they regarded as "social fascists". This position had been handed down from the Stalinist Comintern—the International committee of all Communist Parties—at a time when Stalin advocated isolationism in Russia. Now, however the line had changed—to a total about-turn. Russia was under threat from rising fascism in Germany. Now it was unity at any price. The French CP, worried by rising militancy within its ranks, was only too pleased to accept the new line.

By allying itself with more moderate pro-capitalist forces to the right of the Party, they could isolate the left. By January 1936, the Popular Front had proposed its electoral programme. It was vague and certainly not socialist. It was careful not to alienate middle-class support. It called for an end to fascism, for civil liberties, for peace through negotiation, measures to end

The response to that call was immense. All-out strikes in state-owned industry and construction, even taxis. 90% out in the post office, 75% out in the steel industry, 70% in the public service. Even the

RESPONSE

The response to that call was immense. All-out strikes in state-owned industry and construction, even taxis. 90% out in the post office, 75% out in the steel industry, 70% in the public service. Even the



■PARIS 1936: By July six million workers were on strike

Marnie Holborow examines the Popular Front in France 1936 and shows how the power of the workers was betrayed.

BY THE mid-30s the world slump was hitting France hard. Companies were closing down and Banks going bust. Steel production was down by 40%. Widespread unemployment stalked France. In 1935 a record 400,000 workers were on the dole.

Crisis-ridden France became the fertile ground for fascist ideas—especially among the thousands of ex-servicemen who harked back to the first world war. The Green shirts in the country and the Croix de Fen in the towns began a campaign of anti-semitism, calls for strong government, of rampant nationalism. On February 6 1934 they came out on a demonstration in Paris numbering tens of thousands. The government reeled in shock. The liberal Daladier government fell.

Meanwhile there were ripples in the trade union movement calling for the defiance of the fascist threat. Communist party members went ahead with a counter-demonstration on February 9 banned by the new Doumergue government. The Confederation General du Travail, the biggest trade union with the support of some of the Socialist Party called for a general strike on Monday 12, criticising the complicity of the government in the fascist threat and calling on workers "to show their own power" against the fascists.

Which way forward for the Irish left?

Eamonn McCann looks at the new left wing party founded by John Mitchell and Kieran Allen assesses the prospects for building a revolutionary party today.

Into the mist with Mitchell

TO MANY workers who want to see real change in Irish politics the idea of a new, 32-County socialist party with strong trade union backing seems very attractive.

Trade union leader John Mitchell called a conference in February to lay the basis for the establishment of such a party.

The initiative followed a motion passed at the 1984 conference of Mitchell's union—the Irish Distributive and Allied Trades Union. This had pointed out that none of the existing major parties represented the needs of workers at a political level.

When you look at the "old" parties, the case for a new left-wing party seems pretty strong.

The Labour Party has lost any credibility it ever had through its abject subservience to Fine Gael in Coalition.

The Workers' Party divides its time between low-level campaigns on issues like water rates, extolling the virtues of the Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe and, in effect, backing the Brits in the North. While Sinn Fein doesn't even claim to be based on specifically working class interests and, despite its "left-turn", appeals to nationalists of all classes to join together in "patriotic" unity.

So John Mitchell's appeal for serious socialists to come together and begin to build an all-Ireland, independent left-wing party struck a chord with quite a few people.

However, the conference in February revealed the enormous difficulties involved.

About seventy people attended, mostly from Dublin but with a few each from Waterford, Cork, Sligo, Limerick and Drogheda, plus a couple from Derry and Belfast. They were told by John Mitchell that to become really viable and to be able to compete with other parties they would need a membership of about 1,000.

Now there are two very different ways a tiny group of socialists can build up into a 1,000-strong organisation. One is by making politics very broad and vague so as to be able to cast the net wide and bring in

people who have all sorts of disagreements but who do agree with one another that a mass-based socialist party is, in general terms, a good thing.

The second option is to be very hard and clear-cut about your politics from the outset. This will mean that you recruit relatively slowly but that those you do recruit will be in very firm agreement with one another and the organisation will be solidly-based.

Those around the new Campaign for an All-Ireland Socialist Party (CAISP) have gone for the first option.

At one level, this is very understandable. Obviously any new party will want to grow quickly rather than slowly. And many workers are understandably off-put by what appears to be the nit-picking and dogmatism of small left-wing groups which preach obscure ideas with religious intensity but which seems quite irrelevant to the great majority of rank and file workers.

But when we look at the policies on which the CAISP will campaign we can see the fatal weakness of the "broad" approach.

The group's economic policy consists of a call for a "large, competent, commercial public sector" over which "workers must have direct influence". It goes on to say that "Jobs must be given priority over the elimination of budget deficits or the repayment of interest on foreign borrowings".

There's nothing wrong with this as far as it goes—but it doesn't go any further than the Workers' Party or Sinn Fein or sections of the Labour Party. And—as with the policies of those parties—it's very far from clear what exactly it means. What does workers having "influence" over the public sector mean? Full workers' control? Or a couple of workers' representatives on the board, as at present? Or workers' "representatives" in the Dail having an input?

On taxation, the CAISP says: "A new party must be prepared not only to tax the farmers and the self-employed but must also be willing to

depart from the conventional attitude to foreign debt and to control the export of profits".

Again, nothing here that we haven't heard before. And what departing from the "conventional attitude" to foreign debt and profit-export means is anybody's guess.

On the North, the CAISP wants a British withdrawal and "a united sovereign state".

Very good, but it is nowhere stated whether the group wants all nationalists to band together to create a united capitalist state first (as Sinn Fein does) or whether it takes the Marxist view that only a socialist

Ireland can be "sovereign" anyway and that we should therefore aim directly for socialist Ireland.

On "social policy" we are told: "A new party would favour liberal social policies and would eliminate discrimination against women and would cater for travellers and other oppressed minorities".

There's not a word in that that Garret Fitzgerald would take exception to. No mention of abortion, no commitment to the separation of Church and State, nothing about the need for secular education.

On each of these issues the

new group, anxious not to alienate any potential pocket of support, has devised such a fudged and loosely-formulated set of policies that it's not clearly committed to anything much. On the crucial area of economic policy, for example, it could accommodate people who are out for the nationalisation under workers' control of manufacturing industry, the banks and the finance houses and people who agree 100 percent with Dick Spring.

There is already a party which caters to this wide constituency. It is the Labour Party.

