

Socialist Worker

Inside:

Good riddance to Stalinism
Pages 5,6,7,8

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism 35p

Communism is dead

Now fight for real socialism

"COMMUNISM has collapsed" declare the newspapers and the TV. It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing.

The media try to pretend that the collapse of

one party rule in the USSR means that socialism has failed. They want us to believe that the free market is the only way of running the world.

But it is Stalinism that is

crumbling in the USSR. The rulers of the USSR called themselves socialist but presided over a system where workers were denied free trade unions and free speech.

And the free market does not represent much of an alternative for Eastern

Europe. Recession and poverty are gripping the Western World.

In the United States, those under 30 are now worse off than their parents generation. *Business Week*, the US bosses paper says that "young black families have been hit as hard

as the Depression hit nearly everybody in the 1930s'

In Latin America cholera is spreading rapidly. In Africa far more people are starving than in the 1960s.

Turn to page 3

TALLAGHT HOSPITAL CAMPAIGN

THE fight for a hospital in Tallaght continues. The Dublin suburb was promised a hospital five years ago.

In November 1986 Coalition Health Minister Barry Desmond turned the sod on a proposed site at Springfield Industrial Estate.

Three years later the hospital had not been built. Fianna Fail ran a series of newspaper ads during the 1989 election campaign promising swift action. They said that construction of the hospital would start in 1990.

Naturally, when Fianna Fail were elected they forgot about Tallaght until the matter was raised in the Dail in 1990. Health Minister Rory O'Hanlon promised that building would commence in 1991.

When 1991 came



Rory O'Hanlon

O'Hanlon said that there was no money "for any new major capital project—Tallaght hospital will not commence in 1991".

People in Tallaght still rely on St James' Hospital, Rialto, or Crumlin Children's Hospital. Both are several miles away and are seriously overstretched.

Activity committees have organised a number of protests in Tallaght. As we go to press government representatives are to meet local activists. Further protests can succeed in forcing the issue.

GALWAY:

Travellers' Centre must be defended

AS we go to press, eighty parents at Coolarne, Co Galway have decided to withdraw their children from the local national school.

They are protesting at plans to open an Education Centre for Travellers next to the school. Their main fear is of "an influx of Travellers".

Socialists should oppose such campaigns for several reasons.

Firstly, Irish Travellers face a life of real hardship.

Hundreds live on the side of the road without proper facilities. This, coupled with poverty, leads to major health problems.

Recent reports found that:

■ The number of Traveller kids who die before the age of one is three times that of non-Traveller kids.

■ Life expectancy for Traveller women is 55 years compared to 76 in the rest of the population.

Secondly, right-wing politicians, especially

Fianna Fail, whip up anti-Traveller sentiments to win votes. They play on people's worst fears about crime, blaming Travellers for the problem.

The real effect of this bigotry is to deflect attention away from the government's own attacks on our living conditions.

For example, they have made major cuts in education. Clearly we should demand more funding in this area.

Yet the parents at

Coolarne have objected to EC funds being used for the Travellers' Centre. This plays into Fianna Fail's hands.

Education is a basic right for Travellers and non-Travellers alike—we should unite to demand that right.

The real misuse of EC money is the state's £9 million handout to fund golf clubs for Smurfit and his rich pals.

These people, and not Travellers, are the real source of workers' misery.

20,200
in
Belfast
Demo

THE Belfast rally held on 11 August to commemorate the anniversaries of the hunger strikes and internment showed two things about the republican movement.

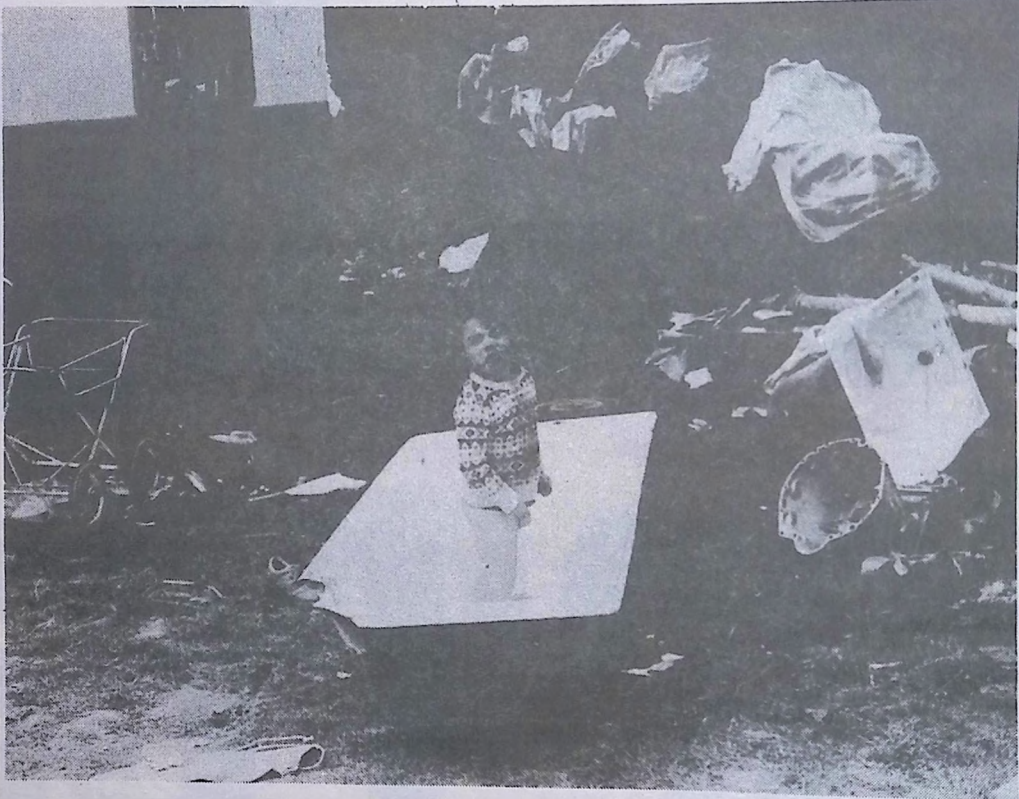
Firstly, the huge turnout of approximately twenty thousand people underlines the deep support which Sinn Fein enjoys among working class nationalists. But a second point shown by the rally is the stagnation of the politics of Sinn Fein.

The speakers offered nothing but the possibility of more decades of struggle along the same lines as the present. Gerry Adams' only "political initiative" was an offer to the British government of "the open hand of friendship or the clenched fist of resistance". In other words, the choice is between an accommodation with a Tory government or a continuation of the armed struggle.

With such a large crowd it would have been possible to break the ban on nationalists marching to the city centre. Yet Sinn Fein made no move to mobilise for this, preferring to leave "real struggle" to the IRA.

SWM had a large presence on the demo. We sold ninety copies of *Socialist Worker* and 25 copies of the pamphlet "Socialists, Republicanism and the Armed Struggle".

■ PAUL MURPHY



BRAY TRAVELLERS:

W.P. silent on Racist lies

GARDAI intimidated 200 Travellers into leaving a site in Bray last month.

Wicklow County Council obtained an injunction against the Travellers' camp at Ballywaltrim GAA pitch.

250 local people met on 28 August to demand further action. Racist attitudes were rife.

One woman said that the site at Ballywaltrim would not be safe "because Travellers



Liz McManus

had been there". The meeting agreed to have a health inspector look over the site.

Workers Party councillors Liz McManus and Dermot Tobin were

on the platform. But these "socialists" made no effort to condemn the racist lies.

They welcomed the "speedy action" in kicking out the Travellers and made vague noises about a proper halting site.

No money has been provided for an official Travellers' halt in Wicklow. Yet £6,000 was spent in erecting boulders to prevent entry to the Ballywaltrim site.

DEATH IN IRISH JAILS

LOUSY prison conditions and Fianna Fail's cutbacks are driving prisoners to suicide.

The death of Michael Lennon in Mountjoy Prison on 21 August brought the toll of suicides in Irish prisons to 22 in the last three years.

Michael Lennon, 30 years of age, was found hanging in his cell just twenty minutes after he was last checked. He was a remand prisoner awaiting trial on a charge of property damage. He was the third person in five weeks to commit suicide.

On 25 July a 34-year-old prisoner hanged himself in his cell in Mountjoy while on remand on a rape charge. The rape therapy group for prisoners was closed down earlier because the government refused needed funds.

On 20 July Mr. Noel Healy was found hanging in his cell in Limerick prison. He was due for temporary release the following day to visit his family and was suffering from depression.

The prison system does nothing to solve the problem of crime. It's main role is to punish people rather than to rehabilitate them. In many cases people are brutalised by the prison regime. Others turn to despair and suicide.

That is why socialists do not join calls for extra prisons to be built.

At the same time we oppose cuts in rehabilitation—therapy is obviously needed in the case of extreme crimes like rape.

But rehabilitation alone cannot solve crime. The root causes—mainly poverty—need to be tackled.

On that score Fianna Fail have nothing to offer.

