

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism



The bitter fruit of Thatcher's rule



NORTH AND SOUTH, thousands of workers recoiled in horror from the violence vividly depicted in newspaper pictures and television news film in recent weeks.

That's what those who are really responsible for the violence want—that we should all recoil in horror and give tacit support to whatever measures they take: that we should accept their "official" violence while opposing the violence of anyone who resists them.

Why is the North such a violent place? The "explanation" that places like the Falls and the Bogside have somehow become peopled with psychopaths and that other elements are reacting to the mad violence of these psychopaths is contemptible nonsense.

The reason for Republican violence is that Catholics in the North have been oppressed since the inception of the State. This is a fundamental fact, no matter how awkward it is for the analyses of "moderate" Southern Leftists and dainty liberals everywhere.

Created and armed by British imperialism and maintained by brute force, the Northern State has proved

impossible to reform. The forces of "law and order" are, literally, a law unto themselves. Catholic working class young people are doomed to unemployment, dire poverty and constant harassment.

Meanwhile, Loyalist leaders refuse to concede a share of power even with the harmless middle-class Catholics of the SDLP. And Loyalist paramilitaries use random terror to cow the Catholic community into acceptance. The leaders of the "official working class movement" stay out of it all.

In this situation violent resistance is inevitable. It's inevitable that its general aim is "a united Ireland". And it's inevitable that when it's beamed onto television screens it will be a very ugly sight.

Moralising about it is pointless. What socialists have to do is face up to the issue and offer a way forward.

What's wrong with the Provos is not that their violence is morally reprehensible but that their politics are inadequate for the situation working class people find themselves in.

To aim at a "united Ireland" without specifying that only a socialist Ireland is envisaged is in effect, to aim at a capitalist united Ireland.

In the North, there is *no* possibility of building support for thirty-two county capitalism outside the Catholic nationalist community. Thus the struggle is shaped by the sectarianism of the State, no matter what the conscious intentions of those leading it.

The fight for a socialist Ireland demands a thirty-two county movement opposing the Southern capitalist State as well as the sectarian state in the North. This must be based specifically on the struggles of the working class.

This runs directly counter to the most basic Republican idea. For them people of all classes have a common interest in a British withdrawal.

Marxists reject this "unity of classes" approach utterly.

While continuing to draw this sharp distinction between the Marxist and Republican approaches to the fight against the Northern State, the SWM stands squarely on the side of the Republicans and against the forces ranged around Thatcher, whose delight in violence is self evident and who represents the class ultimately responsible for all the mess and bloody misery.

See pages three,
six and seven

NHS day of action

MONDAY March 14th saw strikes across the Six Counties in defence of the Health Service. Rallies were held in seventeen different centres with large marches in Belfast and Derry.

Belfast had probably the biggest march in Britain or the North with over 7,000 workers coming out. Derry's twelve to fifteen hundred was more disappointing.

Although the Day of Action was called by the Northern Ireland Committee of the ICTU (NICTU), such stoppages as did take place happened in spite of the union leadership.

Politicians from Gerry Adams to Gregory Campbell were invited onto picket lines. DUP, OUP, SDLP and Sinn Fein were all courted by union leaders although Sinn Fein is the only party to consistently oppose the cuts.

NUPE leader Inez Mc Cormack even sought a meeting with Bishop Cathal Daly despite the fact that Church representatives have voted for the cuts at every level.

The initiative for the 14th was almost entirely with the officials—unlike 1982 when there was still a fairly strong shop steward's network in the North. In Derry, for example,

one official called a meeting of his union's sixty shop stewards on Saturday 12th—to organise strike action for Monday 14th! Not surprisingly there was little strike action in Derry. Besides the Health workers, Post Office, the Council, some civil servants, one or two other workforces including Maydown Precision Engineering turned out. But the thousands of shirt factory workers who had made the 1982 stoppage so impressive scarcely knew the protest was on.

Things were better in Belfast. The shipyard, Shorts and Scirocco came out. In Larne, the Ballylumford power workers struck. Large numbers of University students and school students joined the Belfast protest.

Unfortunately, the NICTU leadership has no plans for even another round of limited stoppages, still less the all-out action which is needed if the Health Service is to be saved.

July 5th, the 40th anniversary of the NHS is being proposed in Britain as a day for further action. If it is to be successful, rank and file organisation—similar to that which made September 22nd 1982 a success—is needed. Union activists must leaflet workplaces and hold canteen or factory gate meetings to ensure all-out action—with the support of the officials if possible, in spite of them if necessary.

THE HEALTH Service Day of Action involved workers from the Belfast Shipyard alongside those from, say, Dove House in Derry's Bogside. It was unity in action by groups of Catholic and Protestant workers who would "normally" regard joint activity for a common objective as ridiculous.

Of course, it was limited action for a limited purpose and, politically, will have changed little. But there is no other area of life in the North where Catholic and Protestant workers ever join together for a common purpose: it only happens when the class is in action in its own economic interests. In this there is a glimmer—no more—of the most relevant, central truth of revolutionary socialist politics.

Union leaders—great anti-sectarians every one of them, argue against politics being brought into the protests at all—so as to build a "broad alliance" which can include Cathal Daly and Ian Paisley! While republican leaders—great believers in working class power in Ireland "eventually"—reject the idea that class politics are relevant at all until such time as there is an all-Ireland state.

In fighting to save the Health Service, as in fighting against the sectarian Northern state, socialists must argue loudly for the political links between the struggles to be acknowledged.

Labour Youth:

Knives are out for Militant

THE IRISH Labour party has begun to turn on the left rhetoric.

Dick Spring, having dusted off the Red Flag, has become a born again socialist.

But the rhetoric should not be taken too seriously. The party is still led by those who sat happily in Coalition for years. It is primarily geared to boosting their standing in the opinion polls.

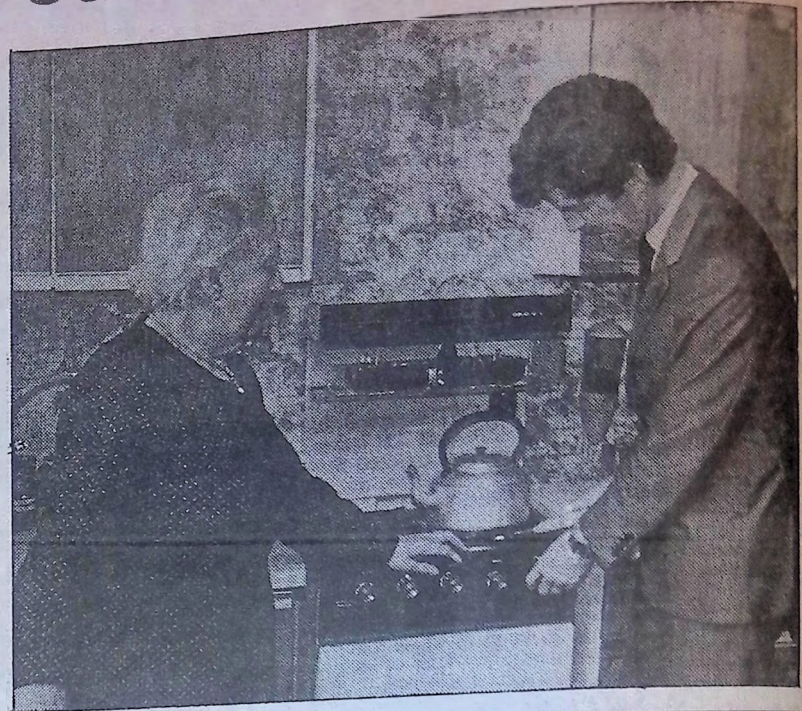
Anyone in any doubt, should look at how the Militant group in the party is under attack.

Labour Youth branches accused of Militant dominance—Dublin South West and Dublin South Central have been disbanded. In the Dublin West constituency the whole branch has been suspended while there is an investigation in to "financial irregularities".

This is purely a smokescreen. Their real crime was to select Joe Higgins, a prominent Militant supporter as their election candidate.

The Administrative Council of the party blocked his selection. This move was supported by a fellow left-winger, Emmet Stagg, for all his posturing, has leadership ambitions. He sees Labour Youth as a good place to build a base.

The attacks on Militant was also led by Stagg's supporters inside the Labour Youth organisation. Militant dominated Labour Youth since it was founded. But at its recent conference, they lost the position of chair, vice chair heavily and only managed



Spring still has socialism on the back burner

A tendency to fudge

THE MILITANT Tendency claim to be a Trotskyist group inside the Irish Labour Party. However a brief examination of their politics shows that this is not the case.

At one stage Trotsky did advocate the tactic of "entrism". But he was arguing that revolutionaries should enter left moving social democratic parties for a short time in order to win new members. But at the hands of Militant this has become a long term strategy. This has led to a softening of their politics. They have abandoned the building of an independent revolutionary party in favour of trying to transform the Labour Party into such a party.

Militant have also given up on the self emancipation of workers. Marx and Lenin argued that workers themselves must seize power, smash up the existing capitalist state and replace it with workers democracy. In the Militant view this is utopian. Instead they are for the election of a left wing

Labour Party government. They will enact an "Enabling Act" which will nationalise the top 200 companies and place them under workers' control. The working class are meanwhile reduced to cheering on the sidelines.

Militant are also forced to soften their criticisms of the union leaders and the Labour leadership in order to avoid expulsion from the Labour Party. Thus whereas Lenin called for revolutionaries to support reformists "as a rope supports a hanged man" Militant advocate unity with the reformists. When faced with expulsion from the Labour Party they insisted that they wanted to keep the Labour Party as a "broad church".

The experience in Britain shows the futility of Militant politics. They have been in the British Labour Party for 35 years without producing any real change. Instead here again Militant have faced expulsions despite their looking for "unity" in the Labour party. So desperate has their desire been to stay in the Labour Party

that they even tried to use the bosses courts to get an injunction against Kinnock.

Militant in Britain and Ireland have argued that it is impossible to build outside the official Labour Movement. If it were the case that we were confined to building inside the tiny Irish Labour Party, then life would indeed be miserable. Fortunately, the facts show otherwise. In Britain the Socialist Workers Party has succeeded in building a revolutionary organisation of several thousand strong. In Ireland the SWM has also succeeded in modestly growing.

A revolutionary Marxist party is desperately needed in Ireland. This is what the SWM are trying to build. We have no illusions in the size of the tasks ahead. The goal we strive for is a world free unemployment, starvation and racism. We urge all those who want to fully break with the reformists in the Labour Party to join us.



