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INTRODUCTION

The members of the International Marxist Group in Hull have brought out this edition of Revolutionary Student both as a contribution to vigorous debate on the left about the tasks and perspectives of socialists under capitalism - locally and nationally - as well as an introduction to some of the ideas and theoretical viewpoints of the IMG. We are one of the younger and smaller organizations of the revolutionary left in Britain but we are firmly convinced that the clarity and correctness of our ideas and positions will prove far more important in the long run than either larger numbers or soft accommodation to the brutalities of capitalism.

The IMG is part of an international organization - the Fourth International founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938 - which is increasingly able to play a major part in workers' struggles throughout Europe. This gives the significant internationalism to our work as reflected in the articles here. In our time, capitalism and imperialism are multinational in the fullest sense of the word and can only be defeated by the unified struggle of workers in all countries acting in solidarity against the common enemy and for the common victory.

As we write, the focus of the struggle in Europe is increasingly sharpening on Spain. We write this in the shadow of the appalling executions of five militant freedom fighters. This vicious dying crime of a criminal regime has justifiably provoked massive protest throughout a Europe which has not forgotten how Franco came to power, how over half a million died in the effort and how he has maintained fascism - first with German and Italian aid, today with blatant murder. The first task of all European socialists is to ensure that Spain is not sucked into more tragedy but that her proletariat can not only destroy fascism but create a truly free society. In this our solidarity and understanding is vital.

The articles we present here reflect our perspectives. Our first one takes up the crucial question of the role of women in the struggle for socialism. Too often women's oppression has been seen even by leftist parties as something peripheral or to be solved after the 'revolution'. The full and total liberation of women from the shackles of not only capitalism but the whole range of sexist and arrogant attitudes, we believe, is an essential precondition for a real and genuine revolution. The two articles on Ireland are intended to be seen as a coherent unit. The first depicts the overall background of imperialism in Ireland while the second underlines the vital necessity for the immediate withdrawal of troops. This has been one of the central issues in the work of the IMG. We trust you will give it your deepest consideration and help to build up a strong Troops Out Movement in Hull. The articles on education cutbacks and Portugal underline further aspects of our socialist perspective. We must combat the efforts of decaying capitalism to jeopardize educational standards and the rights of all students. And we must aid the efforts of a young socialism to secure itself among the Portuguese people, especially as a preparation for the Spanish struggle. We trust this will give you an idea of what we believe and indicate the way forward for revolutionaries in coming to grips with a final defeat for imperialism, especially here.

WOMEN'S ROLE IN THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM

By Glen Spray

The role played by women all over the world in the fight against capitalism to achieve a socialist revolution has been vital. Changes in economic structure have, however, not automatically brought an end to women's position of subordination. She has generally remained the "second sex" in both pre- and post-capitalist societies.

Although lip service has been paid to the "woman question", the left has generally failed to make an adequate theoretical analysis of women's oppression. Women's groups have been dismissed as either mistaken feminists or bourgeois reformers. Most particularly what has been lacking is an analysis of the productive activity which is largely specific to women - domestic labour - and its role in determining the relationships of women to men and to male dominated institutions.

But it is the role of the family and domestic labour which is at the very centre of the arena of conflict. The bourgeois family and the values which it encapsulates provides the necessary material and ideological support for a rotten economic structure. Consequently, the principle of socialist women's movements: "There will be no women's liberation without revolution, There will be no revolution without women's liberation" is crucial. It is therefore necessary for women to organise as women before the socialist revolution and during the socialist revolution, so that they are able to play a maximum role and to ensure that their needs are not subordinated.

Bourgeois Theory

Bourgeois theorists have viewed female activity in the home as essentially cultural and frequently failed to recognise that women do in fact constitute a subordinate group at all. Where there has been a recognition of female oppression, this has generally been limited to a descriptive analysis of manifestations of sexual inequality and discrimination in quite distinct fields; in employment, in personal relationships, in the family, in the commercial exploitation of the female sex and so on. Bourgeois theory has therefore been unable to establish links between different manifestations of sex-based inequality, and has also failed to analyse women's subordination within the productive relationships of the class system.

Bourgeois values and ideology have particularly stressed the role of the family and its structure, and have manipulated this in varying degrees at different periods. The myth of equality of status in marriage is given full weight and eagerly expounded. Similarly during periods of economic crisis and unemployment when the female labour force becomes the first to be made redundant, theories of "maternal deprivation" are resurrected. The working mother (irrespective of the fact that most women work through economic necessity), is labelled as irresponsible and pressurised into returning to her full time job in the home. A recent example has been Sir Keith Joseph's speech on the "degeneration" of Britain caused by unmarried mothers and his comments on Thatcher's election: "The values for which Mrs Thatcher stands - the family, responsibility, work and thrift - are shared across the nation". The family (as defined in a bourgeois sense) is therefore a cornerstone of bourgeois hegemony and social life.

Classical Marxism

Apart from Engels' essay *Origins of the Family*, the question of the subordination of women was taken up by such people as Bebel, Kollantai and Clara Zetkin. However, the level of theoretical discussion never matched the degree of sophistication attained by the marxist analysis of class antagonisms.

Early debate was largely based on Engels' suspect anthropology and seems to have been concerned only with the bourgeois family system. The main concept which appears to have been used by early Marxist writers on the family is that of "sexual property". This not only failed to recognise the difference between social classes, but saw women as wholly passive objects especially within the context of the family. Women were regarded as potential historical subjects only when they entered the labour force.

Therefore implicit in the debate is the view that since women as housewives and mothers are excluded from social production for the market, their subordination is not a constituent element of the central dynamic of capitalist societies. The conclusion of the classical marxist view was that female emancipation must depend on the entry of women into social production.