■ ALAN KELLY

For information on abortion, contact:

Womens Information Network: 01-6794700

British Pregnancy Advisory Service (London): 03-071-6378962

British Pregnancy Advisory Service (Liverpool): 035-7091558

THINGS THEY SAY

"Is there a raffle on? Who won the washing machine? Youse need one."

—An RUC man to anti-internment demonstrators in Belfast, using the age-old "dirty Catholics" line.

"Well you didn't win the brains."—The reply from the crowd to the bigot in uniform.

Subscribe!

If you would like 'Socialist Worker' sent each month send £7 and completed slip to:
SW PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

I want a year's sub
 I want more details

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....



WE THINK

Now fight for real socialism

From page 1

In Ireland we have a perfect example of the failures of the free market. Each year £1,000 million is handed out to the employers as encouragement to help the free market along. But still one in five is without a job; one in three are on state benefits; one quarter of a million have emigrated.

In this situation thousands are asking is there an alternative to BOTH the free market and Stalinism? Can there be socialism AND freedom?

In fact, there have always been socialists who have opposed the Stalin tradition of dictatorship and worship of state ownership.

Marx began his political life fighting for democracy in Germany. In 1848 he championed the fight against censorship and for the right of free assembly.

In 1871 when the workers seized Paris, Marx celebrated the fact that they not only elected but could re-call their delegates. He supported their extension of democracy.

In Russia, Stalin was opposed by Leon Trotsky, one of the leaders of the 1917 revolution. Some of the major miner strikes have involved Vorkuta, in Siberia. This was the place where hundreds of Trotsky's supporters were murdered by Stalin for defending workers democracy.

The Socialist Workers Movement has always fought under the slogan "Neither Washington nor Moscow, but International Socialism". Ever since we were established USSR represented a form of state capitalism.

The theory of state capitalism is vital for socialists today. On Tuesday 20 August, there was only one question facing every socialist. Which side are you on—the junta and the tanks OR the mass of people?

Regardless of the illusions that many in the USSR have in the market today, the SWM was fully against the coup.

In contrast, all theories which identify the USSR as a socialist or "degenerated" workers state, or more progressive than the West, had to either equivocate or worry more about the "restoration of capitalism" than the defeat of the tanks.

They see the coming to power of Yeltsin as a huge defeat for the workers movement. We see it as a step sideways that is just the beginning of major struggles in the USSR.



Behind the barricades in Latvia and (inset) Russian miners striking against the coup



The beginning ~not the end

of the failed coup enormously strengthened. But so too has the workers movement.

Workers have gained a sense of their own power and dignity. The fear of the KGB has been removed. The old Communist Party bureaucrats are on the defensive and keeping their heads down.

Sooner or later the workers movement will come into conflict with the liberal democrats. Yeltsin, Shevardnadze, Yakovlev all come from the old ruling class, the *nomenklatura*. Yeltsin was the party boss in Sverdlovsk; Shevardnadze was the security chief in Georgia.

The liberal democrats want to reform the way their class rules. The only difference between them and the old Stalinists is

dash to the market and privatisation.

Yavlinsky, who has been given full control over the economic changes, has said that they will be very "unpopular".

Today Yeltsin balances between the top managers who form the active core of his supporters and tens of thousands of middle class democrats and workers.

Unbalanced

The more the economic crisis deepens, the more Yeltsin will become unbalanced. The drive to the market will bring with it a push for a South Korean style semi dictatorship to enforce the unpopular measures. In this situation thousands of genuine democrats who support Yeltsin today can be won to the workers movement.

workers' movement will have to build on the August victory and do so quickly. The failure of the coup does not mean the end of the repressive forces in the USSR. Many will want to wait on the wings until Yeltsin becomes discredited and then move decisively.

In Chile there was an unsuccessful coup in June 1973 before Pinochet's bloody victory in September 1973. In Portugal, there were two failed coups before the revolutionary period was ended in November 1975.

Disbanded

The Communist party may be disbanded in the USSR but there are still networks of privileges that connect up middle ranking officers with the old CP bureaucrats.

remove the threat. Yeltsin will do everything to preserve the KGB and the officer core hoping that he can put them to HIS use.

It is necessary for workers to drive the pro-coup managers and spies from their workplaces and to unite with the soldiers who refused to obey orders.

This means strikes and occupations in the factories which unite economic and political demands.

In the growing confrontation that is opening in the USSR, Yeltsin will try to play the card of Russian nationalism. Already he is demanding that the nuclear missile plants be returned to Russia and that borders be re-drawn to suit Russia.

But the miners who have struck together come from Russian and non-Russian nationalities. Nationalism can be beaten if the workers take the initiative.

LETTERS

Write to: PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

No Child Satanic Abuse

As a social worker and a socialist I found the article on child abuse (August SW) helpful.

It was good to see that socialists do recognise that abuse happens in the middle class and that although it might not be due to financial pressures it is due to the family—an important part of capitalism.

But the article is not clear on the issue of satanic abuse. It states that "child abuse is usually linked to isolated cases of satanic rituals".

I would argue that to even talk about "isolated cases" is mistaken. As a social worker I know there have been NO proven cases of child satanic abuse.

It is a media scare, a red herring thrown in because for people who uphold the system it is easier to blame child abuse on "mad satanists" than face the reality that capitalism, by creating poverty and alienation leads to child abuse. It also encourages the



Last month's Socialist Worker

view that even in a world free from exploitation abuse would continue to occur.

Although the whole of the article showed the material reasons for child abuse, Socialist Worker should be unequivocal in saying that there haven't even been

"isolated cases" of satanic abuse. Enclosed is £5 for your appeal.

GEORGINA MERTON

Editor's reply: This point was made in the original article but was lost in the editing. Apologies to all concerned.

Wrong on part-time workers

JPAUL O'Brien's Industrial Notebook (August SW) was correct to argue that the growth in part-time work does not mean the working class is dead. But it was wrong on two counts.

Although it is true that the turn to part-time work is due to economic uncertainties, Paul was a little deterministic in saying that the situation "could be readily reversed in an economic upturn". Marxism isn't a crystal ball. We cannot presume that the next boom will be a big one—there is a tendency in capitalism for booms to get shorter and slumps longer. We've had three booms in the last fifteen years which haven't changed anything.

My other query is over Paul's assertion that "there is no clear strategy at the moment to divide workers into a core and non-core". It seems that there is some evidence to question his statement. The most obvious



An Post workers

example is the An Post plan. We know the bosses have backed away from their attempt to divide the workforce into a core and a periphery because of the strength of the trade unions, but surely the Plan showed a trend among Irish bosses in the run-up to 1992. Privatisation and restructuring are the buzz-words in the semi-state sector at the moment.

On a smaller scale in UCD we see that after the defeat of the

cleaners' strike in 1988 the college authorities have moved to employing contract labour and are now pushing the electricians and other maintenance workers to accept contracts. This has forced a number of one-day strikes.

I'm not suggesting that we face an imminent generalised bosses' offensive, but surely these examples undermine Paul's arguments.

CJ McELLIGOTT, Dublin

INTERNATIONAL

Hostages: Israel is the real kidnapper

FEW people can have watched the release of John McCarthy and Edward Tracy, two of the hostages held in Lebanon, without feeling relieved that two innocent men have been set free.

But the media have used the admirable characteristics of McCarthy, and of his friend Jill Morrell, to obscure the truth about the situation in the Middle East.

To cut through the hypocrisy requires no more than to recall a few elementary facts.

It was just days after the US bomb attack on Libya from British bases in 1986 that John McCarthy was kidnapped.

Such murderous attacks on the people of the Middle East, particularly the Palestinians, have been carried out by the major powers time and again throughout this century.

The latest instalment, the Gulf War, was more brutal than most. It will have the same effect—ordinary people driven in desperation to take up the gun and the bomb, like the Kurds, will be branded as "terrorists" by the very people who are oppressing them.

The biggest hostage taker in the Middle East is



the US and British backed Israeli state.

CIVILIANS

The Israelis hold hundreds of ordinary civilians from Lebanon in prisons run by their client militia in southern Lebanon. They also hold thousands of innocent Palestinians in internment camps.

The kidnapper which tortures its hostages most

systematically is also Israel.

John McCarthy and Edward Tracy emerged physically unharmed from their imprisonment. Israel's prisoners are beaten and tortured with electric shocks. UN guards outside can hear the screams of the torture victims.

The Israeli prisoners held in Lebanon are captured soldiers. The prisoners held by the Israelis are villages

rounded up in retaliation.

The Israeli state was founded on terrorism—the forcible ejection of the Palestinian population from its land. It has grown by military conquest ever since—conquest of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, of southern Lebanon and the Golan Heights.

At every turn it has been backed by Britain and the US.

That is why the hostages are taken. That is why Arabs take up arms against the Israelis.

Albanians. No welcome in the 'Free West'

Blood and Coke don't mix

AFTER the Tianenmen Square massacre on 4 June 1989 George Bush cried crocodile tears while he set about "improving" US trade links with China.