Emmet Stagg

to retain 4 places in an executive of 21.

Significantly, while the conference passed a number of left resolutions on abortion and South Africa, it also accepted Stagg's uncritical line on Russia. A resolution attacking Gorbachev's sham reforms was defeated in favour

of one that saluted the efforts of "Comrade Gorbachev".

The mood of the new left was summed up by the incoming chairperson of Labour Youth, Vincent Byrne, a Vexford Councillor. As soon

as he was elected he switched his jacket and jeans for the three piece suit and, of course, the red tie!

Spring and Co must be delighted by the witchhunt of

Militant. Now Stagg's supporters are doing the dirty work in a confused fashion. But the quashing of the real left in the party gives Spring more room to engage in hot air rhetoric.

The Seoul of Sligo

THE IDA is very proud that it has managed to attract the first Korean multinational to locate in Europe.

Seadan Video International is to provide up to eight hundred jobs in the Sligo area making video cassettes for export.

The company means to run industrial relations along Korean

lines, they've said. They'll expect total loyalty from the workers, a single-union agreement, no demarcation lines etc. They're even planning to build dormitories so the workers can live on the factory site. They clearly think that workers in Sligo should be grateful for the jobs and should live, eat and sleep for the good of

the company.

The company hasn't, however, been keen to talk about one of the main reasons they're moving production from Korea to Sligo.

In recent years, the working class in Korea has been in confident, fighting—and winning—form. Wave after wave of strikes, mass strikes and a number of general strikes have shaken the state to its very roots.

Last year, Seadan Video workers in Korea went on strike for higher wages and better working conditions. They had been working twelve hour shifts and wanted shorter hours with no loss of pay.

The workers won. Not only did the company concede new eight-hour shifts, the Korean workers won a 15-20 per cent rise in wages for a 30 per cent shorter working week!

The company say they want Korean-style industrial relations in their Sligo plant. The Sligo workers should give them just that by following the lead of their Korean fellow-workers.

Paved with gold

CHARLIE'S brother, Sean Haughey was enthusiastic, Carmencita was over the moon at the idea. Labour Councillor Michael O Halloran thought it a good move "provided there were reasonable safeguards".

They want to pave O Connell Street with personalised slabs of stone that would be paid for by Irish Americans.

For a mere 50 dollars, these poor suckers would have their names and telephone number inscribed on the stone.

Socialist Worker can also reveal that there are plans afoot to sell off the stone work in the Dail and Dublin Corporation's Mansion House to the same sources.

Special offers available to those who will take the dummies inside.



PLENTY of anger, but will the action be called?

WE THINK

The duty of socialists

IN THE four months since the Enniskillen bombing Southern attitudes to the North have seemed to swing wildly from one side to the other.

After Enniskillen, the Provos were lashed by every Leinster House party and newspaper commentator and were presented as being about as popular as lepers.

Then came January and the Stalker affair, followed closely by the Birmingham Six decision. In February the British made the Prevention of Terrorism Act permanent; Aidan McAneaspie was shot dead at Aghnacloy; and it emerged that Private Ian Thain, jailed for life for the murder of Kidso Reilly in 1983, had been freed and had rejoined his regiment.

March brought the detention and exclusion of relatives of Martina Shanahan under the PTA, the Gibraltar killings and then the Milltown cemetery attack.

At that point the Provos appeared to occupy the "high moral ground". But what happened on the Andersonstown Road on March 19th seemed to cause public opinion to switch back immediately to its post-Enniskillen, pre-Stalker mood.

All this has created an impression that the opinions on the North of practically all political elements in the South are up for grabs, depending on who were the perpetrators and who the victims of the most recent legal or military atrocity. But in fact something much more precise and politically interesting emerges from a consideration of actual attitudes of the parties of Southern capitalism over this period.

The only practical measure taken

by the Haughey government to express displeasure over the Stalker affair etc. was the suspension in January of meetings between Garda commissioner Doherty and RUC chief constable Hermon, although contact and cooperation between the two forces continued as before along the border. But two days after the Andersonstown Road this measure was abandoned. *The Irish Times*, citing senior government and garda sources attributed the decision to resume "full security cooperation" to concern that events in the North might threaten the stability of the South.

This point had been spelled out clearly in mid-February, at the height of nationalist anger over British "arrogance" and "insensitivity". Justice Minister Gerry Collins promised that there would be no easing of pressure on the Provos because of the very real threat that the Provisional IRA represents to this State—ie, the Southern State.

PD leader Des O'Malley used the same argument—that there was a threat to the Southern State—when demanding on RTE radio that "Nothing should impair security cooperation".

Fine Gael's Alan Dukes declared that the behaviour of the British had been "totally unsatisfactory from our point of view" but went on: "We must not look to measures that could be damaging to ourselves. Security cooperation is not one of the sanctions we can take".

What emerges plainly from all this is that the policies of the parties of Southern capitalism towards the North are shaped mainly by their concern to maintain stability on their own patch. They see a threat

to this stability in the presence of elements of the IRA in "their" territory, challenging their State's monopoly on the use of violence.

They see a threat in the possibility of UDA or UVF incursions across the border in "retaliation" for something that's happened in the North. They are aware that any upsurge of gut-Republicanism among sections of the Southern working class in response to attacks on Northern Catholics would likely to be containable in itself but could carry sizable numbers outside the present political consensus.

These considerations weigh particularly heavily on them at a time of deep economic crisis when they are "forced" to make savage attacks on working class living standards and need the maximum passivity and acceptance of the State's authority.

CONTEXT

It is in this context that socialists should see the attempts to depict the Provos as psychopaths, the half-hints about the possibility of internment, the efforts to enmesh RTE even more deeply in the machinery of the State, the envisaged strengthening of the gardai, the kites being flown by Fine Gaelers about issuing *the entire population* with South African-style "identity cards" and so forth.

These efforts to strengthen and ensure the stability of the Southern capitalist state do not derive from moral concern about violence in the North but from a desire to copperfasten the rule of the capitalist class in the South.



In this situation it is the height of political lunacy for socialists in the South to allow themselves to be herded into alliance with Haughey, Dukes and O'Malley and into support for crude anti-Provo "law and order" ideas.

The Southern capitalist class and its parties take a twenty-six county view. It is in their interest to keep the North and issues arising from the North at arm's length, and to cooperate with their partners across the water (difficult as these partners sometimes are to work with) in trying to devise a way of settling the North down so that it poses no threat to either of the partners' interests.

The Southern working class, on the other hand, must, in its own interest, take a thirty-two county view.

While continuing to argue that only an approach based on class rather than nationalist fervour makes any sense for Southern workers, and while seeing the struggles of workers as the central element in socialist politics, socialists should be to the fore in resisting the growing repression—opposing extradition, strip-searching, the erosion of civil liberties, "security cooperation" and so forth.

And, even when it's not particularly popular, socialists must fight within the working class movement for these issues to be taken up, as part of the broad struggle to assert the political independence of the working class movement and its necessary opposition to the capitalist State.

Buckling under Section 31

RTE journalists have been a disgrace to trade unionism and to journalism yet again in the case of Jenny McGeever, the reporter sacked for defying Section 31 censorship.

The Broadcasting Branch

of the NUJ abandoned a ballot on strike action over the sacking, claiming that a legal action for unfair dismissal made the matter sub judice. NUJ officials backed this climb-down.

The SWM regrets that Jenny McGeever opted for action through the courts than a straight fight through the union. But it was the craven attitude of the NUJ which pushed her in the direction of

the courts.

In presenting a report to the "Morning Ireland" programme which included the voices of Martin McGuinness and Gerry Adams Jenny McGeever was doing no more than following official NUJ policy.

The policy, passed at last year's annual conference, explicitly encourages RTE journalists to ignore Section 31 in cases where it would prevent a "full and fair" account of a story, and it guarantees full union support for any journalist disciplined for carrying out this policy.

NUJ rank and file members will pay dearly for this betrayal if there isn't a strong fight-back in support of official policy and for *All Out action* for Jenny's reinstatement.

No management will feel a need to take the NUJ seriously if it can't stand by its own members when they follow the union's own policy.

Self-respecting NUJ members at RTE should organise now to boot out Broadcasting Branch chairman, Charlie Bird, who has operated throughout as an agent of management rather than a representative of union members.

NUJ members in every Irish branch should call special meetings to insist on strike action.

Emergency resolutions should be put to the union's 1988 conference this month reaffirming the anti-Section 31 policy and instructing the national executive to declare an official dispute with RTE and to call members out until such times as Jenny McGeever is reinstated.

Breaking Glass

THE BOSSES at Waterford Glass have scored another major victory. The shop stewards and workers at the plant have decided to accept management's refusal to pay any wage increase for this year.

In effect, the workers have just agreed to pay for the recent redundancy package of £20 million.

The refusal to make a pay offer is unprecedented

in the company but management were confident that they could get away with it. This followed the huge defeats for the unions over the redundancy issue last Autumn. Over one thousand people have taken up the scheme. There is a continuing rolling redundancy package in operation that is designed to undermine union organisation.

Meanwhile the company have taken on contract workers to keep their production up. They are installing new technology. This disposable workforce of contract workers (which can be sacked at a minutes notice) is also weakening union organisation.

It is creating a two-tier workforce—one with full union rights and the other with none.

Management are also bringing in some American and Japanese techniques such as quality control circles.

All of this will weaken and even destroy a union organisation that has been built up over the years unless a shop stewards get to grips with the situation. It is understandable that the shop stewards may not have been confident to push a demand for wages this year when the company balance sheet was so low. But a stand up fight is necessary in the near future if management's confidence is to be dented.

QUINN'S SPIRIT

FERGAL QUINN, the boss of An Post, has come up with a new gimmick to "lift the national spirit".

He is heading up a consortium to enter a ship into the Whitbread millionaires yacht now. This is an around the world race. Any playboy sailor would need to be able to take a long holiday to participate.

The unemployed are, off course, disqualified as they "need to be available for work".

Quinn wants us all to contribute to the estimated cost of £5 million to build the ship. He says of the ship wins, it would be a victory "for Ireland".

So, all you unemployed beggers, cough up. Caithlin Ni Houlihan is speaking through our glizzy entrepreneurs.



Jenny McGeever sacked in Section 31 rumpus

INTERNATIONAL

Can Jackson break the mould?

IN THE jamboree of the US presidential battle, Jesse Jackson seems to represent something different.