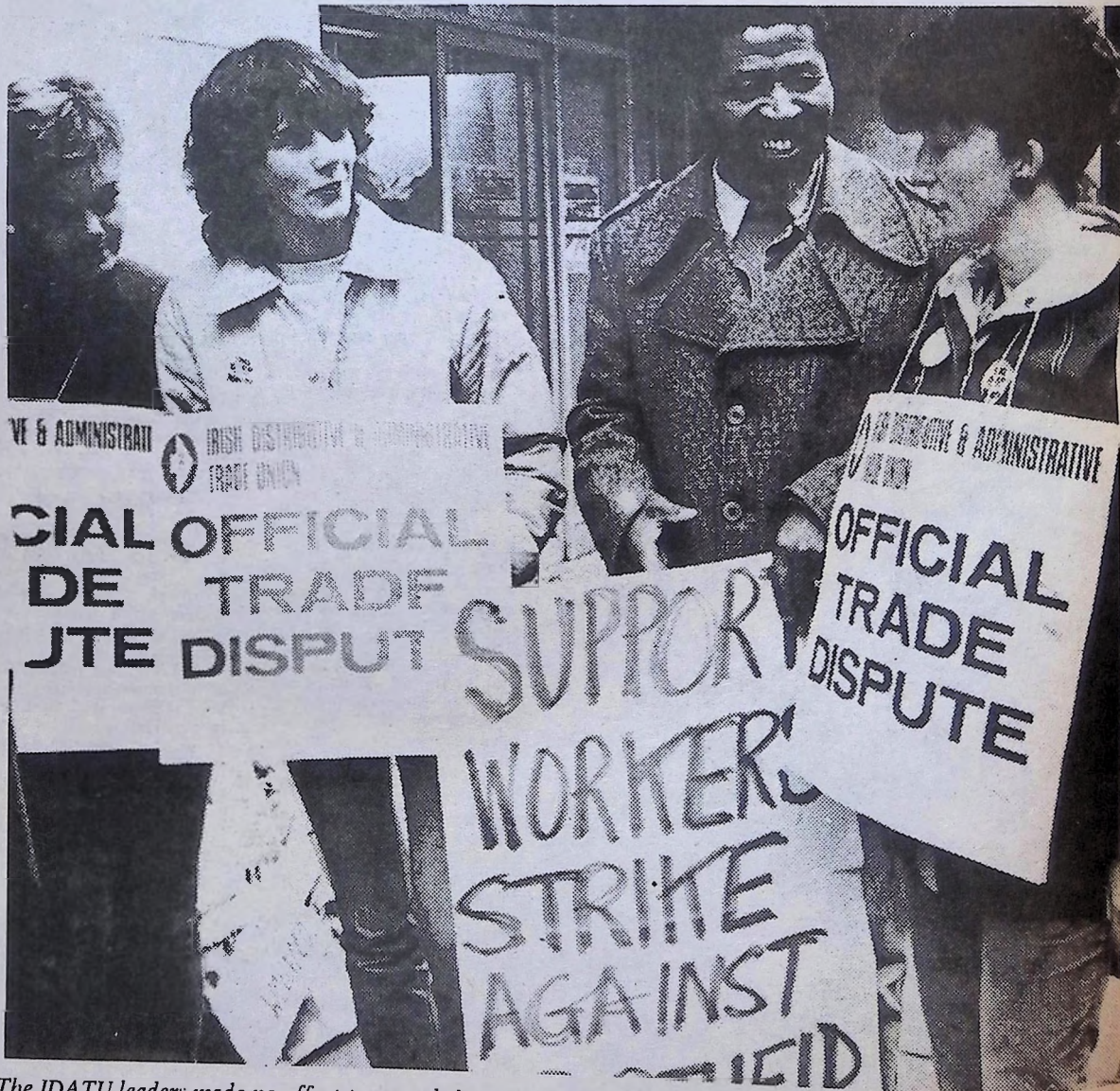
All this is very reminiscent of a previous attempt to set up a new socialist party which

would avoid both the all-class nationalism of traditional Republicanism and the sell-outs of Labour. This was the Socialist Labour Party, established in 1977 largely on the initiative of Noel Browne and ATGWU leader Mattie Merrigan.

The SLP attracted a core of hundreds of people to its founding conference rather than the sixty who in February launched the CAISP. But precisely because it set out with a series of leftish and liberal attitudes, rather than a sharp socialist programme, it quickly degenerated into a chaotic debating society and by the early eighties had collapsed entirely.

There seems little point repeating this exercise.

Only on the North does the CAISP take a line which differs fundamentally from the line the



The IDATU leaders made no effort to spread the Dunnes strike to other stores in the chain.

The road to revolution

THE "OFFICIAL" left in Ireland is on the decline. In 1968, the Labour Party alone commanded 22 percent of the popular vote. Now it has to contend with the Workers Party for something less than 12 percent of the vote, according to opinion polls.

Votes are only a rough indicator of the state of the parties. Far more serious is their appalling record of treachery. Neither the Labour Party or the Workers Party support the fight against the Orange state and the British army. Instead they have backed repressive measures that socialists in any other country would consider a disgrace. (One simple example: the leaders of the WP and LP could not support the mildest campaign to release Nicky Kelly from prison lest they gave aid to republicanism.)

In this situation hundreds of genuine socialists are desperately looking for an alternative. Some of these will have seen through the all class politics of republicanism. Many will even consider themselves revolutionary socialists. What they require is an answer to the question: how can an open, independent Marxist organisation in Ireland be built today?

You need first to recognise that revolutionaries will always be a minority of the working class—until the moment of revolution. Often a tiny minority. There is a simple reason. The ideas of society—including the ideas of most workers—are predominantly the ideas of the rich. Oil speculator and press baron, Tony O'Reilly, will command far more influence among workers through the Independent and Sunday World, until their own experience of mass struggle teaches them different.

This does not mean that revolutionaries are destined to remain a helpless minority. They face two central tasks immediately.

Firstly, in the face of this dominance of "bourgeois ideas", they have to clarify their own ideas and theories. In practice that means carving out a clear Marxist tradition against competing ideas and traditions

within the working class.

The best and most successful example to follow is that of the Russian revolutionaries. In 1883 the Emancipation of Labour group was formed by George Plekhanov under conditions of terrible repression. It had only a handful of members. The first publication of the group was called "Our Differences". It wasn't an attack on the Tsar or even on capitalism! The differences referred to were with the politics of the Narodnik group! This was a far larger movement that looked to guerilla struggle among the peasantry as the way to overthrow the Tsar and smash capitalism.

These polemics were key to winning over a generation of revolutionaries to Marxism. Indeed the ideas developed then were the cement that held the Bolshevik party together until victory in 1917.

One hundred years later, Irish revolutionaries face a very similar task. The struggle against bigotry in the North combined with the abysmal failures of Southern Irish reformism has brought the rebirth of republicanism. But behind the militancy and heroism of the republican tradition lies a fatal opening to all class alliances.

Its failure to look to the power of organised workers throughout Ireland is the reason why republican politics can never lead the Catholic minority to victory over the Orange state. The job of socialist revolutionaries in Ireland today is to show up the weakness of republicanism in order to win over the best fighters to Marxism.

That is why this paper devotes so much space to issues like Gerry Adams appeal for an electoral pact with the SDLP, the orientation of republicans during the H Block crisis to the nationalist elements of Fianna Fail, the SDLP and the church. It is why Socialist Worker looks critically at some of Connolly's ideas. It is also why we devote so much space to looking at the experience of nationalist movements in other

countries.

However it is not enough for revolutionary socialists to get their ideas clear. The second major task they have is to relate their politics to the minority of the working class prepared to fight. Sometimes, as at the moment, this minority can be very small. But it always exists and any organisation worth its salt must be able to make the connections.

During the recent strike of UCD cleaners, SWM members were mobilised for picket duty and solidarity work. But it wasn't just a question of servicing the strike, important though it was. SWM argued successfully for taking the issue directly to the other UCD workers and organising a solidarity strike.

In Cork, the SWM gave full backing to the ESB strikers when they were being vilified by the press and the union officials. They linked up with the Waterford SWM to take them on a tour of factories in that town.

When revolutionaries apply their politics they have to be able to work alongside other forces who have different and more right-wing politics. It is only by forming united fronts on specific issues that an audience can be won to revolutionary ideas.

When Reagan visited Ireland, the SWM initiated the Reagan Reception Campaign. It set up groups all around the country and mobilised 10,000 for a march in Dublin.

Similarly, when Thatcher came for talks with Fitzgerald, SWM organised a demonstration and worked alongside Sinn Fein members on a simple platform of Troops Out, No extradition and support for the miners who were then on strike.

On a day to day basis individual members of a revolutionary organisation have to be able to combine the same hardness on politics with an ability to initiate action in their own workplaces and areas with people who don't agree with all their politics. They have to sell a paper to a few people every month and take the lead in fighting redundancies, wage cuts or rotten community facilities.