New Left

The New Left showed little interest in the oppression of women until forced out of its complacency by the women's liberation movement. Its theoretical interest in the family has generally been less concerned with the way in which it might directly determine the oppression of women, than in the adverse effects of the present organisation of the family on working class consciousness. Interest centres less on the family itself than on the family's relevance to the male-dominated class struggle being waged in the industrial sector.

Emphasis is laid on how the family functions to inhibit a direct challenge to the capitalist order by the working class. For example, the family is isolated from the class struggle. Its values, privatised and demanding that the husband's overriding responsibility be to his family, conflict with the requirements of class solidarity; the family provides an emotionally supportive retreat for the psychologically alienated worker; the family also is the main agency for the transmission of values to new generations. These will tend to be anti-solidaristic and will encourage the acceptance of existing authority structures.

Whilst these points are of crucial importance, the one-sided nature of the analysis inevitably leads back to the agreement that it is necessary for women to enter fully into social production, both as a means of escaping household drudgery and as a precondition of their emancipation.

The Feminist Debate

Dissatisfaction with the narrowness and inadequacy of marxist theory has in many cases led to the opposite reaction. A feature of much feminist thought is the belief that all women irrespective of social class or politics share a common oppression and may be organised around it. In its radical version, it maintains that the division between the sexes was the principle form of all class divisions, and that the great moving power of all historic events is the "dialectic of sex".

If we are asking for reforms, the view that all women may be mobilised around certain issues is no doubt true. However, if we adopt a revolutionary perspective, women must be differentiated by their class affiliations which will determine their collective capacity for anti-capitalist and anti-sexist action.

What has been lacking then, in both Marxist and Feminist perspectives is an approach which views productive and reproductive systems as aspects of a unified whole, rather than as separate parts.

Domestic labour is of the utmost productive importance to the capitalist economy. It not only produces and maintains the labour force, but also serves as a major instrument of ideological control. The repressive morality which is diffused through the medium of the bourgeois family, is of crucial significance. The family, which is itself the historical product of definite economic constellations, creates, through the process of child rearing, the type of character structure which supports the political and economic order of the society as a whole. Thus the child is not only socialised into restrictive forms of behaviour, but into the value systems of the ruling class.

Similarly, radical psychiatrists such as Laing have destroyed the myth that families are the "little democracies" described by bourgeois sociologists, and have shown them to be centres of conflict. This is clearly supported by instances of wife battering, child battering, and mental breakdown. As he says: "In the family the whole bog of social mystification, reification, alienation, and bad faith is filtered..."

Women are therefore not marginal to the capitalist economy, but at its very centre. A breakdown of the capitalist structure inevitably involves a complete collapse of the present nuclear family. Trotsky puts forward such a view when, in 1938, he discusses the reversal in the Soviet attitude to women and the family:-

"The position of women is the most graphic and telling indicator for evaluating social regime and state policy. The October Revolution inscribed on its banner the emancipation of womankind and created the most progressive legislation in history on marriage and the family. This does not mean of course, that a "happy life" was immediately in store for the Soviet woman. Genuine emancipation of women is inconceivable without a general rise of economy and culture, without the destruction of the petty-bourgeois family unit, without the introduction of socialised food preparation and education. Meanwhile, guided by its conservative instinct, the bureaucracy has taken alarm at the disintegration of the family. It began singing panegyrics to the family supper and the family laundry, that is, the household slavery of women. To cap it all, the bureaucracy has restored criminal punishment for abortions, officially returning women to the status of pack animals. In complete contradiction with the ABC of Communism, the ruling caste has thus restored the most reactionary and benighted nucleus of the class system, i.e. the petty-bourgeois family".

The analysis which limits women's emancipation purely to victories on the factory floor is not only failing to appreciate the basic objectives of the women's movement, but will by implication fail to achieve a truly socialist society.

The fight against capitalism must be waged on many different fronts-- at work, in the home, against sexual and psychological repression, through the raising of class consciousness and individual consciousness, in poetry, art and literature.

The National Abortion Campaign which demands "a woman's right to choose" is a struggle not purely for women, but about women's rights which is the concern of the whole working class movement. Equally, abortion can not be considered without free contraception on demand, nursery facilities, equal job opportunities, training and so on. In other words, the work now done in the home as private production must be changed into work to be done in the public sector. Society must begin to take responsibility for children; the economic dependence of women and children on husband-father must be ended. The other work which goes on in the home must also be changed - communal eating places and laundries for example. When such work is moved into the public sector, then the material basis for discrimination against women will be gone.

Socialist revolution demands a complete "leap in consciousness". Women's oppression must be located in the total series of repressive structures, and not reduced simply to economic exploitation as a class or exploitation at work.

If women are to be truly free - rather than to simply exchange one particular form of domination for another - we must learn the lessons of history. Women's emancipation must be located at the centre of the struggle, and not subordinated to its periphery. Revolutionary theory, therefore, cannot remain static but must be continually reforming and re-creating itself.

IMPERIALISM AND THE IRISH STRUGGLE

BY Alan Bruce

Among the Left, as in Western society as a whole, the long neglect of Ireland is notorious. Books and articles on imperialism, colonialism, racialism, industrialization and neo-colonialism can be sifted through at length without producing between them more than a sentence or two on a society which experienced native 'reservations' before America was discovered; a nation which underwent rampant colonialism before Africa was explored; a country which had its population enslaved and shipped to the West Indies two centuries before Wilberforce - and with no protest.

Tragic as this neglect has been, in the case of Britain - and particularly the British working class - it has been a scandal. A working class and its vanguard, however 'advanced', which refuses to recognize its own imperialism is a brutal betrayal to itself and to the international struggle for an end to capitalism and the achievement of socialism. This is as true for pre-1914 Russia in its dealings with the Poles as it is for France (and the French Communist Party) in relation to Vietnam before Dien Bien Phu. Today it is true for Britain in relation to its oldest and last colony, Ireland.