He is black and attracts millions of black voters who have had enough of racism and worsening living conditions. The number of black families earning less than \$5000 has gone up by 50% since 1970. Thirty per cent of blacks are below the official poverty line. Many of these look to Jesse Jackson as a way out. But his support goes beyond this, as the US primaries have shown.

In the whitest state in the union, Vermont, Jackson got 26% of the Democratic votes. In Minneapolis, a city without a large black population, he actually won.

His success reflects the widespread disenchantment with Reagan's regime. Real wages have fallen by 11% in the last decade. Unemployment is rising among white workers. Jackson is tapping this support and finding enthusiasm for his campaign.

But Jackson is building his campaign on shaky ground.

His election message does explicitly target support outside the traditional black base. But it is not particularly aimed at the working class. Rather, his appeal is to a far broader constituency, or as one campaign worker said "the true rainbow this time".

"Twenty years ago racial violence in the South was not only constant but legal," Jackson has said. "Today, racial violence still occurs but it's illegal so we can struggle effectively to end it. But economic violence is legal and is devastating the lives of Americans of all races". In other words, Jackson wants to move from the racial battlefield he stressed in the 1984

campaign, to what he now calls "the economic common ground".

But Jackson's "economics" are very patriotic. He sees import controls as the alternative to Reaganomics. American workers and bosses should line up on the "economic common ground" of opposing foreign goods.

Patriotism runs right through his campaign. He has stressed the need for a strong military and has not criticised the US presence in the Persian gulf, merely Reagan's lack of "clearly defined objectives". (He has even declared his support for Israel, to patch up the hostility that he received for his remarks about Palestine in 1984).

For him the social problems are merely due to Reagan's leadership and not the system itself. Supporters of his National Rainbow Coalition (NRC) met at their convention in October, Jackson let loose some unbridled patriotism: "Nothing is wrong with America", he said, "America is our land. America is God's country. America has been blessed. God bless America".

In fact Jackson has increasingly presented a moderate image. Last month he walked arm in arm down the streets of Selma, Alabama, with the mayor who in 1965 attacked the Freedom marchers in that town. In spite of all the talk of Jackson representing the completion of the civil rights movement, his approach could hardly be more different. Martin Luther King, though a moderate, was prepared to build mass campaigns that openly challenged the law. Jackson is working exclusively through the electoral channels.

The NRC is an electoral machine, whose main task is



Jackson's triumph after Super Tuesday

getting out the vote. In the longer term it will set Jackson up as a power broker inside the Democratic Party. It certainly does not constitute a potential left opposition to the Democratic party.

Increasingly it has become the home of ex-radicals of the late sixties and for them the acceptable face of the Democratic party. Jackson has, though, repudiated support from socialists such as the Democratic Socialist Organisation.

To reassure this middle class base, at the end of last year Jackson wrote a letter to Business Week magazine promising readers that he was not anti-business. He also ran off a series of commercials on American TV advertising a chain of business schools.

RACISM

Where Jackson has organised working class support it is mainly from the

higher echelons of the trade unions. One of his supporters, William Winpisinger, head of the machinists union sold out the 1985-86 strike by the United Food and Commercial Workers against Hormel meatpackers. He ordered his members to cross the picket line—the same picket line that Jackson had been seen to visit.

Sadly, Jackson is taking the support from working class Americans nowhere. Exclusive concentration on

the Presidential election within the confines of the Democratic Party ties Jackson to moderacy hand and foot. There have been outbursts of real anger, as in the Howard Beach demonstrations in New York, mounted against white racists getting off lightly for murder of a black youth. Jackson has refused to give his support for fear of losing the support of Democratic Cuomo. Ironically he is spurning the very struggle—against racism—that put him where he is now.

Armenia:

Gorbachev's biggest challenge



Hundred of thousands of Armenians defy Moscow

UP TO a million people took to the streets in militant protests in Armenia recently. In the biggest protest the USSR has seen since the twenties, workers defied the party bosses and downed tools to demonstrate at the end of February.

The agitation began with demands for the return of the predominantly Armenian region of Nagorno-Karabakh to the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan since 1923. Armenian party bosses seem at first to have allowed the protests as a means of striking back at Gorbachev. His "reform" programme involves—in an attempt to make Russian state capitalism more efficient—attacking the power of corrupt regional party officials.

But the scale of the action quickly overtook the local party leaders and other, local grievances, in particular about pollution from synthetic rubber plants and the building of a nuclear reactor, were raised.

More than half of the USSR's population is non-Russian. These nations to the

East, South and West of Russia proper, were first colonised by the Tsars who tried to impose the Russian language.

The revolution of 1917 granted full rights to the different nationalities, enabling people for the first time to have their own national republic governments and to use their native languages without fear of discrimination.

Stalinism reversed all this. The national governments were appointed from Moscow and people speaking non-Russian languages faced vicious discrimination once again. Whole nations were forced to move thousands of miles. This happened to the Crimean Tartars, who still have not been allowed to return home.

Under Brezhnev the intensity of national oppression was reduced but Moscow still called the shots. The regional party leaderships became centres of corruption which contributed to economic stagnation.

In order to try to overcome this economic crisis, Gorbachev's reforms are seeking to control corruption—not from below by the mobilisation of the oppressed masses, but from above by administra-

tive means. This has led to a number of nationalist clashes over the past eighteen months

In Kazakhstan last year a corrupt local leader was removed and replaced by a Russian by Moscow. Masses took to the streets in demonstrations and rioting—not so much because they were for the old, corrupt leader, but because their nationalist sentiments were outraged by Moscow putting in their man.

Gorbachev's attempts to "restructure" Soviet society are aimed at increasing productivity and overcoming inefficiency in the crisis-torn economy. This policy entails not only the carrot of more openness, but the stick of measures that attack workers' living standards.

Many party officials threatened under the reform programme, particularly in the nationalities, are prepared to use nationalist protest as a means of hitting back at Gorbachev's faction. But last month's events show that nationalist protest can quickly grow beyond the bounds set for it as workers' add their social grievances as well.

This is at once the threat to Russia's stalinist rulers and the hope for the future.

A system that breeds violence against women

RAPE AND the way in which society treats its victims is probably the most horrific example of the distorted way in which women are viewed in this society.

Rape is not legally recognised within marriage. Women who are raped are looked upon with distrust and disdain. They are taught to blame themselves for being raped.

The entire legal and medical establishment is geared around determining whether the woman was "asking for it" or if she only pretended to be raped. Under the present laws in Ireland, a woman often finds her entire sexual history reviewed before the jury (though it is not legally required). The medical examination to find forensic evidence of rape is often humiliating and inadequate. The Dublin Rape Crisis Centre notes that "all doctors trained in the Republic of Ireland are given more lectures on how to detect a false rape than to deal with a real one". In such an atmosphere it comes as no surprise that only a handful of rapes are ever reported.

But why do rapes occur? The Dublin Rape Crisis Centre for example in their First Report, quote Susan Brownmiller's famous phrase: "Rape is a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear".

In other words, rape is part of an overall conspiracy to subjugate women. That men, regardless of class, age, politics or temperament threaten women with rape solely on the basis of their physical make-up. Furthermore, men rape with the intention of showing their dominance over women, to keep them in their place.

CONSPIRACY

A socialist draws radically different conclusions on the causes of rape. She or he sees the root of the problem in the system we live under—Capitalism. The way it distorts every aspect of our lives including our sexual relationships, is the root cause of rape. Women are seen as passive and vulnerable, sex objects to be taken by men at their pleasure. This image of women is constantly reinforced by the media. Women are used to sell everything from toothpaste to cars. Men and



women can never wholly escape from the roles they are supposed to play in this society.

We are told from early childhood that the normal thing to do is fall in love, marry, have children and live happily ever after. The reality of most peoples' lives is very different. Marital bliss is torn to pieces by unemployment, financial insecurity and inadequate housing. The fact that working class men and women have no real power over their lives leads to alienation. The difference between societies' ideal and reality leads to confusion and unhappiness. This disillusionment often leads to violence and because of the inequality of the system it will inevitably be male violence.

Nor is rape a "conscious process of intimidation". Indisputably rape sometimes happens for this purpose, but this is only a small minority and it is certainly not an adequate explanation for why men

rape. The reason some men become rapists, as Susan Brownmiller states, is probably "stemming from a need to find or prove their masculinity. They are desperately trying to learn to be successful men".

Where do their role models come from? Capitalist society. Men rape from a distorted sense of sexuality, not as part of a conspiracy.

A socialist would never condone rape but it is ridiculous to blame men as a sex for a system that distorts their lives as much as womens.

STUDIES

Only a few studies have been conducted on rape. They are mostly American but are still very useful in placing rape within a class context. They show a clear correlation between social deprivation and sexual violence. They also show that the degree of actual (as opposed to abstract) exposure to the threat of rape for women is determined by their class position in society. The most widely referred to inquiry into rape was conducted in the US by Menacham Amir who examined all reported rapes in Philadelphia from 1958-1960. He found that 90% of all rapists "belonged to the lower part of the occupational scale, from skilled workers to the unemployed" and aged between 15 and 19. Most

of them had previous convictions for burglary, robbery or assault but rarely a previous rape conviction. Their victims were usually of the same class, race and age as themselves. Other reports confirm this evidence.

CURFEWS

Feminists have argued that all women, regardless of class, are raped in equal proportions and equally exposed to the threat of rape. In reality, all evidence points to the contrary. Women Against Rape note that: "Women with the least financial security—low paid jobs and with low paid partners, poor housing and no access to a car, stood a higher chance of being assaulted or sexually abused."

This of course is not to imply that middle class and upper class women don't get raped. But because they are financially secure and have more control over their lives, it is much less a possibility for them than for their working class counterparts.

Because feminists believe that women as a whole must be protected from all men, they end up calling for higher sentences for rapists, male curfews and "better" policing.

Socialists oppose these demands because they suggest that if the law is tougher on individuals, then the

problem of rape can be solved. But as we have seen, even if rapists got higher sentences, rape would still continue as long as capitalism existed.

It is also a political trap because it puts more power into the hands of the police and the courts. This misrepresents and obscures the real purpose of these institutions. They are an integral part of the capitalist system which distorts sexuality and promotes sexism. They are certainly not there to protect ordinary women from violence.

Moreover any call for more power to the police and the courts will rebound on working class people. Calls for higher sentences for rapists will help build up a general law and order atmosphere where it will be working class people who are attacked.