This then is how a revolutionary organisation can be built in Ireland. It is how the SWM intends to build. Over the next few years it is vital that there are branches—even very small ones—in every industrial town in Ireland. SWM has recently expanded to build branches in Dublin, Belfast, Portlaoise, Dungarvan, Dundalk, Waterford, Kilkenny, Galway and Cork. This has been a great step forward—but much more needs to be done. But what are the immediate prospects for such a nation-wide revolutionary party?

Here we have to face facts. There has been a drift to the right in Irish society over the last few years. The rise of the Progressive Democrats, the law and order hysteria—even the moving statues phenomenon of last year are just a few signs. More fundamentally, the organised working class has its back to the wall. Struggles in workplaces are mainly over defensive issues and there is often very little confidence to go beyond the limits set by the union bureaucrats.

In this situation a revolutionary party will not be easily established. There will not be a flock of recruits when people's own experience is one of pessimism in their own strength.

Instead, it is necessary to recruit in ones and twos. Regular public meetings and paper sales bring small numbers in contact with revolutionary politics.

In this period it is vital that they hear the full range of the revolutionary arguments. But it is possible to build—as long as we have a clear understanding of the period we are in and avoid the manic-depressive activity that characterises other sections of the left.

The organisations that can build slowly during the downturn will be in a position to lead the struggles of tomorrow. That was the experience of the Bolsheviks. After the 1905 revolution a period of reaction set in. Their organisation was virtually decimated. But they revived and held their hard politics.

When the upturn came after 1912, it was the Bolshevik party that was able to combine the maximum flexibility in tactics with the most clear headed politics and so lead a successful workers revolution.

It will be the same in Ireland. Today there is a lull in the struggle. Workers have been defeated—but there is a well of bitterness under the surface. There will be massive struggles ahead.

It is now we need to build the basis of a revolutionary organisation that will grow out of these struggles. There are no short-cuts to this. It has to be said that the job of building an organisation of 300-400 revolutionaries, will be difficult but must be done.

SWM has started that job. We invite every genuine socialist to join with us.

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SLP had. The SLP tried to avoid the national question altogether: it's one TD, Noel Browne, was pro-partition while most of the membership was for a British withdrawal.

At least the CAISP is clearly for British withdrawal and unity. But, as mentioned earlier it leaves open the question whether a united capitalist Ireland (with Charlie Haughey as Taoiseach?) is an objective which socialists should strive for. Its attitude to the national question is fully compatible with that of Sinn Fein. And since none of its other policies are in conflict with that of Sinn Fein it's difficult to understand why most of the 60 who attended the February conference don't simply join Sinn Fein rather than try to recreate the defunct SLP.

The CAISP has another fundamental weakness. Whatever credibility it has is based on the involvement of leading trade union officials, particularly John Mitchell and other IDATU leaders.

Generally speaking IDATU is on the left of the Irish trade union movement and Mitchell is one of the most left-wing of the union bosses. But any group which is serious about building a genuinely socialist party must be in a position to criticise trade union officialdom sharply. The CAISP is in no position at all to do that, and indeed the role of the trade union bosses in holding back workers who want to fight is completely ignored in the Campaign's "manifesto".

To take a recent and very relevant example, any party which is serious about socialism would have to make harsh criticisms of the way the leadership of IDATU conducted the Dunnes Stores strike. The IDATU leaders made no effort at all to spread the strike to other Dunnes Stores and indeed ordered workers at Crumlin who wanted to come out in solidarity to do no such thing. No effort was made to appeal to rank and file workers in other unions for solidarity and backing—because that would have irritated the bosses of unions like the ITGWU and the FWUI; and the IDATU leadership, like all union leaderships, didn't want bad feelings in union leadership circles.

In the middle of the strike IDATU general secretary John Mitchell severely damaged the

strikers' morale by suggesting in an *Irish Press* interview that there was little point persisting with the dispute because Dunne would never give way.

But how could this new group look objectively at the Dunnes' dispute when the top officials of IDATU are themselves the leaders of the group?

The point doesn't apply just to the Dunnes dispute or to disputes in which IDATU is involved. If the CAISP manages to form a new party it will clearly be a party based on trade union officialdom generally rather than on rank and file workers. The invites to attend the February conference were sent out on an individual basis and a very large number of full-time officials of various trade unions were on the invitation list. IDATU officials apart, very few actually turned up, but it's clear what the intention was.

And thus it's equally clear what line the new group will take when—as happens day in and day out—there is conflict between workers who want to take on their boss and union officials who want a quiet life and compromise at all costs.

Most of those involved in the CAISP are genuine socialists. It is perfectly understandable that they should have despaired of the existing major parties and determined to build an alternative. And no doubt they have a sense of urgency, given the hammering that the working class has been taking in Ireland, North and South, for years. But with the CAISP they are trying to take a short-cut. And in socialist politics short-cuts, how however attractive they might look, invariably turn out to be blind alleys.

The alternative to the short-cut is the long haul, trying to relate to the day-to-day struggles of the working class while arguing patiently that only Marxist politics and mass rank and file action can lead these struggles to victory.

This is the path which the Socialist Workers Movement has chosen, and there is a place within the SWM for those who want to start from a real beginning and with a clear idea of where we are headed, rather than to set out with the CAISP on a conducted tour of cul-de-sacs which have so often, and with so little result, been explored in the past.



It is now that we need to build the basis of a revolutionary socialist organisation

ANALYSIS

Protestant workers and the fight for socialism

Eamonn McCann concludes his two-part article by outlining a strategy to win Protestant workers away from Loyalism.



TO MANY left-wingers at the moment the idea of winning the mass of Protestant workers in the North away from Loyalism is ridiculous.

Every news bulletin brings further evidence that sectarianism—very particularly in the Protestant community—is on the increase. At rallies, hate-merchants like Peter Robinson are greeted like heroes. Many Catholic homes have been petrol-bombed and three Catholics have been beaten to death in North Belfast this year. The Loyalist strike against the Anglo-Irish Agreement was a considerable success. And the RUC has been attacked by Loyalist mobs because they have allegedly “gone soft” on a united Ireland!

The picture that comes across is of an entire community engulfed by sectarian bitterness.

Of course it is not the whole picture. Far from it. There are many Protestant workers—mostly active trade unionists—who have not been swept away by the sectarian rhetoric and who in their unions and workplaces have stood firm courageously against the pressure pushing them backwards towards sectarianism.

However, these are in the minority and for the time being right-wing bigots are making all the running. Thus the reaction of many left-wingers to write the Protestant working class off as hopelessly lost to bigotry and political filth.

This is very stupid.

It is obvious that Protestant workers can—and sooner or later will—reject Loyalism

and make common cause with their fellow Catholic fellow-workers. This is obvious because it has happened frequently in the past—including the very recent past—and for reasons that will inevitably reoccur.

Any socialist seriously interested in overcoming the sectarian divisions and establishing working class unity must look closely at the occasions when this came about and examine why it came about and the reasons it was so short-lived when it did.

It happened in 1907, when James Larkin led Protestant and Catholic dockers and transport workers in a strike which paralysed Belfast.

STRUGGLE

It happened in 1919 when 40,000 shipyard and engineering workers came out in Belfast for the 48-hour week in a mighty struggle which only ended when British troops were sent in to smash the strike. Most of the strikers were Protestant—but a majority of the strike committee were Catholic. The strike lasted weeks, was absolutely solid and the workers fought together against British Army scabs.

It happened in 1932 when thousands of unemployed workers engaged on “relief” work struck for higher payments. The Falls and the Shankill joined and from the inter-connecting streets fought off RUC baton charges.

It happened in 1944 when Belfast was gripped by an unofficial general strike in-

volving more than 25,000 workers after mainly-Protestant shipyard workers defied war-time anti-strike laws and came out over pay.