A deal was signed making China "most favoured nation" in trade. All mention of the massacre was soon dropped.

But lo and behold—Bush is now threatening China with sanctions. A belated conscience attack? Not likely.

It seems the Chinese government has erected "unfair" trade barriers against US goods and that under Chinese law trademarks, patents and copyrights of western companies can't be protected. This has upset multinationals like Coca Cola who find their profits hit.

Bush has stepped in to help his friends in big business. It's symbolic of how capitalism works that Coca Cola's profits mean more than 2,000 slaughtered students.

Bush has nothing to offer those fighting against oppression.

THE treatment of Albanian refugees in Italy gives the lie to the myth of the "free West". For years our leaders condemned the East European regimes for preventing their people from leaving; now western governments are forcing them to stay.

The refugees risked their lives to escape the poverty of Albania and flee to the affluent Italy they had seen on TV. But the Italian authorities were determined that they should return to Albania and they wanted to teach the refugees a lesson.

So they were herded into the Bari football stadium and left in the

summer heat, without toilets or adequate food and medical supplies. One health worker described the stadium and the docks as "vast shit houses". In anger the refugees fought back and some escaped, but most were returned to their fate in Albania. Others refused to leave the stadium and in an act of stunning barbarity the Italian police attempted to starve them out.

Across the EC in preparation for 1992, governments are tightening up immigration controls to keep out non-EC "economic migrants". But multinational capitalists are free to move production around the world, creating or destroying jobs as they see fit. Workers should have the same freedom. Immigration controls only serve to divide us and tie us to our own bosses.

Good riddance to Stalinism

Workers' action defeated the coup

THE defeat of the August coup was a victory for Russian workers and all those fighting for democracy. All socialists should welcome the downfall of the hardline stalinist generals and bureaucrats.

Their coup was an attempt to roll back the clock to the tradition of Stalin and Brezhnev. Gorbachev had become as unpopular as the hardliners and it was not to save his neck that workers risked their lives. But who was it that defeated the coup? Was it the single-handed heroism of Yeltsin or did workers play the vital role? To answer this it is necessary to look at the events themselves.

The first major sign of workers' fightback was the miners' strike of summer 1989, when Gorbachev made concessions to the strikers. During 1989 there was continued unrest. Coupled with the strikes called by the dissident Andrei Sakharov there were sporadic riots and demonstrations. These were often attacked by riot police.

Then the republics began to demand independence. Gorbachev ordered in the troops to crush the Lithuanian struggle. In the summer of 1990 another miners' strike flared up. By the end of that summer the state capitalist rulers of Russia were increasingly worried.

Prime minister Ryzhkov complained about the disintegration of the empire. Gorbachev had to ditch plans to introduce a speedy move to the market. 100,000 demonstrated against him in Moscow. The miners' struck again and this was followed by more demonstrations.

At that stage Gorbachev himself provided the basis for the coup by strengthening the KGB and promoting hardliners to bolster his own rule. Just as Chile's prime minister Allende had done before the 1973 coup in that country, Gorbachev appointed his own would-be executioners.

When the right-wingers sent in the tanks last month it was to reimpose coercion by the KGB and repression in the republics. At this point it was the strike call by Yeltsin combined with the spontaneous militancy of thousands of people which started the fightback.

■ The miners were once again to the forefront. Strikes broke out in Georgia, the Ukraine, Siberia and Byelorussia.

■ There was a widespread strike in Leningrad coupled with strike threats. In the Kirov plant 40,000 workers took on management in opposing the coup.

■ On Tuesday 20 August 10,000 took to the streets in Moscow to surround the Russian parliament building in defiance of curfew.

■ Young people built barricades around the area and armed themselves in case resistance to an army attack became necessary.

■ Thousands more fraternised with troops, winning sizeable sections away from the emergency council. They paralysed the hostile tanks.

■ There were widespread rallies against the coup, especially in Leningrad and Estonia.

Just as in Eastern Europe it was street-fighting and workers' action which defeated the stalinists.



No tears for Gorby

BY the 1980s the Russian economy was in a mess. Complete state control of industry had been useful before and after world war two when the world economy had retreated behind national boundaries. By the 1980s there were major changes.

Billions of pounds could be transferred around the world in seconds as the world economy became more integrated. Multi-national production lines were set up. The most efficient industry was geared for world markets.

The most farsighted Russian rulers saw the need for change if they were to survive. Gorbachev had never been known as a reformer. At 39 he became First Secretary of his local party and was soon on the Politburo. He was groomed to take over by Andropov—head of the KGB.

When he came to power the restructuring of the economy came first, and almost second.

Initially all went well. The West promised aid and many in Russia sided with Gorbachev.

Very soon he met his major problem. Party bureaucrats and managers opposed any moves to openness as it threatened their extremely privileged positions. Gorbachev was trying to reform the state when large sections of the state didn't want to be reformed.

ISOLATED

Two factions grew up in the bureaucracy—the conservatives, who thought Gorbachev was going too quickly, and the "radicals", who thought he was going too slow. Increasingly Gorbachev became isolated and had to balance between these two forces.

He supported Yeltsin's calls for a rapid 500-day move to the market, then backed down under pressure from the old guard. In March, when 800,000 demonstrated for his resignation, Gorbachev strengthened the KGB and purged the media, trying to play one side off

against the other in a bid to hold on to power.

Freedom under Gorbachev was just as delicate as his balancing act. He tried desperately to curtail the right to strike. He sent troops into oil-rich Baku in February 1990 to butcher demonstrators. With food queues lengthening, the KGB used the Jews as a scapegoat. 51 percent of Russia's workforce are women. Gorbachev is intent on pushing them back into the home to divide the workforce and "reduce" unemployment. As his book *Perestroika* says, "We should make it possible for women to return to their purely womanly role".

His twists and turns can only be explained by the fact that his primary concern was to make Russia competitive on the world market.

Last year, while pushing wage cuts on workers, he received a 160 percent pay rise. No wonder ordinary people in the USSR hate him. We shed no tears for Gorbachev. We look forward to the day when he and his class are toppled by those who toppled the coup.

Good riddance to Stalinism

Yeltsin ~ a step backwards?



Yeltsin

MANY on the Left have claimed that Boris Yeltsin represents a step back, a return to capitalism. This view has dangerous implications. It can lead people to line up with the old regime. Yet thousands of workers are themselves openly rejecting what the old regime stood for—privilege, repression, and the trampling on workers' rights. No socialist can stand aside in that fight.

Yeltsin is neither a step forward nor a step backward. He is the voice of a section of the ruling class in Russia who, confronted with deep crisis, want to haul the economy out of its downward spiral and to organise production more competitively on the world market. That project requires a political shake-up of the old order, but Yeltsin's proposed reforms do not challenge the basic distribution of power in society. He is offering to the state capitalist class in Russia a lifeline for their own survival.

It is not surprising that people pin their hopes on Yeltsin. He articulates the feeling of workers on particular issues. He gives voice to the anger about the communist party's power and privilege.

He won popularity for exposing from within the opulent living standards of the party cliques and functionaries. As party boss in Moscow he ordered the nomenklatura to give up their chauffeur-driven Volgas and attacked mafia activity in the city. Simultaneously he became the new hope for basic democratic rights.

His opposition to the coup and the spectacle of him clambering on to a tank to denounce its organisers have made Yeltsin more popular. But he is walking a tightrope.

On the one hand he expresses anger against stalinism and offers reforms to the existing system in ways that people can readily grasp.

On the other, his solution to the crisis will pit him against the very people who look to him now.

Yeltsin and his followers both

need the workers and oppose them. They want them as a battering ram against the right wingers. But they also want to keep the workers in line for their own ends.

During the coup itself, Yeltsin's supporter in Leningrad, the mayor, Anatoly Sobchak, did a deal with the military commander there, Samsonov. If Samsonov and his troops did not enter the city, Sobchak would not call for a general strike. In the event, many work places did strike.

Yeltsin himself, while he did call for a general strike against the coup, when the stakes were high, was not so keen on political strikes last April. Then, in a pact with Gorbachev, he called for an end to the strike wave initiated by the miners and rushed to defend the stability of the system. He described as "intolerable the attempts to attain political ends by incitement to disobedience or strike". He imposed a "special work regime in industry's base sectors".

Even today, in the aftermath of the coup, Yeltsin is seeking changes from above rather than from below. He is replacing the hated KGB heads by his own appointees and is insisting on his own military personnel.

In the area of economic reform Yeltsin has been vague about what the imposition of the market will mean. He has been careful not to talk of the cuts in living standards that are a key part of the move to the market. When Gorbachev talked about the market, people knew that it involved higher prices and worsening queues in the shops. When Yeltsin talks about the market he pretends he has a way of using the market which doesn't involve higher prices.

As the economic crisis across the Soviet Union spirals—imports of goods are already down by 45 per cent and acute food and fuel shortages are predicted for this winter—managers in the factories and new republican governments will be more eager than ever to restore order. Yeltsin and the liberal democrats will then turn on the mass of people whose support they have courted up to now.