Ireland remains a confused twilight enigma for Britain. Its values and culture are as little understood and misrepresented as its history. Its people are the objects of both ridicule and hate - both prejudices stemming from fear, and perhaps guilt. The Left has mirrored this confusion, particularly since the recent upsurge of revolt in north-eastern Ireland after 1969. Various solutions have been put forward ranging from sheer absurdity to timidity. Above all, Ireland is relegated to the footnotes or afterthoughts while once again, for the tenth time in 175 years, her people, working people, resort to arms to achieve independence.

Irish history is long and tortuous. We only wish to sketch some of its main features in this article - those features in particular which may be of benefit to those British socialists who wish to extricate theory and practice out of the morass of ignorance, chauvinism and arrogance with which they have been for too long encumbered.

From the twelfth century to the sixteenth, Ireland was a feudal fief of Anglo-Norman kings and their barons. Peripheral to continental developments her culture, power and social organization went through set-back and re-establishment but, ultimately, little fundamental change. Tudor expansionism and centralization changed all that and by 1550 Ireland took on a role in the eyes of a nascent imperialism which she has never relinquished - a rich and profitable colony as well as a laboratory and testing-ground for colonial, exploitive and military techniques. Gaelic Ireland resisted all this ferociously only to be destroyed in 1603 with her Spanish allies at the battle of Kinsale. The seventeenth century saw the sustained efforts of Stuarts, Cromwellians and religions to 'pacify' the Irish, break their economy and culture, deport or enslave her population, settle a vigorous colon community and use Ireland as a pawn in wider European power games. In all that long and brutal century, Ireland's fate foretold that of countless countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. British imperialism evolved and refined itself in Ireland.

By the eighteenth century, Ireland was indeed at 'peace'. A large, hostile and landless population ruled by a tiny oligarchy of (often absentee) landlords, supported by their agents and a ruthless army was the picture of colonial Ireland. Even the Anglo-Scots settlers, predominant in north-east Ulster because of meagre industrial concessions, began to drift away to North America in the first of many exoduses that the Irish would know.

Modern Irish politics begins in 1798 when the dispossessed populace, merging a primitive colonial analysis with the borrowed bourgeois ideals of the French Revolution, rose en masse against the puppet colonial government. The May rebellion was crushed by November with unspeakable cruelty. With it were lost 150,000 dead, the Irish Parliament and a fledgling catholic-protestant unity based on common resistance to the occupying power of Britain. But with it was gained the experience that would inspire further revolt and, eventually, partial independence.

The nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of class forces and interests on a less feudal and more recognizable pattern. The abolition of Parliament saw an ever-increasing integration of the Irish economy into that of the United Kingdom - as a supplier of foodstuffs (largely unprocessed), raw materials and, later on, cheap migrant labour. The Irish service economy produced a catholic bourgeoisie which secured its 'emancipation' and position under its leader Daniel O'Connell in 1829. He was the first of many Irish neo-colonial politicians to betray the Irish peasant and worker in humble obedience to the dictates of metropolitan imperialism. The thread runs from him, through Redmond and Griffith, to Liam Cosgrave and Cruise O'Brien in our own day.

The great Famine of 1845 is the watershed of modern Irish history. Those, especially socialists, who wish to understand the main currents of the present Irish dilemma, must come to grips with the traumatic social, demographic and cultural effects occasioned by it. In five years over one million Irish had emigrated and a further million died from starvation and disease - all the time while the colonial capitalists were exporting food to the British market. The building of railroads in the twenty years after the Famine served to spread and strengthen the colonial nature of Ireland - a predominantly rural society, riddled with fatalism and despair; a declining population whose education and mores were dominated by the catholic church (whose seminaries were financed by the British) and whose economic life was controlled by 'gombeen' men, the agents of landlord and credit; small fragmented holdings whose occupiers were progressively driven into the Belfast or Dublin slums or overseas as industrial fodder for British and American capitalism.

The land wars of the 1880s were serious manifestations of peasant discontent. Allied to the radical republicanism of the Fenians, this would be the basis for the twentieth century revolutions. At the same time Ireland produced its own bourgeois party, the Nationalists, based on native capitalist interests and a declining but conscience-stricken landlordism. The contradictions were insuperable. No clear demand for independence based on the masses of the people emerged. The Irish people were betrayed from within as well as without.

Proto-fascist manifestations appeared, fostered by British imperialism, in the north-east. These were based on the predominantly protestant working class in and around Belfast. Here industries had arisen which in no way competed against British ones but, rather, were complementary to the worldwide pattern of British imperialist networks. Ship-building and textiles oiled imperialism's wheels. The Irish workers never benefitted from this lopsided and irrational 'development'.

By the early twentieth century, catholic clericalism allied to Irish petty capitalism had emasculated the nationalist movement. A revived Orange order directly served imperialism by dividing the working class and stimulating regular sectarian riots and pogroms. Republicanism had been driven underground into small secret esoteric societies with theories as anachronistic as they were impractical. Sinn Fein was a small petit bourgeois grouping around Griffith toying with an Austro-Hungarian 'solution' and the absurd dream of even Irish colonies in Africa. Only the gun could triumph and triumph it did. The contradictions were indeed great.

Only the Irish working class, undivided and in alliance with the remaining radicalized peasantry, could preserve the spirit of Irish nationality and, more importantly, carry this into action. James Connolly, who clearly understood this, and James Larkin, the labour organizer, both sought to achieve this. The labour movement they led posed the most serious threat to the vested interests of imperialism. Irish labour could see through the sham of bourgeois parliamentary manipulations. Irish labour carried through the first police strike and the first general strike in Europe. Irish labour broke sectarian barriers and fought divisive attempts by imported rabble rousers like Carson and Churchill. Irish labour formed the first armed workers' militia in the world.