This is not to say that rape should be ignored or not fought against but that it should be combated through the collective organisation of working class men and women. This can be done by calling on the trade unions to fight for better street lighting, paid taxis home from work and better public transport. By fighting together as workers, men and women can not only change the system but rid themselves of the ideological chains that stunt and distort our sexual relationships".

EVE MORRISON



JUNE '36
Class struggle and the Popular Front in France
by Jacques Dunos and Marcel Gibelin

In a decade dominated by the rise of fascism, the election of the Popular Front government in June 1936 seemed at last to put socialism on the agenda. £6.95 inc post

NICARAGUA:

Peace plan concessions



IN MARCH, the Sandinista government of Nicaragua signed a truce with the Contra rebels to bring peace in the seven year war. The truce is temporary but it has already been hailed on all sides as a great step forward. There is no doubt that many Nicaraguans, worn out by seven years of brutal US funded war, will welcome an early end to the fighting.

But there are also signs of unease among Sandinista supporters as they see the gains of the revolution being whittled away. The terms of the ceasefire indicate that the most democratic government in Central America has been forced to make concessions to the US and to supporters of the former dictator, Somoza.

In return for an early end to the fighting, the Sandinistas have pledged to free all remaining political prisoners. These include 3,200 of Somoza's brutal National Guard.

Contras who lay down their arms are to be given complete freedom from prosecution and the right to organise politically. Many on the left see this concession as reflecting the Sandinista's concern with pluralism and liberal democracy. It is nothing of the sort.

The Contras right to organise politically is backed up the coffers of US imperialism. La Prensa, the main right-wing magazine is heavily funded by the US. A growing number of right wing Americans such as the former US Ambassador, Jean Fitzpatrick, are flooding into the capital, Managua.

Under the peace treaty, US "humanitarian aid" to the Contras can continue. This will now be used to back Contra propaganda, distribution of papers and broadcasting.

Thus while left wing critics of the Sandinistas—who argue, for example that the rich should be made to bear the cost of the war—are hampered by a lack of resources, the hated ex-Somoza supporters will have millions at their disposal.

Two immediate events have led the Sandinistas into signing the treaty.

The first is the momentum of the Arias Peace plan. The Arias plan was a regional agreement between five governments in Central America.

It sought to achieve peace between guerrilla groups and their respective governments.

But whereas the Sandinistas made tremendous concessions to their right wing guerrillas, the ships in the region have used the plan to undermine their left wing opponents. This can be seen in El Salvador.

The President of El Salvador, Napoleon Duarte, complied with the

agreement by enacting an amnesty. 500 left wing guerrillas were released but the rest were given 15 days to turn in their weapons. Fortunately few did so.

The amnesty also exempted from prosecution army officers and death squad members, who have murdered 40,000 since 1979. They celebrated their release by murdering Herbert Anaya, president of the El Salvador Committee for Human Rights.

In the army controlled "democratic elections" that followed, the extreme right Arena grouping came to power. It's leader, D'Aubuisson was once described as a "psychopath" even by the US ambassador. He is believed to have personally organised the assassination of Archbishop Romero.

In Guatemala the army refused to meet with its left wing rebels and stepped up operations. Murders, disappearances, enforced homelessness and internment of whole villages continued.

In Honduras, the country continued to be turned into a US military base. The contras were sheltered in comfort. Efforts to prove the existence of death squads have led to untraced murders of witnesses.

Thus far setting back the left in the region, the Arias plan tightened the noose on the Sandinistas.

The other pressure on the Sandinistas was the virtual collapse of their economy. This was due to both the pressure of war and their failure to take measures to expropriate the rich. On February the 14th, the Sandinistas removed all subsidies on food; introduced a new currency and allowed salaries to rise to meet the huge levels of inflation. All of this was an attempt to meet the growing shortages in the economy.

This economic chaos was producing a growth in support for the right. 15,000 right wingers demonstrated in Managua on January 10th under the slogan "Death to the Sandinistas".

The peace plan with the Contras will now provide them with an opportunity to harness this discontent in their direction. Their's has been a dual strategy towards the revolution. Firstly, there was the hard cop approach of open war. Now they are switching to the second phase of building politically on the destruction they have caused.

Socialist Worker has consistently argued that unless the Nicaraguan revolution of 1979 spread, it would face all the difficulties that follows isolation. Unfortunately, the nationalist approach of the Sandinistas ruled this out.

The truth nevertheless remains that unless a strategy is developed for the defeat of capitalism in the region, then the bitterness in the lives of the workers and peasants of Central America will remain.

WEST BELFAST:

School of resistance

The people of West Belfast have been denounced as "savages and barbarians". The Sunday Tribune has called those involved in the killings of two British soldiers last month as "morally deficient human beings". From all sides they are under attack.

Here JOAN McKIERNAN reports directly from West Belfast of the reality on the ground

TEN THOUSAND people gathered a Belfast city hall last month to commemorate the deaths of the two British soldiers who were killed in Andersonstown. They did not remember the three people who were killed in Milltown cemetery, nor the countless other horrific killings this community has seen. Unionist mayor Dixie Gilmore showed he wasn't interested in the victims of the Shankill Butchers. "That's different," he said, "nobody witnessed that".

In the House of Commons Tom King said much the same. In speaking of the mob attack on the soldiers, he said "the first impression was it might have been a further attempted bomb attack on the funeral". He said the police moved in "as soon as it was clear that the matter was very much more serious". To the nationalist people of Belfast he was clearly saying that the bombing of Catholics was not as serious as an attack on British soldiers.

One of the women who was in Milltown on that frightful day as the bullets and grenades killed and maimed said, "After the attack in the cemetery, people were afraid something would happen again." "We were horrified at what happened on Saturday and didn't approve, but as the press and publicity continue, feelings turn round." She is now more worried about further sectarian attacks.



These attacks are not new to her. She moved to Andersonstown 19 years ago after she was burned out of her North Belfast home by Protestants. Now her teenage sons use the black taxis on the Falls Road and she's heard of the new graffiti up in Protestant areas, "Black taxis—legitimate targets."

People in West Belfast aren't really surprised at the attacks on their community made by the press and politicians. After 20 years of

state violence, there's just one more layer added to the feelings of resentment and despair. Dixie Gilmore referred to the "Scum of humanity" Tom King said they didn't belong in a civilised society.

But many people rightly wonder if this is a civilised place to expect people to live. There are over 77,000 Catholics living in West Belfast. Many came from other areas of the city in 1971 during the

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MARXIST CLASSIC

EXPLAINING A WORLD OF WAR

by **DUNCAN BLACKIE**

SOCIALISM, the Tories claim, is out of date. The world, they say, is now quite different to when Marx first laid out the basis for a decisive fight against capitalism.

The world has changed, but in what way? Has there been a fundamental shift which now blocks the road to socialism?

To answer these questions there is no better place to start than with the excellent *Imperialism and the World Economy*, written over 70 years ago by the Russian revolutionary Nikolai Bukharin.

Imperialism and the World Economy was aimed at analysing the physical, economic and political turmoil which followed the outbreak of the First World War.

Bukharin first looked at the economy as a world system, and then at the position of different nations within it.

He started by seeing how capitalism has transformed the world over the last 200 years, how it has pushed its tentacles to every corner of the globe and how, in doing so, it has transformed itself.

"By and large," he said, "the whole process of world economic life in modern times," becomes, "an ever-widening reproduction of the relations between two classes—the class of the world proletariat on the one hand and the world bourgeoisie on the other."

Nonsense

But the expansion and creation of two contending world-scale classes is much more than a simple, quantitative expansion of early capitalism.

Long before capitalism had circled the globe, it had already started to change its specific features.

The top-hatted boss who once owned and controlled a single factory, facing other bosses in "free" competition, was already nonsense by the latter part of the 19th century.

A long process of takeovers, mergers and bankruptcies has concentrated the economy into fewer, but larger units.

Bukharin noted that "the growth of the volume of stocks and bonds is an expression of the form of property that is characteristic of our times, in a word... 'finance' capitalism".

Bukharin was careful to show that finance capitalism does not mean that industry has been "hijacked" by wily bankers, as many of the current myths about the ills of British capitalism would have it.

Rather, it is a consequence of the increasing concentration of industry. Banking and industrial capital tends to become merged. "As a matter of fact," said Bukharin, "the representatives of the industrialists manage the banks and vice versa."

A central feature of this concentration is the development of trusts and cartels, carving out and controlling a section of the market.

The expansion of production in the heartlands of capitalism drives bosses wider in search of markets and raw materials.

Imperialism contains an

relatively peaceful competition in which the role of direct military intervention was relatively less important. But this has only been achieved since 1945 on the basis of unprecedented arms spending and ultimately the terror of nuclear annihilation.

And, as the aftermath of last October's great crash on the world stock markets showed, despite all the rhetoric about "free" markets, the days of massive state intervention in the economy are by no means over.

Nations

It is true that the specific line-up of world power has changed. There are now intermediate nations both under the heel of the superpowers, and sometimes themselves pushing around less powerful countries.

But, again, this does not invalidate the core of *Imperialism and the World Economy*: That the world is on the one hand united by one market and on the other divided up on the basis of economic and military might.

The most important message from *Imperialism and the World Economy* is that capitalism has unleashed enormous productive forces on a world scale. But the potential for these forces to improve the lives of everyone in the world is constantly compromised by the continuing anarchy of the world economy and the threat of war.

The final resolution of these conflicts is the task of the other force world capitalism has created—the world working class.

■ *Imperialism and the World Economy, £3.95 from the Bookmarks Club. Ask your Socialist Worker seller or branch bookstall for details.*



Victoria Hospital is noted world wide for its coronary care unit, the cardiac ambulance and its ability to react to emergencies. But round its walls more babies die before they reach their first birthday than anywhere else in western Europe. More people still die of bronchitis and other illnesses than anywhere else in the North or Britain.

Next month will see the next lot of school leavers signing on the dole. If they leave a Catholic school without qualification they are the most likely to be left without a job. Those few who get work will receive less pay and work longer hours than workers in Britain. They'll also pay higher prices for everything they need. For those left on the dole, the future is bleak.

There are no jobs coming to West Belfast except the threatened workschemes. And with the extreme cuts in social benefits also coming next month, life on the dole will become even more harsh. There won't be much for the young people to do but hang about, riot, joyride and suffer abuse by the patrolling Brits and RUC.