Some workers in Russia are aware of the dangers of Yeltsinism, even if they have not fully broken from it. Kuzbass miners' leader, Aleksandr Sergeev of the new Independent Trade Unions of Miners, in an interview after the miners' strike in April, put it very clearly. "While supporting at present the movement of democrats...we must never forget that sooner or later we will clash with them and are already over a number of issues."

Workers in Poland have already clashed with their Polish-style liberal democrats. Privatisation plans have met with opposition. Polish workers are increasingly viewing the new rulers as a new nomenklatura and see strikes as the only way to defend their interests.

The depth of the crisis in the USSR will result in the same type of clashes. For workers in Russia and the republics to take the struggles further, a clear-cut political alternative to Yeltsin—based on workers' interests—must be built.

After the coup:

ISSUES FOR SOCIALISTS



What about the Planned Economy?

THE ECONOMY of the USSR is in a complete mess. Inflation is running at over 100 per cent. In the major cities, the shelves are bare. Last year the GNP fell by an amazing 10 per cent.

Right wing politicians blame the collapse on the "planned economy".

But the economy of the USSR was never organised in the interests of workers. Two examples show this:

■ Only 4 per cent of the national revenue of the USSR is devoted to health. The result is terrible chaos on the hospital wards.

In October 1985, Pravda revealed that 60 infants died in a maternity hospital in Rostov on Don. The deaths were caused by an epidemic that spread because swaddling clothes were not sterilised. The wards were overcrowded and the milk was not pasteurised!

■ Russian workers suffer appalling conditions. A miner works a nine and a half hour day for six days a week. Yet an article in the Irish Times in April showed that when miners return to the surface there are few washing machines in the wash rooms. There is also a shortage of soap.

The economy of the USSR is not "planned" in the interests of workers.

Rather, it is governed by a drive to accumulate. According to the Russian economist Seiyunin, the savings fund of the USSR amounts to 40 per cent of all that is produced. This is a fantastically high

figure.

It can only be achieved by cutting back on consumer goods that are produced. This result in a shortage of basic items such as soap, toothpaste and fresh fruit.

The situation has got worse. In 1928, 60 per cent of all output went to consumer goods. Today the figure is 25 per cent.

IMPOSSIBLE

The drive to accumulate stems from the need to compete militarily with the West. Without an industry that is as competitive as the West it is impossible to lay the basis for a military superpower.

Competition with the West makes a nonsense of planning. Looked at from the inside, the USSR resembles a gigantic multi-national where

the management draws up a plan between the different branches.

But competition with the West forces them to set too high targets and over fulfill the plan.

Agriculture is in an appalling state despite regular investment plans.

As militarily competition takes precedent, the agricultural fund is robbed to provide funds for producer goods.

Today there is a desperate shortage of tractors in the USSR—despite the fact that the bureaucracy have been trying to improve the situation for 20 years.

The command economy is no more socialist or progressive than the free market which Yeltsin wants.

Both systems exploit workers, which is why we regard the USSR as state capitalist.



Hardship goes on despite the Plan

Good riddance to Stalinism

R SOCIALISTS

U.S.S.R.:

Why the CP must be smashed! A prison-house of nations

SOCIALISTS should support the smashing of the Soviet Communist Party. It is not a normal political party simply trying to get its ideas across, unlike the Communist Party here in Ireland.

The Party was an instrument of terror in the hands of the ruling class. It controlled every part of life. In 1989 it made a £500 million profit—guaranteeing its members' privileges. Party cells in factories and offices went about spying on the work force, rooting out militants and controlling production.

If the CP had been left intact it would have been a rallying point for the hardliners. Not to suppress it might have led to further coups and attacks on workers and would be foolish. Workers have an absolute right to defend themselves—and that means banning the CP.

Yeltsin finds it necessary at the moment to attack the CP, but he is determined to exclude any mass involvement. He has argued against storming CP and KGB buildings as happened in East Germany because he is trying to win sections of the CP to join his new party. Yeltsin is determined to keep confidential files under wraps and doesn't want workers to increase in confidence even further as he will need to use "authoritarian methods" in his

move to the market.

The banning of the KGB is a joke. The leaders have been purged but the hundreds of thousands of troops and agents are merely being transferred to the pro-Yeltsin Department of Defence.

Only the workers have a consistent interest in dismantling the CP. They should be occupying the CP buildings, confiscating their printing presses and exposing the network of informers and those linked with the coup.

The CP and KGB must be dismantled by workers as part of the fight for democratic rights.

THE USSR was described by Stalinists as a "family" of nations. In reality, when Stalin came to power it became a "prison house of nations", as Russia had been in Tsarist times.

That is why the nationalities want to break away.

Racism is used to justify Russian chauvinism. Muslims are portrayed as irrational, stupid and dirty; they have a high rate of deaths in police custody. The whole of the Meskhetian Turkish population was deported during World War Two. This has happened to many peoples. The Baltic states, although European, suffer too, and their culture is denigrated as inferior.

Health care in the republics is appalling. Infant mortality is very

high, diseases such as tuberculosis are rampant and there are two types of hospitals—the best, reserved for party bosses (who are nearly all Russian) serve caviar and salmon; the rest, for the locals, serve potatoes and bread.

Education is more underfunded than the Russian system. The majority of teachers are Russian and the Russian alphabet has been imposed. In the Ukraine 70 percent of nurseries use only Russian.

RESERVED

The best, well-paid jobs go to Russians. The majority of Communist Party positions (usually the only way to "get on") are reserved for Russians. Rates of pay are lower in the republics.

They are extremely rich in raw materials. Wool, copper, iron ore and coal are plentiful in the Moslem republics. The Ukraine produces

cereals, while the Baltic states are involved in engineering, chemicals and oil importation. The ruthless

exploitation of these resources helped Russia's rulers to build up industry.

This stark oppression explains why they want to break away and we support them.

The Bolsheviks argued that all the oppressed nationalities should have the right to leave. On their coming to power Finland, Poland and the Baltic states (among others) were freed. The Bolsheviks were welcomed into the Ukraine and other republics decided to join the new Soviet state.

The Bolsheviks argued that the future of the nationalities lay with Russian workers, but they knew that the slogan "workers of all countries unite" could only be realised if unity was voluntary and equal.

Stalinism triumphed on the defeat of the revolution. The nationalities suffered as the economy turned to competing with the West—state capitalism.

The USSR was not like the United States of America, where each state is equal and no state oppresses another. It was exactly like the British empire. Every socialist welcomed the break up of the British empire, even though many of the independent states, like Ireland, were deeply reactionary.

As we go to print, Azerbaijan—where troops slaughtered demonstrators in February 1990—has become the sixth republic to declare independence. After independence Azeri workers will begin to see that they are still mercilessly exploited—by Azeri bosses.

On this basis workers will begin to draw the lesson that they belong to a class, not a race. They will not come to this conclusion as long as the USSR exists. Russian workers themselves cannot be free if the exploitation of the nationalities continues. The realisation of this is the basis for saying "Workers of all countries unite".



Kick over the statues?

THE huge demonstrations in Russia and the republics have destroyed statues of Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders. Many on the Left have drawn the conclusion that these demonstrations are therefore reactionary.

Yet Lenin himself would have rejoiced at the destruction of the cult of Lenin. His widow, Krupskaya, condemning Stalin, said "Do not raise monuments to him. If you wish to honour Vladimir Ilyich (Lenin) build crèches, schools and hospitals."

Of course these people tear down Lenin's statues. They are symbols of the regime they hate. Socialists in Russia should be on these demos,

just as the Bolsheviks in 1905 went on a religious procession to the tsar's palace. They realised that people's ideas can change through struggle.

CONTROL

At the same time it is important to argue with workers about what Lenin stood for: workers' control, self determination for the minorities and a fight against all oppression. It should also be pointed out that there are more important things to do than pulling down statues. Anger needs to be directed at

the state itself.

When the Berlin Wall came down red flags were burnt. Today, on marches in Eastern Germany against Kohl's austerity measures, small numbers of red flags have begun to re-emerge. Revolutionary socialist organisations are now being built in Eastern Germany, Poland and Rumania.

As the struggle develops in the USSR the same can happen there. A minority of workers will see the need to reject the market as well as rejecting state control.

In those conditions a real marxist organisation, arguing for workers' control, can be built.

What Lenin really stood for

“During the lifetime of great revolutionaries, the oppressing classes constantly hounded them... After their death, attempts are made to convert them into harmless icons, to canonise them... while at the same time robbing the revolutionary theory of its substance, blunting its revolutionary edge.”—On statues and icons.

“...to compensate the non-Russians for the lack of trust, for the suspicion and the insults to which the government of the dominant nation subjected them in the past.”—On the nationalities (advocating positive discrimination).

“I suggest that the comrades think about a way of removing Stalin from his post and appointing another man in his place.”—On Stalin.