Yet all failed. Betrayed by catholicism and nationalist quisling elements, sabotaged by bureaucrats, Irish labour was savagely repressed by a mutinous British army, drafted into the World War and forced to step aside as 'respectable' nationalists took the stage to destroy the Irish revolution. Easter 1916 galvanized the Irish nation. But, even as Connolly and Pearse were being executed, Irish labour had lost its paramount position. The Anglo-Irish war of 1919-1921 saw the birth of a State, not the rebirth of a nation. The petit bourgeois elements who directed it were incapable of making any break with imperialism. The gun had won and the contradictions swallowed Ireland.

A vicious civil war raged until 1923 fought out over the forms of neo-colonialism. The absurd partition of Ulster was not even an issue. The crushing of the Irish labour movement and the soviets of the south-west were issues. After the victory of reaction in 1923 hundreds of thousands were unemployed. Yet one of the first acts passed by the Free State was the Censorship of Films Act. In the northern statelet, the first act was the Special Powers Act - a measure which even South Africa's repressive regime is on record as regarding as too stringent. These acts were to set the tone for the future divergent but complementary evolution of imperialism's two clients.

For the next fifty years the South followed a classic neo-colonial course. Servility gave way to feeble protectionism and, in 1958, this in turn gave way to unfettered penetration by multinational capital. The catholic church reigned supreme in the fields of education and cultural affairs. Tax-free incentives and docile labour attracted transient industrialization. Unemployment remained at impossibly high levels and emigration turned into a stampede to escape puritanism and poverty. The economy was tied hand and foot to Britain's. There were no social or health services. Alcoholism and insanity plagued rural life. Independence had become a farce.

In the North, a brutal sectarian statelet arose on one-sixth of the Irish territory. Divided and vicious, its forces of military repression broke trade unions, terrorized the people and repressed the violent rebellions which occurred regularly almost every decade.

The uprising since 1968 is but the latest of these. Predictable as it was, it heralds a new epoch. Northern Ireland now, as in 1798, is the key to Irish resistance. Here the contradictions of imperialism are at their most blatant. The state cannot survive without terror, division and military force. Yet terror and division are no longer advantageous for a declining metropolitan capitalism which needs stable neo-colonial allies to secure its profits. No one in the ruling classes could foresee in the mid-sixties how 'issues' like Civil Rights and People's Democracy would become so crucial in 1969. Even Cathal Goulding, a leader of Official Sinn Fein, confessed to the press in 1967 that another Irish uprising was decades away, if not impossible. But the Northern working class not only saw it, they made it happen.

Today the Southern bourgeois parties, faced with massive economic crisis, writhe with fear and confusion. Their most eloquent apologist, Conor Cruise O'Brien, laments the violence his own sick ideology has produced. The Irish Labour Party, riddled with opportunism, allies itself with a neo-fascist party and can give no clear direction. Other parties, totally out of touch with the realities of the Irish people, use imperialism's categories and values to debate with an imperialism which has already defeated them.

In the North the people have risen. Forced by repression and fascist violence, they have resorted to armed self-defence and, however gropingly, have edged themselves along to a clearer understanding of their history, their needs, their demands and their answers. As their conflict crystallizes they will make the analysis of imperialism, British or West European, which will defeat it. They will forge the tools and categories which will enable them to achieve the only victory which can finally end all the centuries of repression and exploitation. That victory will be not only and simply the victory of the unity of catholic and protestant, worker and peasant. It will be the unity of the working class and revolutionary socialist theory based on self-determination, ownership of natural resources and the means of production by the Irish working class, collectivization of the land for the peasants. Then will follow the destruction of those native elements which have too long retarded the people's struggle: religious mystification, the gombeen men and the indigenous capitalists.

This victory is no victory, and can never be one, unless British workers and students see it as their victory too. The victory of the North will save Ireland. The victory of Ireland will save the British working class. When British workers and students reject chauvinism, when they demand the immediate withdrawal from Ireland of the capitalists' brutal army, when they actively campaign for Irish self-determination and a true understanding of the roots of the Irish tragedy - they will in no small way have contributed to the emancipation of the Irish proletariat and ultimately their own.

By Keith Russell

In the previous article in this journal, the relationship in all its forms between British imperialism and Ireland was examined in its full historical context. The aim of this article is to discuss how militants can best assist the fight of the Irish people and by what means we can break what James Connolly called "the criminal apathy" of the British working class in regard to the long struggle of the Irish against the interests of the British ruling class.

The International Marxist Group believes it is a major priority for the labour movement in this country to campaign for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, in order that the Irish people themselves, and they alone, can determine their own destiny. It is not on the basis of some vague moralistic internationalism that we support the Troops Out Movement, but because it is in the real interests of not only the Irish but also the British working class that the mutual enemy of both, British imperialism and capitalism, suffers a defeat in Ireland. Such a defeat would, by definition, mean not only a qualitative development in the class struggle in Britain and Western Europe but, in this epoch, would affect the class balance of forces on a global scale.

No doubt some socialists will see the last statement as an instance of the Fourth International indulging in fantastic revolutionary orgasms. This is not the case. Rather it is a matter of understanding the objective historical processes at work and what is politically at stake for the working class as a whole in a period when British capitalism is in severe crisis on all fronts. It is the task of socialists in the labour movement to point out that the class which seeks to reduce the standard of living of workers in this country and maintain its own position at the expense of trade unionists, women, blacks, students and other sections of the community, also for its own self-interest uses whatever resources it has at its command to continue the repression of the Irish worker. Naturally, in building a mass Troops Out campaign, we face a long hazardous task. Not the least of our problems is to confront and overcome the eight centuries' old 'colonial mentality' of British people regarding the Irish which, with all the other chauvinistic hangovers from British imperialism, are part and parcel of the social-democratic ideology which still serves to contain the British working class under the capitalist regime.