It happened in 1984 when thousands of Catholic and Protestant health service workers across the North stood shoulder-to-shoulder on picket lines against Thatcher’s cuts and for a wage rise.

These particular incidents are well-known to anyone with a smattering of Irish history. But there are hundreds of other examples of smaller-scale industrial action which make the same point—that, year in and year out, Protestant workers do break from sectarian loyalist ideas and ally themselves instead with Catholic workers to better the conditions of both.

Of course on each occasion the unity has been short-lived. But the fact that it happened at all—and has happened so frequently—shows clearly where we have to start from.

We have to start from the simple and glaringly obvious fact that it is when, and only when, they are involved in class struggle that Protestant workers see Catholic workers as their natural allies and Protestant bosses as their natural enemies.

There are no examples of sizable numbers of Protestant workers in this century rejecting Loyalism in any other circumstances. Only class politics has ever successfully challenged Loyalism for Protestant workers’ allegiance.

The reason the moments of class unity have always been brief is that unity on the economic issues has never developed seriously into unity

on the political issues. On each of the occasions mentioned above, the workers began to split along religious lines as soon as the “national question” was raised. And in the aftermath of working class struggles it was always raised by the bosses for precisely that reason.

Once “Home Rule”, and later “The Border”, entered into it, the Protestant workers lapsed back into Loyalism and began to identify themselves again with people of the same religion rather than people of the same class. And one of the major reasons for that has been that the official leaders of the labour movement have time and time again failed to face up to the political questions.

The North’s official trade union leaders, for example, have argued at every stage that economic issues must be kept separate from politics, that to introduce politics is “divisive”.

DIVISION

The result has always been that when division came about anyway they have had no answer, no basis on which to combat the divisive politics which are inherent in the structure and the very nature of the Northern state.

This was true after 1919, when Craigavon preparing for the establishment of the State, whipped up Loyalist emotions in the Belfast shipyards and split the workers asunder. It was true after the unity of 1932 when Basil Brooke (later Lord Brookborough) did likewise and triggered the bloody sectarian riots of the mid-30s.

Etc., etc. It is still true today. On no occasion has the official workers’ leadership been able to enter into political battle against those out to split the unity which workers themselves had shown could be established. The most dramatic example was the pitiable attempt to the ICTU to organise a back-to-work march during the 1974 anti-power sharing strike. About 200 turned up—under British Army protection.

Throughout the current troubles—like all previous troubles—Northern leaders of the ICTU like Terry Carlin have denounced anyone who tried to argue that no section of the working class should support a State based on sectarianism. That’s “divisive”, they said. The result has been that when the question of supporting the Northern State is raised—as it has been raised now by Paisley and Molyneux over the Hillborough Agreement—the ICTU is in no position to say anything.

It is the official policy of the ICTU in the North to say nothing about the border, or anything relating to the border. The policy is—no policy.

Small wonder then that many of the workers who were solid together in the health service strikes a short time ago are now deeply divided. Their own union leadership had told them that the picket-line unity had no political implications whatever.

At the same time, the major tradition which does consistently put the issue of the sectarian nature of the Northern State right to the very top of the agenda—the

Republican Movement—doesn’t acknowledge the importance of workers’ unity on the economic issues at all.

While the Provos generally express support for workers struggling for better wages or to save jobs, or whatever, they deny that such struggles have any immediate relevance to the fight against the State.

The Republican line is that class politics must take a back seat until such times as the sectarian State is destroyed. So the united Ireland which they are offering as an alternative to the North is, clearly, a capitalist united Ireland. Once that is created, so the Republicans say, then the struggle for a socialist Ireland can begin. There is nothing whatever in this to attract Protestant workers, even Protestant workers who are class-conscious.

The key to winning Protestant workers away from Loyalism and to socialism is to build an organisation which is based on the day-to-day struggles of the working class and which also faces up squarely to the necessity to smash the Northern State.

An organisation which only fights on the economic front might gather Protestant working class support on a shallow basis and in the short term, but it will be broken when it comes into collision—as inevitably it will—with the realities with Northern politics.

An organisation which fights only to destroy the sectarian State, but which doesn’t base itself on working class struggle, will remain confined within the Catholic community and will never make contact with the consciousness of Protestant workers, even when they are directly engaged in fighting their own bosses.

To the sectarian State which offers Protestant workers marginal privileges in relation to jobs and houses it is necessary to counterpose the idea of a socialist Ireland in which the rule of the capitalist class—Orange, Green and true-blue Brit—has been ended. A State which represents the culmination of all the struggles of Irish workers, Catholic and Protestant, North and South.

It is possible to make a link between that vision for the future and Protestant workers in the present. Protestant workers—simply because they are workers—are thrown into conflict with their bosses time and time again. They are not mindless automatons, nor are they helpless victims of some mysterious virus. To analyse the situation as if they were is a perverse form of anti-Protestant bigotry.

Moreover, it is to ignore the fact that the strength of Loyalist ideology in the North has a great deal to do precisely with the disastrous failure of both the social democratic and Republican ideologies to get to grips and grapple at close quarters with it for the allegiance of Protestant workers.

Only revolutionary-socialism—Marxism—which links the question of the existence of the Northern State to the question of what class is to rule in Ireland has any hope of success.

LETTERS

Write to PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

May-day week

MAY DAY is international workers day. It began over one hundred years ago when the First International—which organised socialists from all over the world—decided to take up the battle for an 8 hour day. They proclaimed May 1st as a day for stoppage and demonstrations on the issue. Workers across the world responded in hundreds and thousands.

Today bureaucrats have taken over the day in many parts of the world. In the Red Square in Moscow they wheel on the tanks and missiles. In Poland, they use it

to boast the evidence of their crushing of Solidarity. The faceless men and women of the EEC even decreed it to be a national holiday to de-politicise it.

But despite this, it is *our* day. A day when we remember the struggles our class is fighting across the world.

In this spirit SWM branches organised a number of socials to commemorate the event.

In Dundalk, there was a meeting entitled "One Solution—Revolution" with Kieran Allen speaking. A fine social was held afterwards.

In Dublin, the SWM held a social in Moran's Pub on the quays and we were entertained by the best of socialist music.

In Waterford, a packed social heard music from the Flat-Tops. Those present had their brains taxed by a socialist quiz.

Reagan Demo

Reagan's bombing of Libya brought a feeling of outrage to every decent socialist. In Dublin SWM immediately responded by producing 5,000 leaflets and distributing them at workplaces and Colleges.

The leaflet urged the biggest possible demonstration on the following Saturday.

Unfortunately there were only 500 on the demonstration. This was a disgrace. Two political organisations were noticeable by their absence.

Neither the Workers Party nor Labour Youth decided to march, this apparently had something to do with "not being seen to be associated with terrorists".

SWM's position on the Libyan crisis was absolutely clear. We hold no brief for the Gaddafi regime—believing as we do that it is by no means a socialist government. But we

can recognise naked imperialism when we see it. Despite Ireland's proclaimed neutrality we are very much part of the American "sphere of influence".

The job of every socialist in that situation was to stand up and be counted. Our enemies are Reagan and Thatcher. That is why every socialist organisation should have been working for the biggest possible protest against them—whatever their opinions of the Libyan regime.

Socialist Weekend

At the end of September, Socialist Worker is organising a Marxist Rally in Kilkenny, Friday 26th to Sunday 28th. It will be a weekend of politics, music and crack.

There will be meetings on Nicaragua, South Africa, Irish Republicanism and Marxism and Culture, as well as Women's Liberation; and the politics of Rock and Roll. Running along side these will be a series of videos and films. And in the evenings you can rock the night away to the best of live sounds. For further information, write to SWM c/o PO Box 1648. Next month's paper will have further details of the weekend.