“The typical Russian bureaucrat is in substance a rascal and a tyrant.”—On the bureaucracy.

Good riddance to Stalinism

Trotsky's fight against Stalin

AS Stalinism collapses in Russia, commentators East and West blame the legacy of Lenin and the Bolsheviks.

The media claim that socialism is dead and that 1917 was an experiment that failed

Most importantly, we are told that Lenin's policies led to Stalin's dictatorship. Yet Stalin set out to attack every freedom which Lenin and the working class had fought for.

When Lenin died in 1924 it was left to Leon Trotsky to fight Stalin's attempts to strangle the Revolution.

Tony Cliff of the Socialist Workers party in Britain has recently written Volume 3 of a biography of Trotsky. In it he examines Trotsky's fight to save the Revolution.

Cliff's book is reviewed here by SIMON GILBERT.

IN 1921 Russia emerged from a period of war and revolution followed by civil war and foreign intervention. The Bolsheviks had survived, but at a terrible cost.

Industrial production had collapsed, famine and disease were widespread and the working class which had made the revolution was decimated. The Bolshevik party ruled on behalf of the workers.

In this situation the party and the state inevitably became increasingly bureaucratic. But while Trotsky and Lenin (until his death in 1924) fought against this bureaucratisation, Stalin and his allies thrived on it.

By 1928-29 the bureaucracy had established itself as a new ruling class based on the exploitation of workers.

In the intervening years there was a bitter struggle within the renamed Communist Party. Firstly between the troika of Stalin, Kamenev and Zinoviev, and the Left Opposition led by Trotsky. Later, when the troika split, between Stalin and Bukharin, and the united opposition of Trotsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev.

But it was a one-sided struggle. In order to win, Trotsky required a resurgence of the

working class and workers' revolutions in the West, while Stalin benefited from the continuing passivity of workers and the isolation of the revolution.

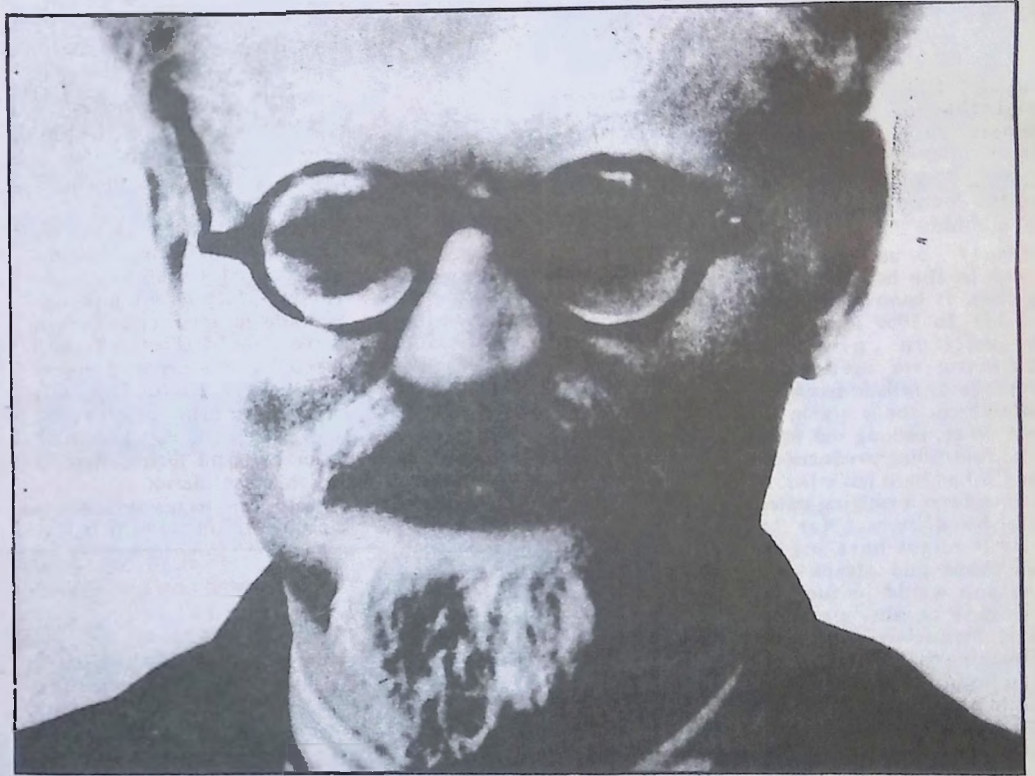
The opposition platform had three strands: democratically planned economic development, a return to inner party democracy and spreading the revolution internationally. In response Stalin developed the techniques that were to become his hallmark: Officials were appointed from above and not elected. Opponents were physically intimidated.

When Lenin died in 1924, the bureaucracy initiated a cult of Leninism. His body was embalmed and put on display in Red Square, and the city of Petrograd was renamed Leningrad. This was used in turn to attack Trotsky. All the disagreements between Lenin and Trotsky before 1917 were grossly exaggerated and their subsequent close cooperation completely ignored.

OUTCOME

Later Stalin's thugs broke up opposition meetings, Trotsky was expelled from the party and eventually exiled.

The Russian revolution went down to defeat, but the outcome could have been very different. The survival of the revolution depended on assistance from workers' revolutions in the ad-



vanced western countries.

This was the understanding of the Bolsheviks in making the revolution. But in 1924 Stalin introduced the doctrine of "socialism in one country". This expressed the bureaucracy's desire to build a strong national economy in competition with the western powers.

This meant that when opportunities to spread the revolution did arise, they were wasted.

In October 1923 Germany was on the verge of revolution, but the German Communist Party hesitated. Trotsky argued that the situation was ripe, but the international leadership in Moscow, the Comintern, only reinforced the caution of German Communists. The moment passed and the revolution ended in a tragic fiasco.

During the Chinese revolution of 1925-27 the Comintern pursued a disastrous policy of subordinating the Communists to the nationalist Guomindang. The result was that when the Guomintang came to power they turned on the Communists, executing thousands of them.

In both cases Trotsky exposed the bankruptcy of Stalin's policies and explained how the revolutions could have been successful. However the defeats

benefited Stalin not Trotsky, because they left Russia more isolated. To the exhausted workers, "socialism in one country" seemed a much safer bet than international revolution.

The tragedy of Trotsky's position was that while at the time of the revolution and the civil war he was a leader of millions, now he had only a tiny audience for his ideas. The weakness of the working class severely limited his ability to resist the advance of Stalin.

FEAR

Trotsky's resistance was further undermined by his unwillingness to rock the party boat. This stemmed from a genuine fear of a counter-revolution. But he also underestimated the extent of the party's degeneration. As Cliff puts it, "He was acutely aware of the danger of capitalist restoration posed by the rise of the NEPmen and the Kulaks (speculators and private landowners), but failed to conceive of the possibility of capitalist restoration, on the basis of state property, by the bureaucracy itself."

So while Stalin could say in 1927 that the opposition "can be removed only by civil war",

Trotsky still believed the party could be reformed from within. The result was that Trotsky was unwilling to take the fight outside the party, to the workers. This in turn could only demoralise his supporters.

Nevertheless Trotsky kept alive the real tradition of the Russian revolution, of workers' power, democracy and internationalism, while Stalin stood for the opposite—bureaucracy, dictatorship, and extreme nationalism.

Now that Stalinism has collapsed and capitalism is deep in crisis once again, socialists have the opportunity to reclaim the heritage of the 1917 revolution. Without the legacy of Trotsky's fight against Stalin that task would be almost impossible.

Book of the month
Trotsky 3
Fighting the rising Stalinist bureaucracy: 1923-27
by TONY CLIFF

£7.00 post free from: SW Books,
PO Box 1648, James's St, Dublin
8

NEWS FROM THE SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT

NOW it's time to organise!



THESE are really exciting times for socialists.

The Socialist Workers Movement had a busy month in August responding to the rapidly changing political situation.

resources were stretched to the limits coping with the demands of these activities.

Broke

When news broke of

the right wing coup on August 19, SWM contacted other socialists and organised a protest rally in Dublin and other towns for the following Saturday. Within 24 hours we printed 1500 posters with the slogan "Protest at the USSR

coup—Support the workers resistance".

Twenty-four hours later when USSR workers had smashed the coup, we prepared and printed a two-sided Socialist Worker special and were on

the streets selling it with our paper.

Within hours of the victory we held a public meeting in Dublin giving the socialist view of the events of the previous days.

On the following Saturday in Dublin we invited passers-by to sign a giant congratulatory card to be sent to trade unions in the USSR. In the space of ninety minutes, twenty papers were sold and twelve people asked to be kept in contact with the SWM.

We then organised a national series of meetings on the theme "Good riddance to Stalinism" for the first week in September which includes a rally in Dublin to be addressed

by the SWM's Eamonn McCann and Frank Renken, an east German socialist.

Earlier in the month, along with other trade unionists in the health service, we printed and distributed Hospital Worker, a rank and file broadsheet which attempted to pull together those opposing the cuts and deterioration of conditions in the hospitals.