It cannot be stressed too often how vital the need is to build a successful Troops Out Movement. The ruling class and its bed-fellows, the presently unrespectable reactionaries and fascists like Powell and the National Front, understand that in many ways the key to the development of the internal class struggle in Britain is being tested in the present Irish struggle. If we do not succeed, then certainly the potential for Powellites and the National Front - using as their base loyalist forces in Ulster - to take advantage of the divisions and confusion in the British working class will be greatly enhanced. Placing this possibility within an ever-increasing crisis of British capitalism, it is easy to see what the consequences of this would be for all militants and trade unionists in this country.

One of the main arguments used against Troops Out Now is that such a move would lead to a bloodbath, a massacre of Catholics in the north of Ireland. We believe this argument reveals a lack of clear understanding about the role and presence of the British army in Ireland now. British troops are only in Ireland to protect British imperialist interests. This is the source of all of Ireland's problems. The six county statelet was artificially established to protect these interests. In pursuit of these interests, British troops have for the past six years terrorized and brutalized the nationalist population of the Six Counties. Hundreds have been interned in concentration camps, thousands put behind bars and still others shot down as on Derry's Bloody Sunday.

The fact is that since the British troops went in, there has been a continual bloodbath. What else can you call nearly 2000 dead, thousands maimed, hundreds serving savage sentences and hundreds in captivity even though they have never been sentenced? What else can you call countless sectarian assassinations, many carried out under the eyes of British troops? What else can you call the endless harassment of the anti-unionist population and the now admitted torturing of suspected Republican prisoners with 'white noise' and deprivation? We say the troops have provoked a bloodbath already and their continued stay in Northern Ireland can only provoke a bigger one.

Despite the thousands of men that the loyalists have under arms, the vast majority of arms searches and arrests before the ceasefire were in anti-unionist areas. Just look at the list of prisoners - the vast majority were and are anti-unionists. This is exactly what the loyalists have always been able to rely on: the strength of the British State to back their own little sectarian statelet so that whenever the 'croppies' get too out of hand, too much for the B-Specials and their ilk, then they can be dealt with by more powerful forces.

Unfortunately, the argument that immediate withdrawal of troops would lead to a 'bloodbath' is also used by the Communist Party to justify its position on Ireland. It is apparent that there is a significant division of opinion in the Communist Party over its policies on Ireland but it is still an obstacle for the Troops Out Movement to overcome. This is the more tragic as this party, at the present, still has the most influence on working class militants. The CP, as demonstrated in its recent manoeuvres over Trades Council delegations to Northern Ireland, is seeking to prevent its own militants from coming into contact with T.O.M.

The theoretical source of the Communist Party's position on Ireland is one Joseph Stalin. This gifted intellectual developed the anti-Marxist theory of 'stages of revolution'. This laid down predetermined stages through which the revolution must pass; that it was not possible to skip stages and therefore it would be a tactical mistake to make demands designed to achieve, say, stage three before stage two had been reached. Thus, the strategy of the C.P., with its crudely updated 'stages theory', is that stage one of the Irish revolution is the winning of bourgeois 'democracy' in the North; stage two is the achievement of an independent capitalist Ireland; stage three would be 'socialism in Ireland'. As Eamon McCann succinctly put it, "stated briefly, the theory sounds crazy; and indeed it is".

We will now look in detail how the C.P. proposes to reach stage one. They say the key to the solution of the problem in Ireland is the concept of a Bill of Rights. The scope of this proposed bill is fantastic. It would range from outlawing discrimination in all fields of life to ending internment without trial to safeguarding the right of all to campaign in democratic elections. Furthermore, British troops under this bill would be withdrawn, not from Ireland, but back into their barracks. Now here is the rub - how is this bill to be implemented?

First this bill is made a British Act of Parliament. At this point, in order to avert our own possible confusion over the C.P.'s confusion, kindly be reminded that the C.P. acknowledges that the system created by British imperialism is sectarian. The C.P. accept that the loyalist forces would react violently to such a bill being implemented in the North. So now we discover why the Communist Party has the British troops in their barracks. They want the imperialist army to stop being imperialist for a little while and make sure that a bill of rights is implemented. However since the C.P. is concerned by passing an act through its own parliament and then making sure that its self-imposed abolition is carried through by its own army!

The way to combat such incredible confusion over the whole question of the Irish struggle, and the role of troops in particular, is to build the Troops Out Movement. Slowly but surely, T.O.M. is beginning to develop. Earlier this year, T.O.M. organized a National Labour Movement Conference on Ireland. It is interesting to note the composition of the delegates: 43 delegates from 34 Trades Councils; 138 delegates from 81 Trade Union branches; 62 delegates from Labour Party organizations; 77 delegates from 37 student organizations.

These 320 delegates plus over 200 observers constituted the largest ever conference on Ireland ever held by the British labour movement. The Conference heard veteran Clydeside revolutionary, Harry McShane, make the essential point which his great comrade John MacLean put forward over fifty years ago: "If British workers deny the Irish people the right to control their own destinies, then they will never be free themselves". This point was taken up by Hervyn Metcalfe, a TASS member and delegate from Coventry Trades Council, who spoke of the need "to challenge the chauvinism which leads workers to believe that the government has some role to play in Ireland. And that means fighting the strategy that sees the withdrawal of troops to barracks as sufficient." As Michael Mullen of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union made perfectly clear in his address - the British government has absolutely no right to any political or military presence in Ireland. It is on this basis that we campaign for the immediate withdrawal of troops, the first step on the road to freedom for the Irish people.