DEFEND

Hundreds of angry young men chased Michael Stone in Milltown cemetery. Their lives in West Belfast taught them not to wait, not to depend on the RUC and the Brits. One of those who died, Kevin Brady, was thirteen when the Brits dragged away hundreds of men on internment morning. Those young people have seen friends and relatives die from British guns and plastic bullets. Life in Belfast has taught them to fight back, on their own, to defend their people.

They did it at the cemetery and were called brave, they attacked two soldiers driving full speed at a funeral and politicians called them scum. But local people see it differently. One young woman described how she clung to her workmate in horror as they watched the TV pictures of the mob attack on the soldiers.

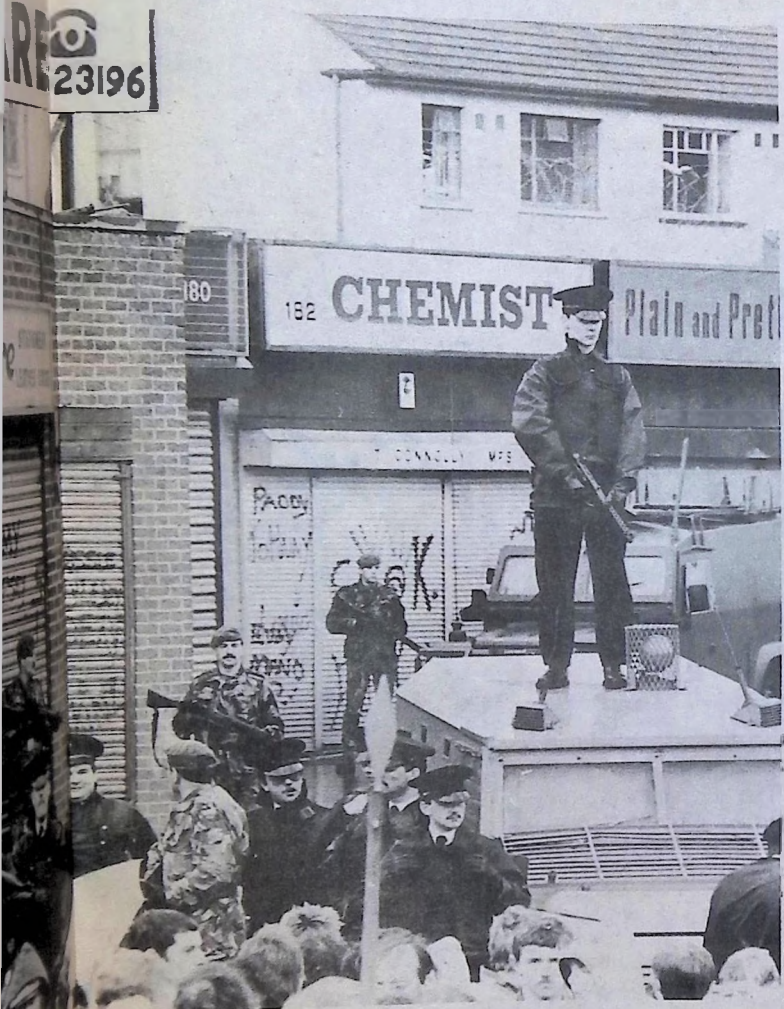
"It was horrible, what a terrible death. But what were they doing there. They were in plain clothes and armed. They shouldn't have been there. If they were SAS, they got their just deserts. The SAS walk up to people, just bang them—shoot them dead, and they get total immunity. It was awful the way the men attacked the car, and it may be blood thirsty, but nobody here is shedding tears for the soldiers. The worst thing is that it is a coup for the British. It takes away from the murders in Gibraltar and Milltown".

—JOAN MCKIERNAN

Photo: DEREK SPEIRS/REPORT

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largest forced population shift in Europe since world war 11. Many have found relative safety during this long war. But they have to survive and raise their children amidst gross unemployment, poverty, poor health and constant repression by the RUC and British army.

SCHOOL

Tommy McErlean was one of the young men who was killed in Milltown cemetery. He was a year old when British soldiers first came into Divis Flats where he lived. He left school early and was married for three years before he got his first job—an ACE post that would have lasted just one year. He was not unusual in an area where overall male unemployment is 32% compared to 21% in the rest of Belfast. It's even higher in certain areas—53% in the Falls where McErlean was raising his young family and 56% in the Whiterock—one of the areas where the tricolour defiantly flies.

The large population influx in to the area provided a major challenge

for the British government to provide new housing. Over the years there has been a major housing programme with new estates and major refurbishment schemes. But homelessness and rotten conditions is still a common problem. Families are constantly being split up and sent to hostels because there are no homes.

The latest cut of £118 million from the Housing Executive budget will only make things worse.

A recent victim of the bad housing is 24 year old Pauline McCabe. She and her seven month old daughter have gone to live in a hostel because her flat in Twinbrook is overrun with rats and mice. Last September she found two dead mice lying next to her young daughter's cheek as she lay sleeping in her cot. Not surprising, her child is always sick with different illnesses, including a kidney infection.

Though West Belfast has one of the largest and most advanced medical centres in Europe, it is still an area where people are more likely to die early from diseases related to poor social conditions: The Royal

VIETNAM:

The war the USA lost

"A COMMUNIST military take over in South Vietnam is no longer just improbable . . . it is impossible", declared US President Johnson in 1966. Statements by US Presidents are more often about how they would like things to be than how they really are. This one was a classic example.

Within less than ten years, in April 1975, the world was to be entertained with the spectacle of US Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker clutching the Stars and Stripes to his bosom escaping by helicopter from Saigon as the Communist led liberation army rolled in. The strongest imperialist power in the world had been defeated by what Johnson had once described as "that raggedy ass fourth rate country".

The roots of the Vietnam conflict go back to the post-war settlement.

At the end of the second world war the world was essentially divided between two major superpowers—Washington and Moscow. This did not mean that countries were directly controlled by the superpowers, although in some cases it did, but rather that they were part of one or another "zone of influence". As one US general put it, "This country cannot escape its destiny as the champion of the free world". Substitute "policeman" for "champion" and you should get the idea.

By 1950 that "free world" seemed to be shrinking fast. China had "fallen" to Mao's peasant armies. South Korea was under threat. The prospect of a "Red Asia" seemed imminent. Where would they stop then? Vietnam was becoming an important test case for American imperialism.

Indochina before World War II had been a French colony. After the defeat of Japan in 1945 France with the support of the US and, more importantly, growing military aid, attempted to recolonise the area. They were opposed by a nationalist movement, the Viet Minh, led by Ho Chi Minh. The Viet Minh had built their support through their leading role in the resistance to the Japanese occupation. Ironically they had then been receiving military aid from the US.

Ho Chi Minh initially tried to negotiate a compromise with the French. When this failed the Viet Minh launched a guerrilla war which culminated in the defeat of France in 1954 at Dien Bien Phu. Under the peace treaty—the Geneva Accord—the country was divided with the Viet Minh controlling the North and with a US dominated regime controlling the South. This was to be a temporary arrangement and the country was to be reunited on the basis of elections to be held within two years.

When it became clear that the Viet Minh would sweep the elections the US refused to sign the Accords, cancelled the elections and threw its weight behind the regime led by the petty dictator Ngo Dinh Diem.

The opposition to Diem, the National Liberation Front commonly known as the Vietcong, grew rapidly. In 1960, despite the opposition at first of North Vietnam, who did not want to provoke a confrontation with the South, the guerrilla war was restarted.

It was at this stage that direct US military involvement started. Initially they were sent by Kennedy as non-combatant military advisors to the South Vietnamese army. This involvement was to escalate until there were 500,000 troops stationed in Vietnam at any one time. Over the next twelve years 2.8 million US soldiers were to fight in Vietnam—7.5 million tons of bombs were to be dropped by the US forces—three and a half times the total tonnage of bombs dropped by the allies during the second world war. The statistics of the war are staggering—and all this to defeat one of the poorest countries in the world.

US propaganda portrayed their troops as the saviours of the Vietnamese people. But to the soldiers on the ground it was quite obvious that they were almost universally hated. US troops going into action with their "allies" the South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) had to be as prepared to defend themselves from them as to attack the Vietcong. By 1966 the ARVN had the highest rate of desertion in the world.

The NLF had a solid base amongst the peasantry. When they liberated a village they handed the land over to the peasantry, instituted an uncorrupt judicial system and established hospitals and schools. For the Vietnamese peasant, for whom to be liberated by the US forces meant the reinstatement of the old landlords, the choice of who to support was simple.

In February 1968 the strength of that support was made obvious to the world. The NLF launched what became known as the Tet Offensive.

Almost every important US base, every town and city were attacked. The cities Da Nang, Chu lai and Hue were captured. In Saigon 19 commandos blasted their way into the American Embassy compound and attacked the buildings with anti tank rockets

REFUGEES

Although the US forces were to win back all its lost positions the Tet Offensive was the beginning of the end. In the counter offensive over 200,000 civilians were killed. The number of new refugees rose to two million. In contrast 16,000 US troops were killed during that year. The explanation of an American colonel for the destruction of Ben Tre "we had to destroy the town to save it", seemed to symbolize the whole American involvement in Vietnam. No longer could they argue that they were fighting a small minority—they were fighting an entire nation.

In America the anti-war movement grew massively. Men called by the army burnt their draft cards. Troop and ammunition convoys were blocked by protesters. In 1970 at Kent State University the National Guard shot dead four students who were protesting against Nixon's invasion of Cambodia. 26,000 Chicago cops and national guardsmen were required to defend the Democrats Presidential Convention. Returning black ex-servicemen, finding that American society still treated them like dirt despite all their sacrifices, turned their military training to good advantage in the ghetto riots of



Children flee napalm attack in 1972

Detroit, Los Angeles, Newark and Washington. The war was coming home.

The cost of the war soared from 10 billion dollars to 30 billion dollars a year. 1971 saw the American balance of payments go into the red for the first time since the second world war. Even the mighty dollar was threatened. Faced by political unrest and possible economic ruin large sections of the ruling class turned against the war.

Most importantly in Vietnam the troops refused to fight. By 1969 virtually all land patrols had stopped. When ordered into battle the conscripts turned on their officers, shooting or "fragging" them—a fragmentation bomb ended all argument. Drug addiction became a major problem. America could no longer physically continue the war. In February 1973 the troops were withdrawn and within two years the whole country was under the control of the liberation forces.