We printed hundreds of posters to advertise this protest under the slogan "Stop SPUC, Defend the Brook Clinic".

In addition we have been busy selling our recent pamphlet "Socialists, Republicanism and the Armed Struggle" which has generated a lot of interest in the two months since it was published.

The SWM had a large presence on the August 11 internment commemoration rally in Belfast. We sold 90 copies of Socialist Worker and 25 copies of our pamphlet "Socialists, Republicanism and the Armed Struggle".

Unlike many on the left who have been depressed by the collapse of Stalinism, the August revolution in the USSR has filled us with optimism. The old order is falling apart in the East while in the West economic slump has made the posturing of Bush, Major, Haughey and Co. ridiculous.

There has never been a better time for socialists to get organised and we invite our readers to consider joining with us in building a genuine socialist party.

Now stands at £2,634.38. Given the enormous demands on our meagre resources can we again appeal to our readers to help us find the technical means to rise to the task ahead?

Send all donations to SW Appeal, PO Box 1648, James Street, Dublin 8.

Responded

In Belfast, our members responded to the right wing bigots' threat to the Brook Clinics by organising along with others a picket of SPUC's conference in the city's Wellington Park Hotel.

SWM Meetings

BELFAST: Meets every Monday at 8.00pm upstairs in the Castle Mews Bar

September 9: Abortion: A woman's right to choose

September 16: Belfast 1907: A year of struggle

September 23: Do working class men benefit from women's oppression?

September 30: Do animals have rights?

BRAY: Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in Hibernian Inn, Marine Ice

September 10: Is Apartheid finished in South Africa

September 17: Reform or Revolution?

September 24: Did Leninism lead to Stalinism?

CORK: Meets every Tuesday in Anchor Inn, Georges Quay.

September 10: Did Leninism lead to Stalinism?

September 17: What's going on in Yugoslavia?

September 24: The roots of gay oppression

October 1: The working class, the revolutionary party and the struggle for socialism

DERRY: Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in Badgers, Orchard Street. For details of meetings see SW sellers or contact national address

DUBLIN: Meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in the Bachelor Inn, O'Connell Bridge

September 11: Anarchism

September 18: Reform or Revolution?

September 25: The American working class

WATERFORD: Meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in the ATGWU Hall, Keyzer Street

September 12: Abortion: a woman's right to choose

September 19: Socialists and religion

September 26: Louise Michel and the Paris Commune

NAVAN: Meets every Tuesday (see SW sellers or contact national address for details of venue)

September 10: The roots of racism

September 17: Socialists and the Republican Movement

September 24: Why are women oppressed?

October 1: Why the SWM says fight back

For more details or of regular meetings in DUNDALK, DUNGARVAN, GALWAY, KILKENNY, LIMERICK and PORTLAOISE contact: SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8 or SWM PO Box 418, Tomb Street, Belfast BT9 5PU

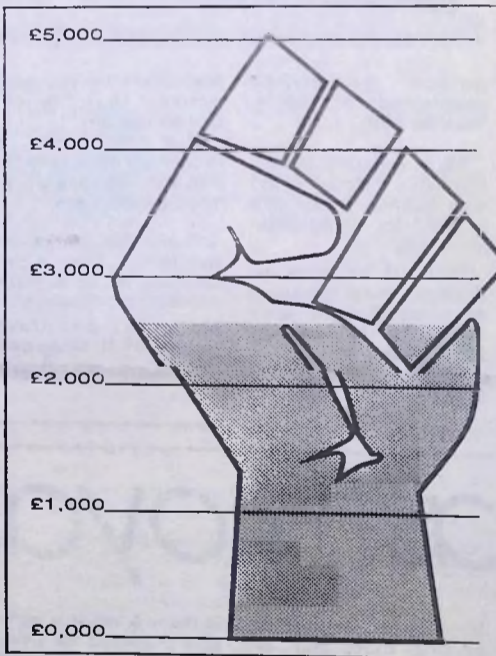
The jobs charter demands include

- The 35-hour week to create jobs
The immediate implementation of the Commission for Social Welfare's recommendations for a minimum £75 dole per person
An end to billion pound hand-outs to the rich. During the month of August in Dublin 400 signatures were collected outside dole offices and public places. It has shown that there is a lot of anger among people that although unemployment has reached 21 percent, the government seems unconcerned and profit margins for Irish bosses have increased by 20 percent in the last four years.

Petitioning has also taken place in Waterford and Cork, where the reaction has been very favourable.

If you would like to help collect signatures or to get some of our anti-unemployment leaflets to distribute to your mates, phone (01) 782471 and ask for Jason.

S.W. £5,000 Appeal



The SWM has produced a propaganda poster attacking Fianna Fail's record on unemployment, emigration and low wages. The poster has two colours (red and black). It gives details of how to get in contact with your local Socialist Worker sellers and our national office. If you'd like to take a few of these to stick up in your area/workplace, write to P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8.

Join us!

If you would like to join the SWM or want more details, complete and send to: SWM PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

Please send me more details of SWM
I want to join the SWM

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....



What we stand for

The Socialist Workers Movement is a marxist organisation fighting for a workers' republic in Ireland and for socialism internationally.

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

We begin from the proposition that what determines the nature of any society is the system by which its wealth is produced. In the system we live under, capitalism, production is geared to profit, not to human need. Among its inevitable features are poverty, war, racism and sexism. Capitalism cannot be destroyed and these evils thus eradicated by piecemeal reform. It can only be destroyed by revolutionary action by the class which creates all the wealth, the working class.

The machinery of the capitalist state - parliament, courts, army, police etc - is designed to protect the interests of the ruling capitalist class, not to regulate society in a neutral fashion. At most, parliament can be used sometimes, to make propaganda against capitalism. It cannot be used to smash capitalism. Only a workers' revolution can do that and establish a truly democratic society in which workers hold power directly through delegates elected from workplaces and areas and are recallable and replaceable at any time by those who elect them.

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

This kind of socialism does not exist anywhere today. Workers do not have control in Russia, China, Cuba etc. Instead, power is held by a state-capitalist class. A workers' revolution is needed in these countries too. We are against NATO and the Warsaw Pact and all weapons of mass destruction. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO PARTITION

The Northern State was created by British imperialism in its own interests. Sectarianism and bigotry were built into it and will continue to exist for as long as the state exists.

Catholic workers in the North are systematically discriminated against by the state, but Protestant workers are discriminated against by the state as well as Catholic workers to fight against their exploitation. It is in the interest of all Northern workers to unite against the state and aim at socialism in Ireland.

We support all forces struggling against imperialism and the Northern state, regardless of differences we may have with them.

The interests of the Southern ruling class are no longer in fundamental conflict with those of imperialism. Southern capitalism is a junior player in the world capitalist system. The Southern state too, props up partition, despite occasional nationalist rhetoric.

The "national question" can be solved only by mass working class struggle against both states. Republicanism, by limiting the immediate struggle to the achievement of "national unity", and by appealing for all-class alliances in pursuit of this goal, can never lead the working class towards the defeat of imperialism.

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression which divide and weaken the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women. We fight for free contraception, abortion on demand and the right to divorce. We oppose all discrimination against gays and lesbians. We stand for secular control of hospitals and schools. We fight for the complete separation of church and state.

FOR A FIGHT IN THE UNIONS

Trade unions exist to protect workers' interests under capitalism. The role of trade union leaders is to negotiate with bosses over workers' position within capitalism. To destroy capitalism, we need a rank and file movement in the unions separate from the leadership and fighting for workers' interests regardless of the needs of capitalism.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To destroy capitalism and achieve socialism the most class conscious sections of the working class must be organised in a revolutionary party. The SWM aims to build such a party through spreading its ideas and through its activity in the working class movement.

KEN RUSSELL'S FILM BANNED:

Fight every form of censorship

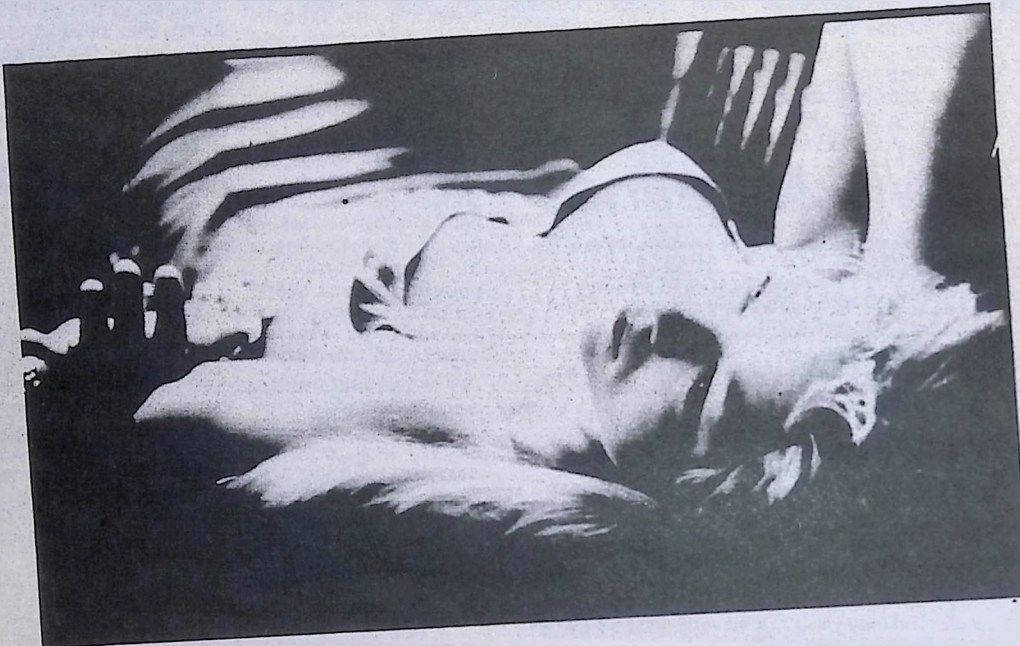
AS WE go to pre: Ken Russell's film, *Whore* is still banned in Ireland.