The capitalist State continues to make preparations for the coming upheavals. The British ruling class is in the unenviable position of facing an economic, social and political crisis of the whole system of imperialism while its own working class is organizationally very strong; a working class which also has suffered no serious defeats throughout the twenty years of the post-war boom and, prior to that, since 1926. This explains the very serious and consistent attempts at the highest level to streamline the police forces and develop their organizational co-ordination with the army.

The formation of the Special Patrol Group, the joint manoeuvres at Heathrow and the hardline tactics of police on demos and on picket lines (e.g. the Kevin Gately murder and Glasgow police rioting on anti-fascist demonstrators) - all this follows a clearly emerging pattern. Furthermore the British army has gained an invaluable experience not only from Ireland but also from its other involvements in 36 'peace-keeping' roles since 1945. So we can see that the removal of troops from Ireland would, at the very least, hamper these preparations. It would be like closing down the laboratory where repressive techniques can best be tested. However, it would represent far more than this. Because for the troops to be removed presupposes a mighty movement within the British working class able to force the decision through. If such a movement were to develop among British workers, its significance would be incalculable. For although the British labour movement is organizationally and numerically very strong, it is very weak politically and ideologically. The questions of racism, sexism and anti-Irish chauvinism for example are cracks which could be exploited in order to split the working class even further and destroy its ability to fight against the capitalist crisis and capitalism itself.

Whenever white workers scab on black workers; whenever male workers refuse to support women workers fighting for equal pay; whenever one union or section of workers is fighting another; then the employing class will know how to exploit all these divisions to their own interest and to the detriment of the fighting ability of the whole united working class. Anti-Irish chauvinism was effectively used by the Labour government in introducing the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which produced very little protest and which has been used by the capitalists not only against Irish working class militants residing in Britain, but also against others like the T&G militant Franco Caprino.

Imperialism is not just another aspect of government policy like incomes policy. It is not something that can be abolished through Parliament like health service charges. Imperialism has created its own Parliament to pass its own laws, to finance its own armed bodies of men, to preserve its social, political, economic and cultural existence. This includes its dominant relationship to Ireland as a whole. The fight of Irish workers and British workers is against imperialism. You can't ask imperialism to have that fight for you. Imperialism artificially divided Ireland; imperialism fostered and encouraged sectarianism; and now imperialism will have to pay the price.

A 'bill of rights' will not solve any of the problems. There is no British solution. There will be no solution until the Northern statelet is completely dismantled. It is for these reasons that the International Marxist Group will continue to fight, as they have always done, for the broadest possible united fronts to mobilize workers and students on the question of Ireland. Within those united fronts we will fight for:
NO CONCESSIONS TO THE LOYALISTS.
TROOPS OUT NOW.
SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE IRISH PEOPLE.

REPULSE WILSON'S EDUCATION CUTBACKS !

By Jeff Gordan

Ever since the late sixties and the mass mobilisations of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, students have increasingly been in conflict with the State. Indeed, quite recently at Oxford, Kent and Essex Universities, a prolonged struggle was waged over the question of inadequate grants, which earned support from sections of workers who were themselves locked in struggle.

This militancy is a response to the effect on students of the "generalised crisis of social expenditure" afflicting society as a whole. Thus with a declining rate of profit and a deepening slump, rampant inflation and accelerating unemployment, the ruling class and their representatives the Labour Government have launched a synchronised offensive to reduce the living standards of all sections of working people. More and more, students in common with other fixed income groups are prey to the "automatic" ravages of a crumbling capitalism - inflation.

But it would be crude "economism" to explain student radicalisation exclusively in terms of their response to problems they face as students. Since universities are places where bourgeois ideology is moulded and developed, students in struggle increasingly come to question the whole range of these ideas, especially since their own situation makes it clear that capitalism can no longer deliver the goods. Hence the collapse of the post-war boom and the entry of the working class onto the political stage since 1968 have led many students to see the ultimate resolution of their problems through an alliance with the working class.

For us in IMG, the worker student alliance emerges at its highest level where students take such actions as occupying their facilities in solidarity with workers. As revolutionaries, we are concerned to build and generalise on this tendency. But what are our tactics in relation to students given the fact we see socialism coming about through building independent workers' councils ? ---

NUS

The NUS is dominated by the CP and its allies in the "Broad Left", and thus for us, it is compromised by its Stalinist and reformist conception of the way forward. The CP hopes to straddle the growing gap between the left and the right by its conception of an "anti-monopoly alliance" - that is an alliance with supposedly "progressive" elements of the ruling class, who turn out to be the very sector of the bourgeoisie (the Vice Chancellors) which is called upon to slash expenditure, and the very sector (the Government) which is proposing them! But of course this "alliance" falls flat when the Vice Chancellors put their own class solidarity first and engage in repression against students (as for example, the savage repression at Essex). The Communist Party counters this collapse of its strategy by either increasingly sectarian attacks on the left or theorising the change by a tautology - the increased "authoritarianism" of Vice Chancellors !

According to the Communist Party - Broad Left analysis the student body serves as a stage army to be periodically wheeled on in order to "pressurise" government and forge the above mentioned unstable alliance. For this reason the CP can often be opposed to independent student activity at the level of the college, which places in jeopardy the alliance with the Vice Chancellors. It often counterposes negotiations at the level of government to

actions by students on their own behalf.

In contrast to this, the IMG argues for generalising and popularising the isolated struggles which do break out despite the dead weight of the NUS leadership. For us, a revolutionary pole must be created to pull against the reformist perspectives of the NUS. It is in the leadership of these isolated struggles that the great opportunity of the NUS is to be found; that is, in providing a platform in the mass organisations of students. A principled united front is called for here.