The defeat in Vietnam continues to haunt the American ruling class today. They could only look on helplessly when one of their closest allies, the Shah of Iran, was toppled by Khomeini. US troops were immediately withdrawn from the Lebanon after a car bomb killed several hundred marines in Beirut. In Nicaragua they have had to rely on the militarily unreliable Contras, an army led by gangsters and drug barons.

This fear will not last forever. Under Reagan there has been a clear shift from "never again" to "next time we'll do it right". At the level of popular culture there are the extremes of Rambo where one man goes back to sort it all out—to the more liberal view which admits that maybe the US should never have been in Vietnam but at least our boys fought bravely.

"The right stuff in the wrong war" is the blurb on the Vietnam veteran's autobiography. The idea that it was the wrong stuff in the wrong war is never allowed. But for now at least every time the US ruling class contemplates a military adventure overseas the spectre of Vietnam lurks in the background.

The lost victory

THE HEROISM of the Vietnamese was, and still should be, an inspiration to the left throughout the world. Thirteen years after the final defeat of American imperialism many ask what went wrong. The last thirteen years have seen the horrors of Cambodia, most graphically shown in "The Killing Fields"; war between "Socialist" Cambodia and "Socialist" Vietnam and later with "Socialist" China; hundreds of thousands move to refugee camps in Thailand. Today the region is still one of the poorest in the world.

To understand what happened you have to look at the politics of the liberation movements. Inspired by the Bolshevik revolution and the Chinese revolution of 1925-27 Communism began to take roots in Indochina. Its aim was a revolution that would sweep away colonialism and imperialism but also capitalism and class exploitation. This they argued could only happen as part of an international revolution.

Under the influence of Stalinism their aims began to narrow down to national liberation. As Ho Chi Minh founder of the Vietnamese CP, put it, "Nothing is more important than liberty and national independence". Those revolutionary socialists who opposed him were executed.

The nation state and an independent national economy became all important. Capitalism is an inter-

national system which respects no national boundaries. Even in an advanced economy "socialism in one country" would have been impossible but in Indochina, devastated by 35 years of war it was totally utopian.

The extreme example of this is demonstrated by Cambodia. In order to build up the resources to develop the economy the cities were forcibly cleared and agriculture collectivised. This could only be done by extreme terror organised by a small elite.

Vietnam took a more cautious line but by pressure of its extreme poverty it has been forced to look to foreign capital to develop its economy. Recently, The Economist, the bosses mag, commented that Vietnam "offered the most capitalist incentives for foreign investment ever promulgated by a socialist country". After a heroic struggle against imperialism the option seems to be terror or the reestablishing of the hold of imperialism.

The fate of Indochina demonstrates starkly the impossibility of "Socialism in one country". The hold of imperialism cannot be broken by carving out separate national patches. Capitalism is a world system whose resources can be used to build socialism only when it has been shattered by an international socialist revolution. The struggle in Vietnam should remain an inspiration for all who desire this. What has happened since is a warning of what to avoid.

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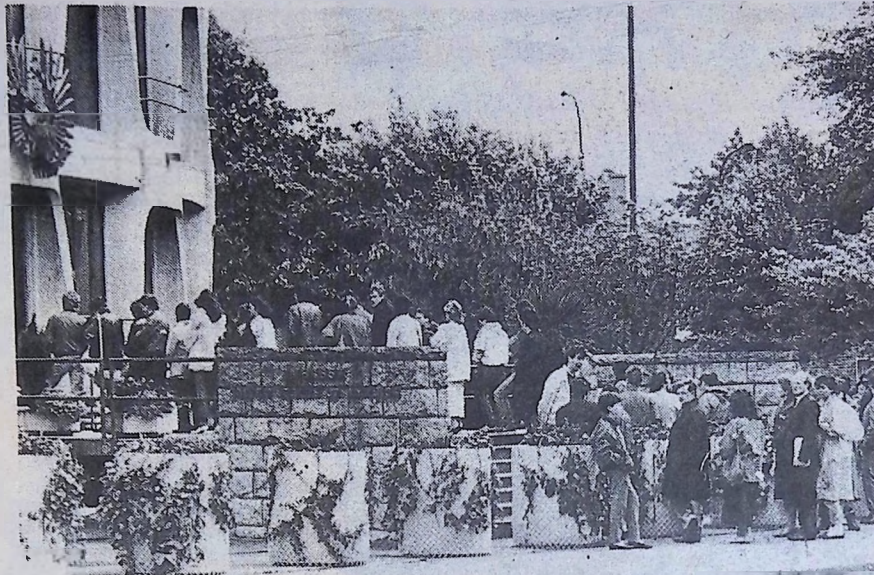
American way of death

MORE babies die in infancy in America than any other industrialised country. In Washington a black child is more likely to die before one year than a child in under-developed Jamaica. These are the startling results revealed in a report issued by the Children's Defence Fund, a Washington based welfare organisation.

11 out of every 1,000 babies dies in the US. This is exactly the same figure for Ireland despite the vast wealth in America. The trend in infant mortality is also going up in America. Since 1985 there has been an increase in the figure as the full impact of Reagan's economics hit home.

The main reason for America's poor record is the high cost of medicine. American medicine is mainly privately run. To be treated you first need to be covered by insurance. Yet 35 million Americans cannot afford the insurance. The result is that they often have to forego visits to doctors.

The Children's Defence Fund report shows that a quarter of pregnant women in the US do without medical care for the first three months. It can cost 50 dollars simply to visit the doctor. Black women are even less likely to get full medical care. 40% stay away



American visas should be issued with a health warning.

from doctors until the last three months. This lack of pre-natal care is linked with an increase in low birth weight

This shocking report makes it all the more necessary to fight the run down of the public health service in both the North and South.

—JANE DOYLE
DUBLIN

DOWN THE DRAIN

Dear Socialist Worker I was interested to hear that workers in Dublin Corpo are refusing to process queries from TD's "clinics".

It seems that Mary Mooney (FF) and others are upset about this. Serves them right.

At election time these politicians take all the credit for fixing people's drains. Meanwhile the workers who actually do the job face more cutbacks initiated by Mooney and her friends! About time they fought back.

—CONOR KELLY
DUBLIN

Length of hose

DURING the firefighters strike a motorist stopped at Townsend Street and handed a 75 foot length of hose and 3 fire extinguishers to strikers picketing Tara St. Fire Station.

He told them that they fell from an army fire tender at Firhouse Road.

The army obviously didn't need the equipment as their job was to break the strike—not fight fires.

The soldiers involved were not conscripted but volunteered. They were paid an extra £13.65 a day to act as scabs

—AIDEN WALSH
DONEGAL

SWM DAY SCHOOL

Eastern Europe and State Capitalism

with COLIN BARKER (author of "Poland — the Festival of the Oppressed")

Sessions on Russia after 1917 and state capitalism today.

Sunday May 1st, Dublin (write for details)

SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT,
P O Box 1648, James Street, Dublin 8

OTHER NOTICES

DEFEND THE CLINICS CAMPAIGN
Information on Abortion:

DUBLIN: (01) 794 700
CORK: (021) 502848 —Monday evenings
BELFAST (084) 324914

ANTI-EXTRADITION CAMPAIGN

March against Extradition

Saturday April 16th, Parnell Square 2.00 pm

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 Naas.

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 compromise with the system. They have destroyed solidarity between workers by the two tier picket system. They have failed to lead any fight over tax, wage cuts and unemployment.

We stand for:

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

We fight for the building of a national rank and file movement that links together the best militants to provide an alternative leadership to the trade union bureaucrats.

We fight for the formation of Right to Work committees that link the unemployed to the power of the trade union movement.

THE PARTY

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

I would like more details about the Socialist Workers Movement

NAME

ADDRESS

Send to SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

WHAT IS ON

Branches of the Socialist Workers Movement meet around the country on a weekly or fortnightly basis.

Each meeting consists of a political discussion as well as branch business. Meetings are open to non-members.

If you are interested in socialist politics and want to find out more about the SWM, then come along.

CORK

Branch meets in the Clock Inn Tavern, Oliver Plunkett St, every Thursday, 8.00 pm.

Thursday April 7: Women and Class
Thursday April 14: Gorbachev's Russia

DUBLIN

Branch meets every Wednesday, Bachelor Inn, Bachelor's Walk at 8.00 pm.

Wednesday April 6: Rosa Luxemburg
Wednesday April 13: Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx
Wednesday April 20: The Vietnam War

WATERFORD

Branch meets every second Monday — details from national address. Forthcoming meetings on:

April 12: Socialists and the Unions
Monday April 25: The 1913 Lock-Out
Monday May 9: Isreal — the Hijack State

DUNDALK

Branch meets fortnightly — details from national address.

Public Meeting

THE NORTH: THE SOCIALIST ANSWER

speaker: EAMONN McCANN

Tuesday 26th April, ATGWU Hall

and Meeting in Regional Tech. College

MAY '68: STUDENTS IN REVOLT

speaker EAMONN McCANN

DERRY

Branch meets every Tuesday in the Dungloe Bar Waterloo St.

April 5th Gay Liberation and Socialism
April 12th: The North: Class War or Civil War
April 19: Nicaragua: Will the Peace Plan Work?

For branch meetings in Bray, Galway, Belfast and Derry contact national address:

PO Box 1648, James Street, Dublin 8

REVIEWS



THE LAST EMPEROR

THE LAST EMPEROR is a film based on the life of Pu Yi, who, in 1908 was made Celestial Emperor of China, Son of Heaven and Lord of Ten Thousand Years, at the age of three.

Unfortunately, the film, although fascinating, is just that—a historical account of his life until he died as a gardener in 1967. Anyone expecting an account of the revolutions that swept China in 1911, 1919 and 1927, during the course of Pu Yi's life will be disappointed. They are merely backdrops to the main story.

The film is built on the time after the 1949 revolution, which Pu Yi spent in prison. But the main body of the film is the flashbacks to his life as Emperor.

DECAY

Even though it is mainly autobiographical, what struck me forcibly about the film was the slow decay of the old ruling class. They were incapable of ruling China any longer. The Ch'ing Dynasty could find neither the armies nor the generals to defend it against a military rebellion and the Republic of China was born in 1911. And so began the advent of capitalism.

England and France had got rid of their ruling class by beheading their kings and queens. China allowed its old ruling class to keep its vast wealth and live in the splendour that it had always had—but cut off completely and

with no power whatsoever. Pu Yi was oblivious of this—thinking he still retained power. He was tutored by a representative from the leading British imperialist power, Reginald Johnstone, in modern ways. Slowly things began to change in the Forbidden City. Old traditions were slowly removed.

