

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

## East and West

# DEFEND WORKERS' RIGHTS

**THE REVOLT** in Eastern Europe is not over.

The most hated of tyrants such as Ceausescu have fallen—but the old networks of privilege remain.

In **ROMANIA**, the old guard around Ceausescu have regrouped themselves as the National Salvation Front.

The factory managers, the generals, the newspaper editors who carried out Ceausescu's orders are still at their posts.

In **POLAND**, the new Solidarity government is linking up with remnants of the old regime to enforce a sharp turn to the market.

Prices of certain items have

jumped by 800 per cent.

Mass sackings are promised in a futile attempt to make the economy more profitable.

In the **USSR**, the liberal mask of Gorbachev has fallen.

When he sent his army in to restore control in Azerbaijan, 300 people were murdered.

When pro-democracy marchers took to the streets in the end of February, he launched an open campaign of intimidation to scare people from the streets.

Across the Eastern Bloc, workers are fighting to defend their most basic of rights and to win new ones.

They are fighting the price rises, the privileges of the party elite who live in fancy houses, the attacks on their working

conditions.

They are demanding the right to vote, to form independent unions, to express themselves freely.

### TYRANNIES

Genuine socialists who have always hated the Stalinist tyrannies celebrate these revolts.

We are for driving forward the revolution—not for cutting it short.

But as well as celebrating we also need to fight for those rights in the West.

■ We have our own party leaders who live a life of untrammelled luxury.

The millionaire Taoiseach, Charles J Haughey owns his own

island and a string of race horses.

But that never stopped him—or Ceausescu—calling on us to pay off "our national debt" to his cronies among the bankers.

■ We have to fight attacks on our working conditions and the growing number of union busters among the boss class.

In the North the Tories have gone all out to break the ambulance drivers union.

In the South, giant multinationals such as Penn Chemicals are trying to break SIPTU by offering workers individual contracts.

In hundreds of restaurants and hotels, young workers are sacked when they mention the word "union".

■ We need to fight the censor-

ship in this country.

Women in Southern Ireland are denied the right to information on abortion.

Our airwaves are censored of republican opinions.

The millionaires who own the national press censor the workers side of the story when it comes to strikes.

It's time we told hypocrites such as Haughey and Thatcher where to get off.

They only shed crocodile tears for the struggle in Eastern Europe while enforcing poverty and repression on their own people.

What freedoms we have in the West were won by workers' struggle. They are limited and continually undermined by the sheer economic power of the capitalist class.

Instead of accepting our rulers line that we live in the best of all worlds, we should be following the inspiration of the workers of Eastern Europe.

If they can overthrow the tyrants, then we can deal with such human miseries as Charles J Haughey or Margaret Thatcher.



# TCD fight SPUC ban

THE FIGHT for abortion information continues at Dublin's Trinity College. The argument is now about how to take the fight forward.

Many students want to see an open defiance of SPUC's injunction banning the Student Union from giving out information on abortion.

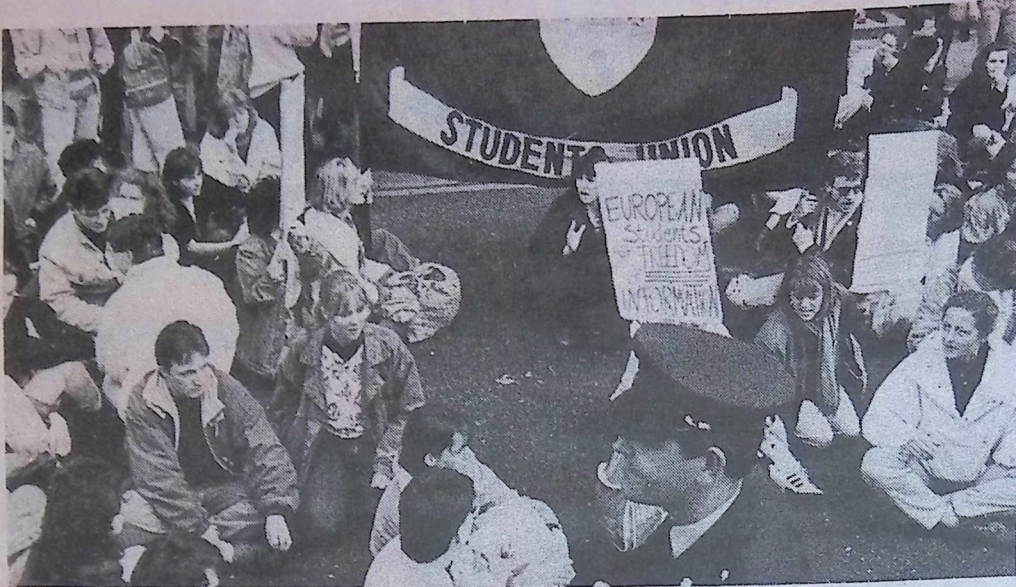
In January a referendum in the college returned a decisive 68 per cent in favour of defying SPUC's injunction and making the information available.