BOYCOTT EXAMS

Dear comrades, I am writing to urge you to lead a call for a boycott by Secondary level students of the Inter and Leaving Certificate examinations should the Minister attempt to hold them without loyal union members and with the complicity of blacklegs.

Although due to sit the latter myself, I will find it impossible to collaborate with an attempt to undermine the bargaining power of the teachers.

There are many reasons for this decision: not the least of which is a lack of confidence in the ability of people unacquainted with the curriculum to assess students fairly. But the most important is a revulsion at the idea of passing a picket-line, literally or metaphorically, in order to help scabs profit from an act of piracy on the rights of a group of workers.

The present dispute could very easily be developed into a powerful manifestation of the historically proven power of solidarity between workers and students, however much that might frighten trade union bureaucrats.

The movement among American students against the imperialist war in Vietnam and the heroic resistance of the Parisian students to the Gaullist regime during May 1968 are just two examples of the spontaneous radicalism which can develop among students once the impetus is

given—be they children of the proletariat or the bourgeoisie.

How much more promising a groundswell of discontent would be among Secondary level students who are more representative of the working class than university students and who have spent less time under the influence of the bourgeois ideology imposed on students due to the cultural, political and religious hegemony of the capitalist class.

It is essential to spread the revolutionary struggle to the schools, because the enemy begins in the cradles. Students need to learn that struggle is useful and not in vain as books such as George Orwell's Animal Farm, which insults the working class and the pre-Stalinist Bolshevik Party, would have us believe.

In a catholic country such as Ireland where schools are very much under the sway of the "opium of the people", the fight against pre-work (or more properly: pre-dole) education and ideological training of the most reactionary kind, is even more urgent than elsewhere.

Preventing the successful running of non-union exams through joint worker-student action would be a highly salutary experience for both. "Workers and students of the world, unite".

S. CLARKE
Balbriggan

STILL AVAILABLE

Two pamphlets which explain the politics of the Socialist Workers Movement:

"Why we need a revolution in Ireland", and

"Four questions of revolutionary Socialism".

£1.20 post free for both pamphlets from: SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

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 Nua.

AGAINST ALL OPPRESSION

Revolutionaries oppose all forms 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 compromises 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.



Kieran Mulvey, General Secretary of the Asti

Supporting the strike

Dear Socialist Worker I am a Leaving Certificate student attending a school in the Finglas area.

On receiving notice of the pro-teachers' march on Wednesday 23rd April, I distributed notices of the march throughout my school.

I succeeded in gathering about 60 supporters, so to keep everything official, I got permission from the Principal to attend the march providing we had notes from our parents.

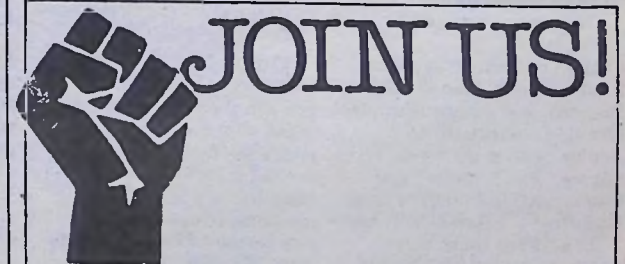
When we brought our notes in, excuses were made. We were told the notes were brought in too late and she

said she was afraid trouble would start on the march.

The gates of the school were locked to prevent us from leaving.

When we asked some teachers to support us they didn't want to get involved at that moment as the talks on the strike were in process.

I think as a student we were let down by the teachers and the Principal who had said she was neutral. I also think the only way to end this strike is to support the teachers by putting pressure on the Government.
NAME WITHHELD



I would like more details about the Socialist Workers Movement

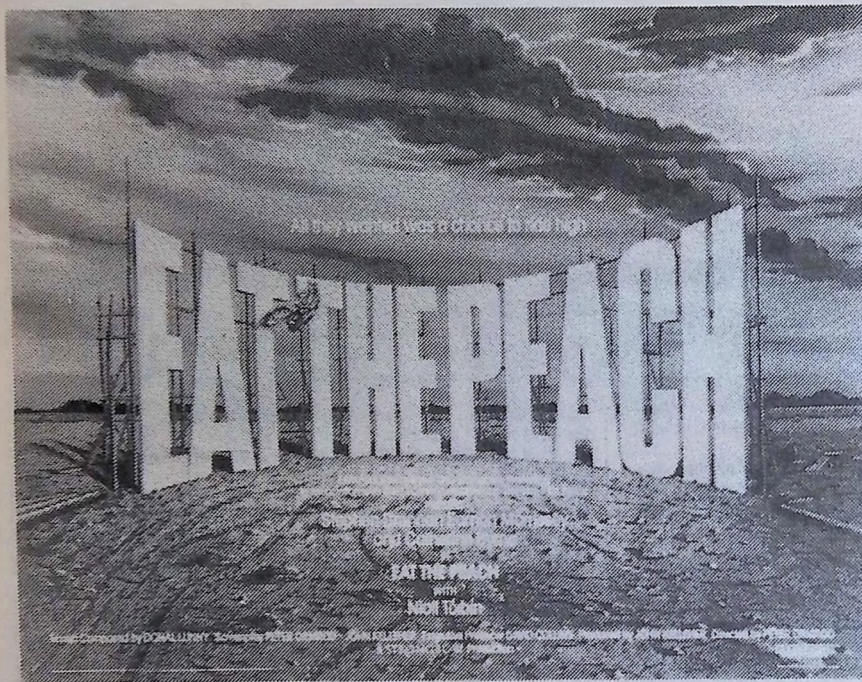
NAME

ADDRESS

Send to SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

FILM:

More of a quiet chuckle than an outbreak of hilarity



AFTER MUCH hype and over-exposure "Eat the Peach", the film that is set to make or break the Strongbow film company finally made it to the screens last month.

Apart from the financial importance of the film, what really matters: is it any good?

Well of course you really couldn't go wrong, a film written and produced in Ireland with Eamonn Morrissey, Niall Toibin, Joe Lynch and Stephen Brennan, not to mention a musical score by Donal Lunny and Paul Brady and such a great true story. Yes, "Eat the Peach" lives up to all its expectations!

The story (if you don't know) is this.

With redundancies at the local factory Vinnie (Stephen Brennan) and Arthur (Eamonn Morrissey) are reduced to sipping pints at the local saloon "The Frontier" and listening to local country band Nuata and the Nashville Three.

In between times they watch a video of their favourite film "Roustabout" with Elvis Presley on the Wall of Death, 40 miles-an-hour and not one brylcreemed hair out of place!

The two lads, being inclined Motorcycle wise and a couple of dreamers, see such a Wall of Death as being the answer to everyone's problems. After a couple of hilarious

tests, the building starts, being financed by a little harmless cross border smuggling. The Wall is built and actually works, and things are set for the big time except not everything works out according to the dream. The shaky symbol of Private Enterprise is finally destroyed by its makers.

Everything about the film is spot on! The whole atmosphere and mood is uniquely Irish and little touches like having the two heroes bunk off mass to go to the local pub are so realistic.

NICE ONE

Gentle stabs are made at the Provos and the British army in the film's funniest scene in a border town pub where the two heroes looking for diesel for their oil tanker, disguised as a hay tractor, meet silence as they enter a very republican pub complete with "A nation once again" on the video. Their tractor is mistaken by the British Army for a booby trap and is blown up.

The barman in the pub finds out who owns the tractor and says as he shakes the hand of Eamonn Morrissey "I don't know who you are pal, but I'm proud to have met you" Nice one!

The film has an infectious whimsicality that is immensely appealing. It has that type of humour that is more of a quiet chuckle than an outbreak of hilarity.