The ban is an outrage and must be opposed.

Whore is a film about a prostitute, Liz (Theresa Russell), who tries to escape from her pimp.

Liz talks about the harsh reality of her life and describes the men who pick her up. She hates most of her clients but also sees them as victims of a repressive society.

According to Fran Belbin in *British Socialist Worker*, the film does not exploit women. Rather it tries to tell the truth about women's oppression.



Theresa Russell in Ken Russell's *'Whore'*

BANNED

Ireland has a long history of film censorship. From 1924 to 1977, film censors banned 3,000 films and cut a further 8,000.

In 1940 Charlie Chaplin's send-up of Hitler, *The Great Dictator*, was banned. In the same year a film called *I Want a Divorce* had its title changed to *The Tragedy of Divorce* lest it corrupt Irish viewers.

From 1941 to 1954 film censor Richard contained "Soviet

poison", pro-British propaganda or "lascivious dancing".

More recently Monty Python's *Life of Brian* was banned from 1979 to 1987 for being blasphemous.

Ireland is one of Europe's most censored societies. But the laws are not as rigid as they were in the past.

...Recently the erotic was given kinder

treatment by the Irish censor than by the British censor.

Our rulers can no longer get away with the blatant censorship of the De Valera era.

From the 1960s onwards the Irish economy opened up to world capitalism. Access to foreign TV and travel (some of it enforced) allowed the Irish to

More importantly, the working class grew and women went out to work in greater numbers.

LIFELONG

Women's expectations went beyond lifelong marriage and childrearing. So attitudes to contraception, divorce and sexuality have changed dramatically... change even more. One

media source, quoted in the *Irish Times*, said: "With the Single (European) Market coming in there will naturally be greater integration at the moral, cultural and social level."

Indeed right-wingers like Professor Mary McAleese opposed the Single European Act for abortion".

SWM opposed the Act for different reasons—the New Europe will mean misery for workers and racist immigration laws.

But if attitudes change even further, so much the better.

Not that 1992 will usher in a new period of freedom. Recently French statistics experts suggested pushing women back into the home because low birth rates were leading to a labour shortage. Women's rights and civil liberties are already under attack across Europe.

FREEDOM

Clearly people will have to fight for more freedom. This means fighting against every form of censorship.

Does that mean that we would welcome the unbanning of pornography? Leading feminist Clodagh Corcoran has argued that pornography is "censorship of women's rights" and should remain banned.

True, porn reflects sexist attitudes and degrades women.

But the Southern state bans sexist but because it

has something to do with sex, however distorted. The state also bans abortion information and homosexual publications.

STATE

It is the state which censors women's rights and not pornography. Lifting the ban on porn would represent a step forward because it would weaken censorship generally.

Also, when workers throw off sexual repression it will not happen smoothly. Porn may become popular for a time as it was during the Portuguese Revolution in 1974-'75. Then *Playboy* was a best-seller, along with Lenin's *State and Revolution*.

Porn will disappear when sexist attitudes disappear, and when both men and women have control over their sexuality.

But fighting sexism involves taking on the authorities which oppress women. And that involves fighting every form of censorship.

DAVE MANNING

Belfast: Loyalty and Rebellion

Belfast: from Loyalty to Rebellion by Maurice Goldring, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1991. £7.99.

BELFAST: from *Loyalty to Rebellion* is primarily a study of the Protestant section of the working class in that city. The author, Maurice Goldring, is a French academic who is hostile to the IRA.

Goldring looks at what he calls Belfast's "culture of sectarianism" and how it affects people's

lives. He shows how the middle class has remained relatively unscathed by the "Troubles" while the working class has borne the brunt of the suffering.

He notes that "whenever there is a conflict there are always places generally for people with a better standard of living than the rest of the population, which provide a shelter from the thunder and lightning". Thus middle class people in Belfast have been able to pretend that life is normal—"Belfast is buzzing", as the tourist authorities and business community try to convince us. Goldring sees through this charade and argues that

in the long run it is impossible to pretend that Belfast is just like any other western European city.

Goldring's work also condemns the lack of political debate in the North. He maintains that as long as the unions ignore political questions they cannot claim to be confronting or overcoming sectarian divisions within the working class. The hunger strike is given as one example where the trade union movement should have discussed and taken a position on the issue, instead of which union leaders ignored what was happening in the world around them.

Goldring, despite his hostility to the Provisional

IRA, argues that it was wrong to regard the hunger strikers as criminals.

Goldring provides historical accounts of the struggles of Protestant workers against their bosses, particularly concentrating on the period around the Second World War.

He describes "Protestant Belfast" as "a fascinating mixture of radicalism and bigotry which one sometimes finds in the same person, but more often in a group of people".

Thus, Protestant workers can be good trade unionists and committed loyalists at one and the same time. The DUP, for example, are anti-conservative in many of



their economic policies and yet blatantly sectarian and reactionary in relation to Catholics.

Goldring gives plenty of examples of times when Protestant workers have taken on their bosses. However, he is pessimistic about the possibility of Catholic and Protestant workers actually uniting politically.

Goldring believes that because Catholics and Protestants are so segregated in much of their lives, and do not discuss politics even when they are together, there is no "common ground" where unity can take place. Instead of putting forward class politics, Goldring argues that

a form of "Loyalist radicalism" is the only answer.

Goldring even suggests that the roots of the violence might lie in gender relations.

"Male" violence is seen as partly responsible for the present conflict. Yet this theory does not explain why the South is less violent. Goldring has missed the crucial point made by Connolly that partition would produce reactionary societies on both sides of the border. It is partition itself which has led to the reactionary nature of Irish society and to the continued violence in the North, not so-called "patriarchy" or violent male attitudes

LINDA MOORE

INDUSTRIAL

CAVAN STRIKE

FOUR hundred and fifty workers at Wellman International in Mullagh, County Cavan got a nasty piece of news just before their holidays this year.

The US company announced a set of 21 compulsory redundancies. The company never experienced an official strike in its 18 years of existence. It expected the redundancies to go through without much trouble.

Workers, however, voted by 9 to 1 to take strike action unless the redundancies were put on a voluntary basis. Two unions, SIPTU and MSF took strike action in late August.

PICKETS

The pickets have also been fully respected by the craft workers.

Many workers suspect that the 21 redundancies are just the first of a growing series of redundancies. While they have decided not to oppose the redundancies completely, they argue that with voluntary redundancies older workers can leave the plant with some reasonable compensation.

The strike is completely solid and workers are drawing up plans to visit other factories in the area to build support.

Send donations to: Wellman Strike Fund, c/o SIPTU Office, Farnagh St Cavan.

Waterford Crystal: New Plan rejected



WORKERS at Waterford Glass have rejected a new document on terms and conditions.

The document included:

- Stricter timekeeping procedures;
- New short-time arrangements;
- Shift work for some furnace and security workers, at present on day-work.

High levels of short-time work have forced some employees to leave

the job with low severance pay.

Meanwhile shop-floor managers are abusing the arrangements. They avoid high levels of short-term work.

REGARDED

The managers also receive bonuses for imposing tougher discipline. These bonuses are regarded as "productivity pay". But the workers who

push up productivity are still lectured on "cost effectiveness".

Negotiations on the new document began after the 1990 strike at Waterford Crystal.

At that stage the union was given three weeks to agree to the terms.

Without an agreement the document would go to conciliation. If no agreement was reached at that stage it would go to the Labour Court.

Since the Labour Court had taken the employers' side during the strike, the union wanted a decision at conciliation.

MODIFIED

The Joint Conciliation Committee hammered out modified terms to put to the members. But the Shop Stewards Committee were split on the

recommendation.

At an open meeting, the members rejected the Document by a large majority.

Management will no doubt insist on a Labour Court hearing to resolve the matter. But the work force are angry at continually paying for the company's problems. That anger could turn into a fight back against the new conditions.