In 1924 Pu Yi was expelled from the Forbidden City. Yet he still believed he would regain his original power. He sought to do this by collaborating with the rising power in Japan. He became a "puppet" emperor for them.

PRISON

Pu Yi was eventually captured during the 1949 revolution and imprisoned for nine years. His re-education programme inside the prison is meant to show the humanity of the penal system in the new China.

This part of the film shows where Bertolucci's sympathies lie. It is obvious it is to the Chinese state. The prison governor who remoulds the Emperor into a citizen is played by the current Deputy Minister of Culture. The Chinese and Bertolucci obviously see eye to eye.

The Chinese ruling class are pleased with the outcome and of the portrayal of modern China in the film. This is the sort of China that they want to portray. The fact that shortly after the film was completed student demonstrations broke out in Peking and Shanghai are events which they would prefer to put very much in the

background.

Besides all these complaints, the film is 2½ hours of sheer enjoyment. It is beautifully filmed with music partly composed by Talking Heads' David Byrne. It will tell you

nothing of the revolutions that happened in China this century or what life was really like under Mao. But it does give you a very good portrayal of a decadent and doomed ruling class. Go and see it!

Out, proud and fighting

LIVING AN openly gay life has always taken bravery. It can mean harassment by the Police and courts, (in Ireland it is completely illegal for gay males to have sexual relationships,) violence and abuse or loss of jobs and home.

The release of this pamphlet by Noel Halifax of the British SWP coincides with the most serious attack on the gains made by the gay movement over the last 20 years.

Clause 28 of the Tory local government act, aims to out law any attempt by local councils to combat anti-gay prejudice. Spurred on by the gutter presses anti-gay hysteria and the backlash caused by the AIDS scare, the bigots are trying to push gays back into the closet. Why is it that hostility to gays runs so deep? Has it always been that way?

In attempting to answer these questions, Halifax provides us with a marxist analysis of gay oppression and how to fight it.

Gays have not always been oppressed. Halifax explains how in Ancient Greece homosexuality was regarded as the highest form of love and was idealised in poetry and art. So there is nothing "queer" or unnatural about gay love.. Why therefore do some societies oppress it?

Halifax explains that the roots of gay oppression lie in the rise of capitalism during the early 19th century.

FAMILY

Capitalism developed a new conception of the family. Capitalists needed a new generation of workers to exploit and somewhere for the present generation to be refreshed (at the lowest cost possible for the capitalist). This could be done by families based around women tied to the home.

Behaviour that didn't fit in with this conception of the family or seemed to threaten it was regarded as "deviant". Capitalism defined what was "normal" and so created "the homosexual" as a social type. Gay oppression was born.

Halifax documents the early gay rights movements and the various strands of opinion which emerged from it. Some looked to gay separatism, others to reformism (the Labour Party) as ways to promote gay rights. Halifax rejects both methods for a third alternative.

REVOLUTION

The alternative he poses is one of workers struggle and revolution, the tradition of the Bolsheviks. In 1917, in a very backward country, where anti-semitism and reactionary orthodox christianity was rife the Bolsheviks came to power. In spite of all the disadvantages, the Bolsheviks achieved more in two months than decades of liberal reform elsewhere. All anti-gay laws were abolished, abortion was made legal and massive steps made in the provision of communal nurseries and laundries. The growth of Stalinism eradicated these gains but nevertheless it showed in practice how a real socialist society could begin to eradicate the roots of all sexual oppression. As Halifax says in the final lines of the pamphlet: "Socialism is not just about an end to all exploitation and oppression—it is also about liberation from all the prejudices and repression that distort and destroy our sexualities. For there can be no gay liberation without Socialism—but there will be no Socialism without gay liberation."

—BRIAN HANLEY

"Out Proud and Fighting" - Gay Liberation and the struggle for Socialism. by Noel Halifax. £1.00



SINCE mid-February, the "Star" has appeared as a new Irish daily in tabloid form. It is published in co-operation with the "Sunday World" — one of the three Irish papers controlled by Tony O'Reilly. O'Reilly, who made a fortune as a director with Heinz beans, also owns the "Irish Independent" and the "Evening Herald". Like its sister paper, the Sunday World, the Star has its page three girls with such titles as "Curvey Carol Ann" or "Ambitious Aneliese". The hypocrisy of the Star is seen in the article which accompanied this sexist drivel. A recent page two had, for example, one appealing for longer sentences for what the Star chose to call "Sex Perverts" no doubt including some of those who had been fed on the daily diet of the Star. Another feature of the Star is a vicious anti-republicanism. The three IRA volunteers gunned down in Gibraltar were described as "terrorists and bombers". The Star's

language in reporting on republican activities sets out to trivialise and dehumanise. The dead "bombers" were met at Dublin Airport by the "Provos Top Brass". The murders at Loughall are not even described as killings. It was rather that the SAS "took out eight of the Provos top killers". It is no surprise then that on Wednesday's Star readers are treated to Gay Byrne. Byrne, who recently claimed Thatcher was doing the "right thing" when she cut taxes on the rich, is another man with a mission against socialist and republicans. In one of his recent Star articles he managed to threaten a correspondent with the Special Branch. The Star, however, does not discriminate against the Irish "terrorists". Its handling of the West Bank riots has been viciously anti-Palestinian. A recent article had the headline: "Get Out - The US Tells PLO Thugs". With such villains stalking the world, who then does the

Star like? Why none other than our green Fianna Fail government. Fianna Fail is praised for its achievements in bringing down interest rates, curbing inflation and introducing cuts. Brian Lenihan was described as the most popular politician in the Dail. The Star even sent hima birthday cake to celebrate Fianna Fail's first year in government. The Star is especially respectful to the religious feelings of the Irish. It aims to keep us all well informed on "Our Lady's current world-tour. Besides appearing regularly in Madagorie in Yugoslavia, the Star is pleased to announce that she is also appearing live in Bessbrook Co Armagh and twice weekly (Saturday and Sunday, only) in Inchegeel Co Cork. The Star promises to "keep us up to date. All in all the Star for 35p is humorous but not to be taken seriously. In fact it is better to give it a miss and spend the 30p on a decent paper: Socialist Worker.



The Fire Last Time: 1968 and after by Chris Harman. The definitive history of the year that ended the 'long boom' and brought revolutionary politics back on to the streets, and of the deeper changes that 1968 brought about.

£7.50 including post from SWM PO Box 1648, Dublin 8



Dublin firemen show the way

DUBLIN'S firefighters have knocked a hole in the Government's assault on jobs and services. They did so by taking determined strike action.

The firefighters have been guaranteed a minimum staffing level of 600—thus maintaining present numbers. Staffing will be reviewed every November under the agreement. Plans to re-deploy control

room staff have been postponed until new technology and improved security measures are in place.

The gains made in this strike will make it easier for activists to push for a real fight against cuts. In fact the strike has exploded a number of myths.

The first myth is that workers are unwilling to strike against cuts. Token stoppages, political lobbies and court actions have all been substituted for strike action. All have failed.

The firefighters proved that by withdrawing their labour they could force concessions. And such action can happen if activists build for it—the firefighters moved to strike action as a result of refusing to cover for job vacancies.

MYTH

The other myth is that we are a country of "me-fainers" and that solidarity between trade unionists is impossible.

The firefighters won support from Brigades throughout the country—particularly from the Derry brigade who helped on the picket line. Also as the strike ended 500 workers in St James Hospital were due to stop work for two hours to oppose scab ambulance drivers.

A magnificent example of solidarity came from the Dun Laoghaire brigade. They stayed solid to the end having been suspended for refusing to scab on the Dublin firefighters. In doing so they killed another myth—that the threat of being sacked will always intimidate workers into submission.

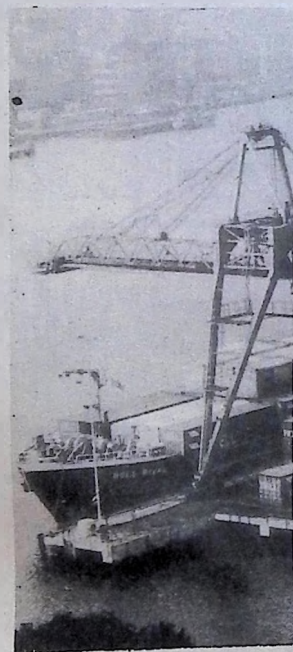
This time the employers were intimidated—not by idle threats from Trade Union bureaucrats but the militancy of rank-and-file workers.

—DAVE McDONAGH

blacked.

It should be remembered that these stewards over the years always delivered solidarity when it was needed.

Send messages of support to: Strike Committee, c/o ATGWU Hall, Keyzer St.



BELLS SETBACK

FOUR SHOP stewards have been sacked at Bells. The manager, Hayden, took the stewards off the pay roll in December. He claimed that there was no work for them and some others. However when the union, the ATGWU offered to share work, the company indicated that it would be willing to take back only those who were not shop stewards.

The section voted narrowly not to strike in defence of the shop stewards. So the ATGWU refused to make the strike official despite its stated position of defending shop stewards in any circumstances.

Bellferry workers are among the highest paid and—until recently—the best organised in Ireland. Their refusal to fight the victimisations is short sighted. If the company get rid of the shop stewards they will start attacking the wages and conditions. If the ATGWU let its shop stewards be victimised, then it will have serious consequences in other workplaces.

The four men involved have placed an unofficial picket on the Bell terminal. They should be supported by insuring that any contractors handled by scabs are

O'KEEFE'S STRIKE

THE O'KEEFE Bakery strike has been going on for over two months.

33 workers came out due to non-payment of the 26th wage round—last year's pay round.

As a shop steward said, "This is a central issue of the strike action but years of bad working conditions and non-recognition of the union by management forced the workers to down tools".

During the first week on strike workers approached management to demand a week's wages due to them. Gardai were called by the management but eventually their pay was given out. O'Keefe then refused to pay the £3 weekly pension payment. At the Conciliation talks a couple of weeks ago management refused to meet the union representative and talks collapsed.

Although 3 workers are scabbing, one of whom is O'Keefe's son, the other workers are united in staying on strike. To achieve a victory it's essential that they make contacts and publicise their dispute among other trade unionists to get solidarity.

LGPSU ACTION

LOCAL Government Public Service Union members in Dublin Corporation are engaged in a work-to-rule over job vacancies.