Acting throughout is superb. Special mention here must be given to Pat Kenny of RTE, who does a splendid job of playing Pat Kenny of RTE. Niall Toibin is great as Boots the local cowboy who though sporting agreeat American accent has never actually stepped foot in America at all. Gentle fun is also made of the Clergy and Cabinet Ministers. And why not? They're a bunch easily made fun of.

The story itself is very far fetched. Two guys suddenly deciding to build a Wall of Death in the middle of a bog. Ridiculous but true. It reminds me somewhat of a similarly strange story of a Monsignor building an airport in such a remote place. Truth is often stranger than fiction.

Half way through the film when everything is going so great, I started to wonder would they get the ending right. Sometimes a bad ending can spoil a great film. The Ending is great! So good in fact that I stayed to see the next showing again.

A Film strongly recommended. Miss it at your peril!
-GARRET KEOGH

Decline and fall of White Rhodesia



Socialist Worker reviews a new book by David Caute

THE RACIST state of South Africa looms over and dominates the economic and political life of all the countries in Southern Africa.

Its existence has been a spur for Black independence and anti-colonialism in Angola, Mozambique, Zambia and more recently Zimbabwe. At the same time, its continued survival remains as a threat to the stability of these countries.

South Africa finances the right-wing Unita guerillas in Angola. In 1984, "revolutionary" President Machel of Mozambique was forced to agree to an end to training for ANC guerillas within his borders.

In return, the South African government reneged on its promised trade concessions. It was Machel who in 1980 put pressure on Mugabe and his Zanla guerilla arm, to negotiate with the British for a cease-fire in what was then Rhodesia.

Mugabe's party Zanu-PF and its armed wing Zanla led a war which began in the 1960s and lasted right up to the cease-fire of 1980 when Ian Smith and his puppets, Bishop Muzorewa and Rev. Sithole were forced to face the inevitable and climb down.

Mugabe was and probably still is a Marxist in his own mind, but his way to victory was through a national liberation army committed to independence first then socialism. There was little reliance, if any on the working class and the war was fought in the countryside with the support of small farmers and peasants looking for a distribution of the big estates. The war was supported, and in many cases led, by the aspiring black middle classes.

National liberation struggles which do not see the working class as central (even in cases like Zimbabwe where that class was small), and do not have Socialism as the primary aim will most certainly get the support of the middle class. The problem is, such struggles tend to get stuck in the groove of realising the aspirations of the middle class to the exclusion of the interests of the working class.

Mugabe's Marxism is a withered plant in the

struggle to satisfy the ambitions of the black professional classes in the new Zimbabwe. Government ministers are still referred to as "comrade" in a country where the housing allowance they have voted for themselves is greater on its own than the average industrial wage! But housing allowances for government ministers do nothing to solve the problems of the peasants who did the fighting and still end up living in villages with mud huts.

David Caute's book probes behind the disintegration of White Rhodesia. It's a fascinating journalistic study of individuals about to be pushed off the stage back to the suburbs of Hampshire and Essex.

It would be interesting to see what happened for instance to Smith's Minister for Justice Desmond Lardner-Burke who presided over the hanging of dozens of freedom fighters. He was says Caute "a cocky arrogant red-faced person with a habit of addressing parliament with his hands in his pockets, a fairly standard saloon bar fascist".

HANGINGS

Christian Andersen who later became Minister for Justice justified the concealment of hangings from the relatives by saying "Its more humane to give as little notice as possible". (Relatives were told after their loved ones were executed). When he was questioned by British journalists about the hanging of six blacks in January 1979 he replied, "If I may say so, I am surprised at the hypocrisy prevalent in your country. You have detention without trial in Northern Ireland".

He ended up as a Minister of State in Mugabe's government, a post he accepted in 1982, which gives some idea of the lengths to which Mugabe went to appease the whites.

Caute looks at the dilemma of the Rhodesian Civil Service as expressed through statements of their Society of Public Servants. They wanted a guarantee that their pensions would be secure even under the

illegal Smith regime. They had been advised by British Tories to stick to their posts. Labour got elected and told them they were no longer servants of the crown. They resorted to calling Smith "intransigent" because he would not settle with Zanu-PF. They declared "We are one of the last remnants of the greatest empire in the history of the world". Such crawling got them nowhere with Thatcher. She refused to stump up the £310 million necessary to pay them all pensions.

Lord Hankey believed that to try and bring Mugabe and Zanu-PF into any settlement was to put the "Communist cuckoo in the nest". There are cuckoos in the nest but it was Mugabe who allowed them in because of the need for "stability for investment". Ian Smith is still rallying the white racialists in parliament. In the June '85 elections Smith won the majority of seats allocated for whites, Asians and coloureds.

In 1981 ZANU PF head quarters was bombed. Many blamed the British who were not happy with Mugabe sweeping the majority of the seats in 1980. Mugabe blamed Nkomo and the South Africans. He sent his loyal Zanla troops into Matabeleland to keep Nkomo's supporters in check and several hundreds were reported to be killed "in crossfire". Many of Smith's dreaded Selous Scouts have been recruited to help enforce emergency regulations. Smith has openly accused Mugabe of making exactly the same mistakes as he did.

The fact remains that Socialism in one country is impossible. Mugabe worked on the stages theory of Stalinism, national liberation first, then Socialism. He has got neither. If they are ever to see freedom, the black working class in Zimbabwe must link up with the newly organised and confident black working class of neighbouring South Africa.

Mugabe's Marxism can never be anything more than a thin veneer of rhetoric until the power of international capital is broken all over Southern Africa.

-JIM BLAKE

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

A RECENT article in Technology Ireland shows glossy colour photographs of Pfizer's new "Organic Synthesis Plant" at Ringaskiddy, Cork. The heading reads "Pfizer invests £16 Million in computerised plant". The image is of an ultra clean, ultra modern plant.

Behind the glamour of course the reality for workers is something different. The company has a long record of producing false figures on their profits in order to try and force through more and more redundancies every year.

There is continuous harassment of those shop stewards who have shown up the seamier side of Pfizer's so-called success story. One shop steward who has pushed hard on safety over the years has been sent warning letters of possible dismissal over pursuing properly agreed

SAFETY AT WORK Pfizers - ultra modern and ultra dangerous

union business. This particular steward was recently put working on a centrifugal machine which unknown to him had earlier in the day been fitted with defective rusty parts that had been lying on a dump for five years. He was very lucky not to have been killed when the machine exploded at high speed. As it was other workers came to the rescue and hosed his body and face down to clear away the acid bases mixture that covered him.

One wit was heard to remark to the manager as the steward was taken off in an ambulance for observation,

"failed again to get rid of him".

Workers have a constant fight on their hands to protect themselves against an inhuman profit system. In Bhopal, India it was found that the safety measures at the Union Carbide plant there were ten times less than they would be in the United States.

Health and safety in multinational and Irish workplaces in this country depends entirely on the strength of the workers. Pfizer's harassment of shop stewards shows that they understand this all too well.

MARXISM MADE EASY Capitalism is not working...

SOCIALISTS ARE often asked, "can socialism solve unemployment; what with new technology, robots, computers, and the micro chip surely workers will just disappear; if you get rid of the bosses who's going to employ us all?"

Karl Marx summed up the nature of capitalism by saying it was "a combination of despotism, and anarchy". Despotism in the workplace where for hours each day workers have to do what they are told, and anarchy in the market, which ties the different workplaces into a single unplanned system of buying and selling.

Workers who tend rubber trees in Malaysia, mine iron ore in Canada or make seat covers in Singapore, are all tied into the production of cars which are assembled in the US and Brazil. These human links in the chain depend solely on the selling of products for profit, and are therefore vulnerable to disruption when the rate of profit falls.