■ JIMMY KELLY (personal capacity)

BUS PLAN PUT BACK

THE threat to withdraw medical cover from the families of CIE employees has been put off for two months.

The Irish Medical Organisation has agreed to postpone the curtailment of the medical scheme while unions and CIE negotiate.

Both SIPTU and the NBRU had received large mandates for strike action if the cuts had gone ahead. For the first time in a number of years transport workers throughout the country were determined to fight back against another attack on their conditions.

However, the tensions which gave rise to the dispute remain.

The government will continue to starve public transport of funds and its workers will be asked to pay the price for this.

CIE has already said that a four percent pay rise due in October may not be paid. The issue of the medical scheme itself is not resolved. Unfortunately, some union leaders have made it clear that they are willing to give concessions on it.

Nevertheless, the determination of transport workers to take strike action over this issue is a clear indication that all future attacks on pay and conditions will be resisted.

■ NBRU MEMBER

Industrial Notebook

by PAUL O'BRIEN

Cleaners dispute

■ CLEANING workers are in dispute with Professional Contract Cleaners. Twenty workers are seeking re-engagement after a change of contracts in Guinness Brewery and the Department of the Marine.

This is a constant problem in the cleaning industry, where SIPTU, representing over two thousand workers, have referred the issue to the Labour Court.

In 1988 the Labour Court issued a lengthy recommendation which attempted to regularise pay and conditions in the industry. One of the recommendations stated that "employers in the industry will give full consideration to the position of workers who are unemployed as a result of a



change of contractors on a site". The FIE on behalf of Professional Contract Cleaners feel confident enough to challenge this recommendation. Strike

notice was served in June with respect to the Guinness site. If the court is not prepared to uphold its own ruling then strike action must be immediately taken.

Even if the court rules in the workers' favour that is no guarantee that Professional Contract Cleaners will abide by it. The outcome of this dispute could determine the future of the industry.

WOMEN WORKERS

■ ACCORDING to a recent NESC study the number of married women going out to work has risen substantially. Also, young women are entering the labour force at a later age due to increased participation in higher education.

The study found that a strong link exists between the level of wages and a decision to enter the jobs market. The obvious implication is that if wages rise more married women will return

to work. The study calculates that a 10 percent increase in wages could, with other things being equal, lead to an increase in participation of between 13 percent and 26 percent.

But we still have a long way to go. Despite an almost five-fold increase in the number of married women in work in the 20 years to 1987, the gap between our participation rates and that of other countries actually widened.

The survey is valuable in highlighting that the labour force is quite elastic—expanding as wages rise. With unemployment at 16 percent it shows that the job problem has another dimension which may be significant in future years.

PESP

■ OF the 160 agreements monitored by *Industrial Relations News* over the last four months 97 percent accord with the terms of the PESP. This compares with 80 percent for the first three months.

There can be no doubt that the rise in unemployment and the downturn in the world economy has led to a loss of confidence by the majority of workers to fight for settlements in excess of the PESP.

Another important feature is the small number of agreements—just eight in all—where the three percent allowed under Phase 2 of the PESP was formally agreed at this stage.

This means that 1992 will be a busy time as workers pursue the three percent cap. The ICTU and the leadership of SIPTU have stated publicly that they expect the vast majority of workers to receive the extra three percent allowed in Phase 2.

The employers are likely to claim inability to pay or that it can only be paid in exceptional circumstances, as the wording of Clause 3 of the PESP says.

The three percent will not be won easily. Shop stewards' committees should be lodging claims now and preparing the members for a fight over the next few months.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism 35p

Fianna Fail cop out on condoms

FIANNA Fail have copped out of providing condoms to young people. They want the health boards to decide where condoms can be sold.

The cabinet is split over lowering to seventeen the legal age for buying contraceptives.

Agriculture Minister Michael O'Kennedy is against the change. He says sex is only "proper to family life".

Yet a recent survey showed that sex outside of marriage is a fact of life in Ireland.

The survey of 2,000 Leaving Cert female students in Munster found that 25 percent had sexual intercourse. Also, ten percent of the 15-year-old age group and one percent of first year students were sexually active.

Bigots like O'Kennedy have no right to tell these young people how to behave. Of course his concern is not for young people at all.

According to O'Kennedy: "It is the social order that we are aiming to maintain and enhance."

Fianna Fail's social order is one where AIDS and unwanted pregnancies are on the increase.

That's why we should demand that condoms be made fully available.

Stop the SPUC bigots

DEFEND THE BROOK CLINICS!

THE Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child are once more attacking our rights.

SPUC organised a conference on 7 September against the setting up of a Brook Advisory Centre in Belfast. The SWM brought together a number of groups to picket the conference.

Brook Advisory Centres offer young people free, confidential birth control advice and supplies. They do not insist that people be over sixteen to get help.

They do pregnancy tests, pregnancy counselling and, if the woman wishes, they will refer her to an abortion clinic.

The Belfast Brook Centre is being funded by the Eastern Health Board. SPUC and its cronies in

Family and Youth Concern and similar organisations are trying to have the funding withdrawn.

But the Health Board decided to fund the centre for good reasons. The number of teenage pregnancies has rocketed in the North over the last ten years. In 1989 there were over 2,000 babies born to teenage mothers. Medical evidence suggests that

these babies are more likely to be underweight and are more likely to die in the first year of life. The Department of Health and Social Services has made the reduction in teenage pregnancies a priority for Health Boards in the coming five years.

"We think it is time that people looked at the facts and got over the whole idea about having the freedom to do whatever they want."—
Kathleen McQuaid, Northern Ireland secretary of SPUC.

SPUC say that the Brook Centre will encourage young people to have sex and so increase

the number of abortions. But they give the real reason for their objections

PEOPLE

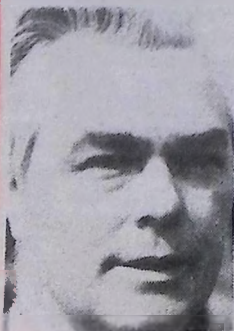
away when they talk about "the evils of abortion and contraception" encouraging young people to engage in the "short term pleasure of sexual gratification as an animalistic

desire.

SPUC don't believe young people have a right to enjoy sex, even if they do so in a caring and responsible way to taking measures to prevent pregnancy and the spread of AIDS. Over the last ten years we've seen in the South the damage their poison can do unless we organise to stop them.

If SPUC are allowed to stop the Brook Centre setting up in Belfast they won't stop there. They'll use the same tactics to intimidate those agencies that provide information on abortion and soon the situation in the North will be as bad as in the South.

UNIONISTS AND SDLP UNITE TO ATTACK OUR RIGHTS



Rev Martin Smyth of the Ulster Unionist Party

POLITICIANS and churchmen, from both sides in the North, are backing SPUC's attack on the Brook clinics.

The Rev Martin Smyth and Ken Maginnis of the Ulster Unionist Party have spoken out against the proposed Belfast centre. They are joined by Dr Joe Hendren of the SDLP.

Also, the Catholic bishop of Down and Connor, Dr Patrick

Walsh, has united with the Rev David McIlwain of the Free Presbyterian Church in condemning the clinic.

TRADITIONS

We continually hear talk of the difficulty of bringing together the "two traditions" in the North. But the leaders of the "two traditions" have no problem in coming together to

attack civil liberties.

They have shown once again that they both belong to *one tradition*—a tradition of narrow-minded bigotry.

Workers and young people from both sides need to unite in a different tradition—the tradition of fighting together to defend our rights.

The Campaign for Information and Choice aims to build such unity to stop SPUC's attack on the Brook clinics.



Patrick Walsh, Bishop of Down and Connor

SPUC: Driving women to despair

IRISH women who have abortions in Britain see it as a basic right. That's the finding of a recent poll of 200 women.

If You Ever Go Across the Sea to England is the title of the report. It was compiled by Dr Colin Francome of Middlesex Polytechnic in London.

The women came from various age groups and walks of life.

A 36-year-old woman—mother of two children—said: "It's up to each individual to be allowed to make a decision about their bodies. If one can't cope with a pregnancy she should have a right to terminate."

A 44-year-old married woman said: "To leave someone pregnant, desperate, mentally exhausted with no-one to turn to for advice or help and just told to 'get on with it' is criminal. Maternity hospitals offer advice but give no contraceptives and do not advise the coil. The Pill may not suit

you and you're back to square one.

"Sterilisation is out of the question in a Catholic hospital—it's not to be mentioned."

Another woman said: "It was very difficult and distressing to find the address and phone number of somewhere reputable to contact before I left Ireland, as the Well Woman can no longer give out this information."

A separate survey of female Leaving Cert students in Munster found that only five percent said they could confide in their parents if they became pregnant.

Ms Maura Ni Riordain, the counsellor who did the survey, also heard of a 15-year-old girl who carried out an abortion on herself while her parents were away for a weekend.

Such desperate measures result from SPUC's attacks on abortion information. SPUC supporters on the Eastern Health Board now want to cut funding for Rape Crisis Centres. There is a growing need to stand up to these bigots.