In past struggles at Oxford, Essex and Kent, IMG comrades have popularised some of the basic concepts of revolutionary democracy: the daily election of occupation committees responsible to their base and subject to instant recall etc. Where appropriate, we aim to centralise these bodies on a mass basis, a good example being the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Student Unions. It is as yet impossible to consolidate such mass united fronts on a permanent basis, but conjunctural united fronts - united bodies set up with a view to specific actions - are appropriate. Since the collapse of the L.C.D.S.U., we have succeeded in grouping the vanguard of students around, for instance, the National Accommodation Crisis Conference of May 1973 and the Victimisation Conference of March 1974.

However, the vanguard of students are also very responsive to manifestations of the International class struggle. Indeed, after the debacle of President Allende's "peaceful road to Socialism" in Chile - where the class-collaborationist line of the Stalinists of the CP received its biggest and bloodiest indictment for years - students are again confronted with the counter-revolutionary policies of the Stalinists. It is in order to clarify people on what went wrong in Chile and to solidarise with the Chilean resistance fighting against the Junta that the IMG places importance on building the Chile Solidarity Society in the Union.

Ireland

Our position on Ireland flows from our fundamental premise, that the bourgeoisie in the epoch beginning with the 20th Century can play no progressive role at all. As has been said elsewhere in this bulletin, Imperialism - including the British presence in Ireland - is an absolutely retrograde force, and we solidarise with all those fighting against it. We thus reason, we are for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland and we side with the republican forces fighting against the British Army (despite the fact that we have very serious criticisms of the political programme of both wings of the Republican Movement.

Accordingly, members of the Fourth International Society will be helping to build a Troops Out Society affiliated to the national Troops Out Movement; thus hopefully, dealing a body blow to "our own" imperialism and strengthening the cause of the Irish Revolution.

Similarly, on the oppression of women, we support the struggle and demands of the Women's liberation movement, especially those incorporated in the Working Women's Charter. We are for 24 hour nurseries and creche facilities for women. We support the initiatives of the women's mass movement as revolutionary because we support all anti-capitalist demands and because the success of the revolution itself depends on the working class being broken from sexism and male chauvinism.

On the campus, women workers are the lowest paid and the most exploited. It is vital that we extend them our support against the "rationalisations" and redundancies they may face in the coming year, and in their struggle for a decent wage.

Grants

As the only viable solution to the problem of the erosion of our grants by inflation, we are for a sliding scale of grants, for automatic increases in the grant based on the student cost of living. This is in addition to an across the board increase to cover the ground we have already lost, and an end to the present anomalies in the grants system. Only if students struggle for this demand - for a sliding scale - can we be assured of adequate protection against inflation and avoid the exhaustion and demoralisation which results from struggling for every increase, only to see it whittled away by price increases. On accomodation, we should call for a freeze at last years levels and we should take up the question of accomodation for students as part and parcel of a campaign for decent housing as well.

Also we propose Action Committees to struggle against the implementation of the Government cuts - based on such demands as:

NO responsibility for the problems of the state in financing higher education.

FOR a freeze on prices and rents.

NO redundancies. An end to "loan financing" system and self financing catering. Expansion of facilities to match the student intake.

This series of demands taken together with the demand for a sliding scale on the grants issue should be integrated with a programme of actions to be worked out by an elected Action Committee of students and implemented with the maximum possible participation of the student body.

PORTUGAL - WILL IT BE ANOTHER CHILE?

by David Booth

Will Portugal become another Chile? That is a question that was increasingly asked on the left during the right-wing offensive of the summer months of this year. But how valid is the comparison, and why is it made?

Let us say at once that the Chilean type of coup is totally unlikely in Portugal as things stand at present. A distinctive feature of the Chilean situation was that despite the three years of mobilization by the working class that preceded it, the coup was able to overcome all resistance within three days, with isolated exceptions. The main reason for this was that the parties of the Popular Unity coalition had consistently peddled the illusion that the workers of Chile could place all their faith in Parliament and the armed forces.

Armed Forces Divided

In Portugal, on the other hand, the Communist Party and the reformists have not been so successful in this manoeuvre. Indeed, it has now become an important part of the consciousness of large sections of the working class that the gains that they have made can only be defended by the working class - gun in hand if necessary. Furthermore, the armed forces are at the moment too deeply divided to be able to carry out a Chile-type coup. In addition, the Portuguese bourgeoisie, still smarting from their experience after General Spínola's attempted coup in March, are not united and convinced that the next step should be a coup - and they certainly do not have the ability to initiate one.

In fact, compared with Chile in 1973, the situation in Portugal now is immensely favourable to the working class. Those who draw direct analogies between the two situations do so more often than not as a cover for their failure to offer the working class a revolutionary leadership (as we explain further on).

Lessons of Chile

But if a Chile-style coup is not likely in Portugal, there are still important similarities in both the offensive of the capitalists and the response of the workers' movement in Chile and Portugal. In this respect an understanding of the real lessons of the Chile experience is vital to the success of the Portuguese revolution.

The most obvious similarity can be seen in the imperialist intervention that was directed at Chile and is now focusing with full force on Portugal. Chile was prevented from receiving almost any economic aid throughout the Popular Unity period (1970-73), a blockade was imposed on spare parts for machinery, money was poured by the CIA into the purses of the Christian Democrats and the right-wing forces which organized the reactionary lorry owners'

strike. These measures were, in the words of the CIA, aimed at 'de-stabilizing' the country - in other words, at creating the conditions in which a right-wing offensive could succeed.

Today the same game is being played in Portugal. NATO and US troops hover in readiness to enter Portugal. No doubt the Church and the right wing parties have been the grateful recipients of CIA handouts. And worse still the ruling class of Western Europe has turned to the social democratic leaders - foremost among them Harold Wilson - to organize and promote an economic and political blockade of Portugal.