If more cars are produced than can be sold, it is not just workers in Detroit, and San Paolo who get laid off. All the industries producing the components and materials which go into making cars get hit as well. Workers from these firms who get laid off can no longer afford to buy cars (if indeed they ever could) and the market slumps further, in a vicious spiral downwards.

There is no bigger waste than unemployment. On top of the appalling waste in human skills, it costs the South over £250m a year in social welfare benefits, which in turn requires huge borrowing, high taxation (direct and indirect), and massive debt from borrowing. As a result workers are sacked to cut costs, and the education and social welfare system is attacked to help cut public spending.

In the USA, steel plants had, in 1982, the capacity to produce 159 m tonnes of steel, but the steel companies were only selling 63m tonnes. In the EEC countries in the same year little more than half of potential capacity was in use.

Why then are steel prices not slashed so that more can be sold? Plenty of steel is needed around the world—for the machines, houses,

tractors, factories, hospitals, lorries and ships which could be built with it. Something as simple as steel ploughshares would help the world's poorest countries grow food, and so avoid famine—but with present steel prices the poor and starving can afford only wooden shares.

The US government has been paying farmers not to produce food. In 1982 farmers were paid 19 Billion dollars to leave 82 million acres of land unworked.

Production of basic food stuffs such as wheat and maize fell by a quarter. If that food had been produced, it would have flooded the market, and forced down the price: good for the hungry but bad for the farmers and the six multinational corporations which dominate the world grain market.

ADVANCES

Over 100 years ago, when compared to the fantastic advances in technology today, capitalism was just a pygmy force, Marx was able to explain that the central drive of capitalism is the "accumulation of profit".

The whole history of capitalism since the industrial revolution is one of competition between capitalists to cut costs, and to increase the productivity of their workforces. This usually involves replacing workers with machines, thereby increasing the amount of machinery per worker. This machinery is itself the product of past labour and Marx called it "dead labour".

Marx also argued that the process of expanding technology leads to an increase in the proportion of dead labour stored up in the machinery used compared to living labour. But only living labour can generate profits, since it is workers, not machines who buy the goods of the capitalists on the market. Profits depend on what price goods can be sold at.

And here an intractable problem arises. The individual firm, seeking to make profits in competition with others, must reduce wages, or lay off workers, and introduce machines. But every other company is doing the same! The overall result is that the increased output from

automation cannot be sold because the capacity of workers to buy is less rather than more. What is rational for each individual competitor is irrational for the capitalist class as whole.

Instead of the fall in prices, as it did in Marx's day, it appears instead in the vast stockpiles of unsold steel, or in car factories operating at only 60% of capacity or less. Or in the case of Cork the complete closure of the car assembly plant of Fords, Irish Steel, and Verolme dockyard.

In the past thirty years alone the productive capacity of human beings on this planet has more than doubled. Every serious study acknowledges that the world has the capacity to produce more than enough food for everyone. Yet tragic famines recur—while vast mountains of food are stockpiled or thrown away in Europe and America.

The effect of the micro chip has been to deprive millions of work altogether creating ever greater poverty, while the profits, instead of being used to improve people's lives are seized by the few.

The economic system under which we live generates such chaos, waste and inequality, that subsequently it has become an obstacle to progress.

Capitalism has one last achievement to its credit. It has created its own gravedigger—the international working class.

Real socialism as it was understood by Marx and Connolly, was neither brutal nor bureaucratic. Based on the power of the working class it is a system of democratic freedom, in which the gigantic technical capacities of modern society can be harnessed to fulfil the needs of all.

Being truly democratic it will place the needs of the majority as the central priority at all times, and not the profit of a few. Socialism will mean getting rid of the anarchy of the market, and organising production to meet priorities laid down by democratic organised workers' councils.

It will, by the harnessing of new technology enable us to work for just a few hours a day on necessary labour.

—EAMONN LEWSLEY
Cork SWM



The four month long strike at Michael Guiney's in North Earl St. and Talbot St., Dublin has ended in partial victory for the two workers who stuck out for their jobs against all the odds. While refusing to reinstate the men, Guineys have admitted that the two workers should receive redundancy payments after months of claiming that they had no such entitlement. Management caved in after a couple of well-supported militant pickets stopped virtually all customers from entering either of the shops — a good example of what effective picketing can do.

Solidarity can break teachers' deadlock

AS WE go to press the teachers are still deadlocked in a frustrating, almost mock battle with the government. Their position has been gradually eroded since the dispute arose eight months ago.

At that stage the very thought of the government not honouring an arbitration award threw teachers into convulsions of anger. However the union leaders have consistently refused to harness this anger and sum total of action so far has been a handful of one-day and three-day strikes.

An indication of how the union leaders have rolled back the militancy is their public concession of the full award at the specified times. If the 10% rise had been implemented when it was supposed to be, teachers would have benefitted since last September. The unions would now see it, as a considerable bonus if the money owed were now to be paid. It seems inevitable that the union leaders, judging by the language of ads they recently put in the newspapers, are ready to accept any deal, especially if the magic word,

"ten percent" appears on it, no matter what the time-span.

The fact that the three teachers' unions were willing to enter into negotiations at the Employer Labour Conference, even though the government virtually made a commitment to concede nothing shows how desperate the union leaders are to end the dispute. Mediation (or in plain man's terms "sell-out") is a process which comes very naturally to these people. At this stage of the dispute it seems to have been forgotten that mediation has already taken place. Of course, faults can be found with the original arbitration award; it was about half of what the teachers were entitled to. But in this case even the unfair judgement has got to be defended when even the government's own appointed arbitrator does not satisfy the government cuts.

GOVERNMENT

There can be no doubt but that the government has singled out the teachers for a hiding so as to whip the rest of the public service into line. The government has already a

massive scab operation in train, but it will require the co-operation of members of civil service unions and others. The support of the Civil service unions for the teachers' case is vital.

The wrong way to look for support is to sit back, as the teachers' unions did previously and allow ads to appear for scab exam correctors without a word to the print unions. Another mistake will be if they back-out of the forthcoming three-day strikes in May. How can any union be taken seriously when it asks other workers to win its strikes for them, without first showing their own commitments?

Support can be built by a strategy of sending speakers to other unions to outline the teachers' case and why it is in the interests of other workers to support it.

This has already been done on a limited scale with branches of the LGPSU, NUJ; other unions and workplaces have been approached and the response everywhere has been supportive.

Both the teachers and the government are staking much on the exams and overall victory or defeat could well come from it. At this, more than any time, teachers must realise that they are part of a public service and indeed national workforce whose fortunes and interests cannot be separated.

—JAMES Mc ILLINEY

Socialist Worker



Media has concentrated on attacks on RUC

Orange thugs hit Catholics

While the Press and TV report in horror the attacks on homes of the RUC by their loyalist neighbours, they have been playing down the petrol-bombing of Catholic homes, schools and churches by the loyalist thugs.

On March 31st, sectarian gangs went on the rampage in the Short Strand area of East Belfast, smashing windows and setting fire to three Catholic homes.

On April 7th and 10th, shots were fired from the loyalist Woodstock area on Catholic homes in the Albert Bridge Road. The following Sunday a Catholic man narrowly escaped after being chased through the Coamdboboy Estate by a car full of loyalists.

In West Belfast, a spate of sectarian attacks began on April 17th, Catholic homes in the Black Road area were

badly damaged by petrol bombs. The following Sunday a family were bombed out of their home on the Stewartstown Road.

This loyalist terror is not confined to Belfast. Catholics have been driven from their homes, and schools and churches set on fire in Portadown, Lisburn, Dunmurray and elsewhere. During April alone, at least fifty Catholic homes have been attacked.