There are 400 clerical vacancies but the Corpo has offered to fill only 40 of these. The work-to-rule began when eight Clerical Officers were threatened with suspension for doing the work of a higher grade.

The 1,800 workers involved are refusing to cover for vacant posts and are implementing a ban on overtime. They are also refusing to co-operate with Public Representatives who pass on queries from their "clinics".

If any member is suspended for taking this action there will automatically be a strike.

It was this type of action which led to the recent firefighters' strike. By implementing a policy of "no cover for vacancies", trade unionists can step up the fight against cutbacks.

But if this is to be successful all the workers should be fully involved, rather than being passive onlookers while the bureaucrats negotiate.

Branch Reps in the Corporation should ensure "report backs" and discussion in the present dispute.

ICTU

ALL-OUT STRIKE

Name of Firm and Location:

Authorisation:

THE TRADITIONS of trade unionism in Ireland were built in the great battles at the beginning of this century. The rallying cry then was "an injury to one is an injury to all".

For Connolly and Larkin trade unionism meant the doctrine of tainted goods, the use of the lightning sympathetic strike and absolute respect for the picket line.

They aimed to fight not only for decent wages and conditions but to begin a challenge to the system which produced such poverty and inequality.

In the last sixty years a bureaucracy developed in the Trade Unions whose interests are different from those of its members. They have led an attack on the basic weapons of workers—the strike and the picket line. At first it was a slow erosion in the ideas, but it now has been formalised by the introduction of the two-tier picket by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions in 1970.

The two-tier picket came into existence after the success of the maintenance workers strike in 1969. Handfuls of maintenance workers travelled the country to bring out tens of thousands of other workers. Industry ground to a halt. It was led by an effective strike committee and brought about the complete capitulation of the employers. This was not to the trade union leadership (except in a formal sense) but to the strike committee.

ATTACK

This was too much for the Trade Union leaders. The following year the annual ICTU Conference introduced the two-tier picket. This was a major attack on the picket weapon. It directed workers to pass pickets except those of their own union and an ICTU all out strike. In a leaflet issued 1973 the ICTU directed that "All other pickets should be disregarded".

The effect of this has been a disaster for workers. It has encouraged sectionalism, created divisions among workers and protected the scab.

Passing pickets has now become an accepted and respectable practice, and has made the winning of disputes that much harder. Equally it has strengthened the position of the Trade Union official—since only an official can apply for the all-out sanction. It can take six weeks or more for sanction to be granted.

Not all applications are granted—in 1986 out of 38 applications only 11 were granted, 14 were withdrawn without a hearing.

Another aspect of the two-tier system has been the emphasis of the ICTU to increase the role of the Union official as mediator of disputes. Full strike action is held off as a bargaining counter while the ICTU is given a chance to mediate.

The 1970 two-tier picket policy was strengthened in 1973 when Congress instructed, "that no union should pay strike pay to members who refuse to pass either an official picket, or a picket placed by another union where no all-out strike has been approved."

GUIDELINES

In 1987 Congress adopted new guidelines on picketing which on one hand increased the red tape involved in obtaining all-out sanction and on the other hand reduced the effectiveness of picketing by introducing restrictive policies on how and where pickets may be placed. Since 1970 many attempts have been made at the ICTU annual conference to rescind the policy of the two-tier picket, but none have been successful.

Despite the attempt to reduce the power of the picket by the ICTU, it is still the most powerful and successful weapon that workers have. During the last 5 years 40% of strikes have been unofficial with pickets being placed to close the place down. Respect for the picket line has not been totally destroyed.

The miners' strike in Britain and the recent firefighters strike in Dublin has shown how effective picketing can be. The job of building anew total respect for the picket line goes hand in hand with the job of gaining rank and file control of the unions.

When the tempo of industrial action picks up, the picket line will be central to workers' struggle.

CURCUIT PICKET

20 members of the MSF union, formally TASS, have been picketing their workplace, Irish Printed Circuits Lmd (IPC), in Walkinstown Dublin.

The dispute is for union recognition, and the re-instatement of one man, David Doyle. The pickets are placed 24 hours a day.

The 33 scabs who continue to work were intimidated by management who threatened to close the shop. Most of the 33 have had less than 6 months service. There is a genuine fear of sacking, as happened with David Doyle himself. David was sacked because he fainted and was taken to hospital.

Mr Clear, the managing director claims to have received a petition from the workers that

they did not wish to be represented by the MSF. But it was pretty obvious that anyone who did not sign would face the sack. After all, in Mr Clear's own words David Doyle was "employed on a daily basis renewable or not at the total discretion of management. These terms were the only terms offered".

Management have told the workers that they "desire to increase turn over from £2 million to £5 million and increase the workforce to 90 or a 100". But this extra staff, if the promise ever materialises, can be hired and fired at will, regardless of sickness.

Management's only interest is productivity and increased profits for the bloated bank accounts of IPC shareholders.

A night out is being organised by management for the scabs. This tactic is typical of companies who want to make workers "feel part of the team". McDonalds, the nasty anti-union hamburger company, have used it for years. It usually co-incides with low pay and, for all the rubbish about team spirit, a high turn over of staff.

These shrewd tactics by management must be countered by the strikers. Union circulars which have been sent out to MSF members in other companies should be reinforced by delegations of strikers visiting these factories. Only by arguing one to one with the workers there, to convince and ensure effective blacking of all IPC products. If this strike is to win, active involvement of all strikers in organising of delegations, fund raising, picketing etc. is a must.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

You have
us on our
Knees!
paying all
these fees



Education and Health cuts:

TURN ANGER ON FIANNA FAIL

MONEY up front is being demanded from the sick before treatment.

Beaumont hospital in Dublin demanded that a woman suffering from arthritis pay £10 in advance. Another hospital demanded £350 from a patient on a stretcher before getting access to a CAT scan—for diagnosing cancer!

The school cuts programme is also going ahead.

From September class sizes in primary schools will average over 38. In many cases they will be higher. 2,000 primary school teachers have applied for voluntary redundancy. That is over one-tenth of the entire INTO membership. Their classes are to be split up between remaining teachers.

Another area of cutbacks is the local authority services. Here 1,900 workers are being made redundant. Union leaders have warned of a real deterioration in such basic services

as refuse collection, water and sewerage.

The tragedy is that Fianna Fail have found allies among the union leaders in mounting their attacks. The National Plan, which the ICTU pushed so hard gave a commitment not to oppose the redundancy programme. In every area the union leaders have ensured that resistance to the cuts has been dampened down.

PROTESTS

INTO General Secretary Gerry Quigley called off the massive school protests on the cuts once Haughey had a private meeting with him to set up a "review committee".

LGPSU general secretary, Phil Flynn campaigned vigorously to stop a move by hospital clerical workers to refuse collection of the £10 hospital charge.

Local Authority trade union leaders have run a pathetic low key

campaign of lobbying against the cuts. They pin all their hopes on the next election.

The only group who have shown a lead in how to fight has been the Dublin firefighters. They struck for over a month and forced the corporo to back down on the worst of the cuts. (see story page 11.)

They showed that the power of strike action was the only way to win.

The contempt of Fianna Fail for any other form of protest was shown in Barrington's Hospital. There the most respectable citizens of Limerick, the Board of Governors of Barrington, displayed a tremendous zeal for moderation. They mobilised the largest march in Limerick. They took the government

RIGHT-WING

to court. They even got the Dail to vote that Barrington's stay open. But on April 1st Barrington's was closed.

Like our counterparts in Britain we are facing a hard right wing government. Half measures to resist their attacks will not work. Token actions and lobbying can be useful to build up a momentum for struggle. But unless resistance translates quickly into the only sort of action that can win—industrial action—Fianna Fail will succeed.

Over the next period socialists must begin an open clear struggle to brand Fianna Fail as the enemies of our class. That will mean attacking the soft nationalism of union leaders who are prepared to make their members "sacrifice for the sake of the country".

This will mean expanding the network of open socialists operating in the unions.

Hospital cuts scandal

Socialist Worker recently spoke to one of the ancillary staff at St. Mary's Hospital in the Phoenix Park in Dublin, to see how the cuts are affecting this 340 bed geriatric hospital.

St. Mary's is like so many other hospitals, grossly understaffed. Recently a ward was left all day with just two nurses to cope with 18 bed-ridden, doubly incontinent, confused patients, who can do nothing for themselves and need constant care. Needless to say morale is low and patients may have to wait hours for basic attention.

Over the past couple of years full time staff who left the job were replaced by temporary workers.

Most of these "temporary" workers (41 in all) are there now over a year.

Recently they were asked by management to sign a "pink slip" which states that they acknowledge they can be let go at any time, and wavers all rights to job security—despite the fact that they have been paying superannuation etc.

Union stewards have oppose d this. It means that a group of

temporary workers can be more easily intimidated by management, and so undermine union organisation.

A special meeting therefore has been called to insist that all workers be in the union, and be prepared to back each other.

They face a hard-nosed management. The 18 person delegation who went on the anti-cuts demo last Summer were disciplined by the matron on the grounds that they left the hospital short of staff. They defended their right to protest and won in the end.

Not that management has any trouble sparing staff to look after their own "freebies". Recently a luncheon to celebrate the launch of a new medical "bus"—the Mobile Day Hospital—was held for 141 big wigs from the Health Board, and included Rory O Hanlon himself. It was a sumptuous spread and drink specially packed in ice was brought in for the occasion.

Extra staff were on duty and the party was held in the day hospital, the patients have been moved out temporarily to a ward that hadn't been opened in months.

This bus will provide a very limited service—in all a couple of hours care. That is if it ever gets off the road. Since the fanfare surrounding its launch, it has remained parked in St. Mary's! It is not quite clear why. Maybe they're having trouble finding a driver. They're offering a princely £65.00 per week wages!

Free meals for the big brass is a regular occurrence at St. Mary's, though not always on such a large

scale. The staff however have to pay through the nose for their meals.

Lunch costs £4.00, even individual items like a piece of bread and butter costs 15p. These prices are supposed to be subsidised.

The union intends to challenge the prices in the canteen. Organising union member on the basis of such issues is very important because it gives shop stewards an opportunity to involve the membership in winning limited demands. It is an effective way of building basic shop floor organisation, and the confidence gained from a "win" on seemingly trivial issues, can help generate a willingness to fight in the greater battles that inevitably lie ahead as the cuts bite deeper.