Economic Sabotage

There are also other resemblances between the two countries. For example, in Chile the ruling class embarked on a strategy of sabotaging production. Factories were closed, stocks were hoarded, capital was rapidly sent out of the country.

Now in Portugal the same is being done. The US-based multi-national ITT has followed up its infamous role in preparing the ground for the Chilean coup by announcing that it is cutting off all finance from its subsidiaries in Portugal. The ITT bosses apparently don't like the way in which their authority has been challenged by the workers' committees (on which see current Red Weeklies).

Nor are they alone in this. A key role in Portuguese industry is played by British-based multinationals, and they too are playing an active part in economic sabotage. The Lisbon bus garage, for instance, is being forced to cannibalise old buses and even forge and cast its own spares because it can't get them from its British suppliers - British Leyland, Gardner's, Lucas and CAV. Yet these same firms are threatening British workers with the dolo 'because there isn't enough work'.

As for ICI, it is apparently demanding cash in advance for all Portuguese orders, according to the workers' commission at its Portuguese subsidiary TINCO. This practice is unheard of in normal trading within a combine.

Leadership

Perhaps the gravest of the similarities is the way the leaderships of the mass parties of the working class - the Popular Unity in Chile, and the CP and SP in Portugal - have all in their different ways sought to contain the struggle of the working class within the framework of the capitalist system.

In Chile this created a situation in which no effective steps could be taken against the internal and external sabotage that was paralysing the country. To be sure workers in many areas began to break in practice with their leaderships. They formed independent organs of workers' power - the Cordones Industriales - that began to take on the control of the factories and the self-defence of the working class. The tragedy is that these bodies, which could have united the whole of the working class against the capitalist offensive, were formed too late and were still too weak

when the coup came.

Workers' Committees

In Portugal, however, such bodies have already been formed and, even at this stage, they have developed much further than they did in Chile. The Workers' and Soldiers' Committees are the only bodies which, because they rely solely on the united strength of the working class, organized democratically and independently of the capitalist state, can meet the economic sabotage through workers' control, and block the reactionary manoeuvres of the capitalists by organizing workers' self-defence.

But time is short. In Chile the political vacuum created by the inability of the Popular Unity to solve any of the urgent problems facing the working class was the ideal breeding ground for the forces behind the capitalist offensive. Today in Portugal there is a similar crisis of political perspectives - a crisis that will only be resolved in favour of the Portuguese working class if a generalized system of organs of workers' power, crowned by a national Popular Assembly, can emerge to fill the vacuum.

Class-Collaboration or Workers' Power?

The Portuguese Communist Party is utterly opposed to such a revolutionary perspective. The reasons are simple. Whereas the leaders of social-democratic parties like Soares' SP openly defend capitalism against the working class (which includes the rank and file of such parties), the CPs defend capitalism by trying to forge alliances with "progressive bourgeois forces" (in this case the Armed Forces Movement) and by trying to limit the workers' upsurge to a "national and democratic" revolution. This explains both the CP's refusal to develop organs of working class power independent of the Armed Forces Movement, and its sectarian refusal to call for a workers' united front with the Socialist Party, or a CP/SP government following the elections.

This is also what explains the standard CP attitude towards the lessons of Chile. To their shame, most CPers still maintain that Chile shows the dangers of "going too fast" - that is, of an insufficiency of class-collaboration with the bourgeoisie, of not restraining the mass movement vigorously enough. Thus when the "danger of another Chile" is invoked this is invariably to provide excuses for not developing the tremendous opportunities inherent in the Portuguese situation.

In truth both Chile and Portugal obey what the great German revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg called the "law of nature" of all revolutions: "either the locomotive drives forward full steam ahead to the most extreme point of the historical ascent, or it rolls back of its own weight again to the starting point at the bottom; and those who would keep it with their weak powers half-way up the hill, it but drags down with it irredeemably into the abyss". (Rosa Luxemburg Speaks, Pathfinder Press, p. 374)

If the Portuguese working class can learn this, the real lesson of the Chilean experience, then they will not only ensure the success of their revolution but they will also have done much to wipe the slate clean of the bloody defeat in Chile.

F.I. SOCIETY and I.M.G. meetings this autumn.

FRIDAY 10 OCT. Noel Hibbet will lead a discussion on ;
"WHY REVOLUTIONARY POLITICS ?"
F.I. SOC. 1.15p.m. Union: room 310 (council chamber)

FRIDAY 17 OCT. Brian Grogan speaks on:
"TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND NOW"
F.I. SOC. 1.15p.m. room310

and at 7.30p.m. White Hart pub, Alfred Gelder St.
(nr. Guildhall)
I.M.G. ON "LABOUR AND THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT"
RED FORUM

FRIDAY 31 OCT. Pat Jordan speaks on;
"WHAT IS TROTSKYISM ?"
F.I. SOC. 1.15p.m. room 310

and at 7.30p.m. White Hart pub on:
RED FORUM "THE TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMME TODAY"

FRIDAY 14 NOV. Tariq Ali speaks on;
"PORTUGAL: NEXT STEP FOR THE WORKERS MOV'T"
F.I. SOC. 1.15p.m. Union room 309 (a) (quiet room)

and at 7.30 p.m. White Hart pub on;
RED FORUM "STALINISM; THE POLITICS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY"

FRIDAY 28 NOV. Julius KARANJA speaks on;
"REVOLUTION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA"
F.I. SOC. 1.15p.m. Union room 309 (a)

and at 7.30p.m. White Hart pub on;
RED FORUM "THE POLITICS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS"

EVERYONE WELCOME

If you wish to talk with us, join us or view our literature
feel free to come to the F.I. SOC. bookstall held
weekly in the Union building.