Many of these people have not suffered such outright intimidation since the early seventies. Bad as it is, the scale of this latest phase of loyalist thuggery is less than in 1969-71 when over 3,500 Catholics were driven from their homes. This, of course, is largely because large numbers have already been intimidated out of the fringe areas into the relative safety of the

Catholic working class ghettos. For those left isolated in the Protestant estates, the attacks

have been vicious. Over 20 families have been burnt out of their homes in Lisburn alone, although that town has been almost exclusively Protestant since 1974.

The RUC have made no attempt to stop these loyalist terror gangs. They don't even keep records of how many such attacks have occurred. Indeed they are probably relieved to see the loyalists turn to Catholic targets rather than RUC members.

So when the media say that the Provos are whipping up hysteria by organising vigilante groups on Catholic estates to take on the loyalist thugs, socialists must be ready with the facts to defend this action.

As the RUC stand by while loyalists terrorise Catholic families in their homes, Catholics are forced to defend themselves and to look to their traditional defenders — the Provos.

— VICKI WASS
BELFAST SWM

SELF AID STINKS!

THE "SELF AID" Concert on May 17th is likely to be a great musical event. The line up of the best of Irish rock bands and singers will make it almost a celebration of the growing Irish contribution to rock music.

But the concert is not intended as a celebration. It is supposed to be doing something about unemployment. "There is no such thing as an acceptable level of unemployment" says the Press statement from the organisers. We agree. But what is this concert going to do to change things?

"Self Aid: Make it Work" is the slogan of the day. So the event is just repeating and reinforcing the idea that it's our own fault if we're unemployed. If we were only to get up off our arses we could make work for ourselves.

In order to push home this idea we will be shown, in between the bands, videos of "success stories" of those who have set up their own firms to carry through those ideas.

Ballygowan mineral water and Fiac a toothpaste are the two "success" stories most frequently quoted. If they can do it, anyone can, the Self Aid message goes.

This is a dangerous and nonsensical lie.

There are over a quarter of a million people unemployed in the 26 Counties with another 125,000 in the North. There are more than 50 unemployed people to every notified job vacancy in the South. In the Six Counties there are as many as 150 to every vacancy!

These horrifying figures do not even include the massive haemorrhage of emigration that has started again.

Official figures indicate that over 20,000, mainly young, people took the boat in the last five years. Every report from London and the USA tells us that they find it no easier to get work abroad than at home. Many of them sleep rough and live on the streets. Those lucky enough to find some kind of work are usually poorly paid and work long hours in bars and restaurants.

The Self Aid message tells us that it's our own fault if we can't find jobs. It's not. As the "Marxism Made Easy" Column on page eleven of this paper explains, the massive unemployment we suffer from today is a direct result of the oppressive economic system under which we live. That system—capitalism—has thrown millions of workers throughout the world



on the dole queues because the bosses are not happy with the profits they are making from our labour.

Mass unemployment is here to stay unless the system which causes it is smashed.

But Self Aid has other ideas. We could make more jobs in Ireland, they tell us, if we were to buy Irish goods instead of imported ones. To preach this message, a slot will be handed over to the Young Ireland group. This bunch of fresh-faced youths come from the posh-Christian Brothers college of Oaklands in the salubrious suburbs of South County Dublin.

They peddle their right-wing Thatcherite ideas in the sure knowledge that they will be the ones to benefit from them and not the working class young people of Ballymun, Ballyphane, Ballybeg or Ballymurphy.

Ironically, if the Self Aid were successful in pushing this "don't buy imported goods" message, the people who would suffer most would be the workers in Third World countries to whom their jobs mean the difference not between work and dole but between work and starvation.

Yet it was to stop starvation in the Third World that the "live Aid" idea was first conceived.

So who will benefit from Self Aid? It certainly won't be any of the many good young unemployed rock bands around the country. There is not a single act on the bill which has not already signed a major recording deal. The millionaires, like U2 and Van Morrison who will be playing in the concert may ease their guilt problems somewhat and gain an ounce or two of street credibility.

The more politically aware acts like Christy Moore and Moving Hearts may be damaged as more and more unemployed rock fans realise the horrible right-wing basis to the event.

The state agencies—AnCO the IDA, the Youth Employment Agency, Manpower etc.—who are backing the event

will also gain, once again at the expense of those on the dole. These organisations exist purely and simply as a cosmetic exercise to make it seem as if something is being done to reduce unemployment.

AnCO keeps the numbers on the dole down by putting people on usually useless, often boring, courses and paying them a pittance for a few weeks or months before dumping them back on the dole. Manpower and the YEA through their "Social Guarantee", Community Youth Training and Teamwork schemes also raise false hopes of jobs in young people's minds that are dashed just as soon as their six-month or year-long scheme ends.

Yet these parasite organisations will gain more credibility in the public eye as they push their hypocritical and lying message that anyone who wants to can go off and set up their own business and make their own jobs.

The only result of twelve hours of this kind of message will be to once again put the blame for capitalism's problems on working class people. There will be a revival in the idea that anyone on the dole is lazy and a scrounger—all the lies that help keep the spotlight off the rotten system which breeds the waste of unemployment.

As we go to press, attempts are being made to organise a picket of the event by the many unemployed people who can't and won't give up almost half their dole to spend £15 on a ticket to it. Some young rock bands are trying to get an alternative "Rock against the Dole" gig together. Look out for posters and leaflets about these and let the Self Aid organisers know that much as we like music, the message is shite.



S o c i a l i s t W o r k e r s a y s :

H A N D S O F F L I B Y A !
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Libya has been singled out by the US government as the "World Centre of Terrorism". This is the same US Government which organised, armed, trained and payrolled the murderous Contras, who have distinguished themselves by their indiscriminate killings of Nicaraguan civilians, disemboweling and physically mutilating women and children and the wholesale kidnapping and abduction of Nicaraguan school children. . . actions taken at the behest of the US to bring down a democratically elected government.

This same US Government has consistently backed the butchers who rule in El Salvador. The US-supported Salvadorean army itself organises the notorious hit squads whose particular expertise consists in abducting thousands of people suspected of being insufficiently enthusiastic in their support for the Government. Most are never heard of again. Those that are are found decapitated in mass graves or just lying in rubbish tips on the edge of cities. State-sponsored torture is commonplace.

This same US Government gave, until the very last minute, unstinting support to Baby Doc Duvalier whose regime supported itself with the same barbarous mixture of official murder and torture, in this case spiced with voodoo. And Marcos too was a grateful recipient of US largesse as he murdered and imprisoned and tortured his opponents.

And without the continued military and economic support of the US, Israel could not survive a week. Yet underwritten by Reagan and Co, Israel has felt confident enough to invade the Lebanon, and organised the fascist Phalange gangs which massacred Palestinian men, women and children in the refugee camps.

The evidence for these US inspired terrorist actions is incontestable. Missionaries and church leaders, special envoys, journalists from the West, etc, etc have all published these facts. The US Government's hands drip with the blood of the victims of terrorism committed by the US directly or through its agents.

Yet on the basis of allegations it will not substantiate, the US has bombed Libyan cities. Western journalists report that at least a hundred, and very probably more, civilians were killed in the air raid.

The US is attacking Libya because Libya supports the Palestinians and will not bend its knee to US imperialism.

Reagan's gunboat diplomacy must be opposed. It is Reagan and his cronies who are the real terrorists. Show your opposition to US warmonging.

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H A N D S O F F L I B Y A !

R E A G A N I S T H E R E A L T E R R O R I S T !

Reagan is merely the clownish front-man for US imperialism. Notwithstanding the Small print of the South's non-membership of NATO, we live in the Western camp. The main enemy for socialists in this conflict must be the leaders of the Western camp - and of course their local representatives, our rulers.

Issued by the Socialist Workers Movement. For more details of our meetings and activities write to SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.