The position of eight workers employed by Trinity SU has not been helpful. The TCD branch of SIPTU, which organises the workers, called on the Student Union officers not to do anything which might provoke court action, seizure of SU assets and threaten their jobs.

Unfortunately TCD Student Union leaders have bowed to this pressure.

Distribution of abortion information has been suspended pending talks with the SIPTU branch and clarification of the legal position.

But relying on the legal road is inviting defeat.



Students take the lead

Whether the courts seize the union's funds depends on the strength and determination of those defying SPUC's gag. If the mass of students were prepared to occupy and spread the campaign by seeking support in the trade union movement, the judges will back off.

If on the other hand students allow themselves to be stitched up by legal processes, if we wait for Mary Robinson's litigation in the European Court in defence of the right to information, SPUC

will have won.

SIPTU members in Trinity are wrong. They should be demanding that the college administration guarantees their jobs. SIPTU and other unions, locally and nationally, should be joining the defiance and fighting for abortion information. Students should not allow the mistaken policy of the SIPTU workers to veto their fight.

Socialist Worker Student Society members in Trinity are continuing to press in student assemblies that

★ Socialist Workers Movement member Shane O'Curry is standing in this year's election for USI President. Shane, a student at Trinity College Dublin and active in the Socialist Workers Student Society there, is campaigning for a militant fightback in the colleges. Shane told Socialist Worker: "I want to show up the careerism that dominates USI politics. What we need is a fighting USI standing for open defiance of SPUC. The only way to fight the right-wing movement for disaffiliation is to build a campaigning USI".

the SU takes a fighting lead. And they have been organising stu-

dents to join the public defiance of the SPUC ban set for March 9

## Dirty tricks that went wrong!

COLIN Wallace's experiences with British government black propaganda may be recent, but the dissemination of lies and "rumours" to the media goes back a long way.

Those concocted during the last war are now carefully listed in the Public Records Office in England.

Sometimes they got it wrong and had to be quickly withdrawn.

One (file Number 949/A) suggested that "Mussolini's behaviour towards his nurses has got so passionate that they have had to change over to male nurses". The Foreign Office, hastily forbidding its dissemination in a "most secret" memo, said that "Mussolini's amativeness is a general source of admiration among his compatriots, whose standards are not Northern European. This rumour will restore his prestige".



## Christian Brothers set you up for life

AN BORD Pleannala has granted outline planning permission for a development at St Helen's, Booterstown, Co Dublin, for 506 houses, 100 apartments, a 101 bedroom hotel and a neighbourhood centre.

These are expected to fetch prices "obviously at the upper end of the scale".

The number of houses would be reduced if a proposed major road is built through the site to link Merrion Strand and Stillorgan Road. Dun Laoghaire Corporation and Dublin County Council would have to pay the present owners the current market price for the 17 acres needed for the road, amounting to between £5.1 million and £6.8 million.

The entire site was bought from the Christian Brothers by Phoenix Properties for just over £5 million in April, 1988. Phoenix was later taken over by the British property giant Mountleigh, who sold St Helen's last year to the present owners Berland Limited for an undisclosed figure.

Berland is a private company headed by Sean Dunne, a London-based property developer originally from Co Carlow.

For a 71 acre site costing £5 million in

1988 the deal amounts to whacking profits—some might say swindles—for the speculators whose hands it passed through and for those who now own it.

### QUOTE

"The government has given £3.5 millions to greyhounds and horses and only £2 million to the mentally handicapped." Eithne Fitzgerald, Dublin County Councillor.

## FF's chum won't pay his taxes

BOB Manson, director of Association Management Services Ltd and of Canary Island Holidays Ltd, has had judgments registered against him in the High Court for over £43,000 in unpaid taxes. Manson, despite

this, has just been appointed to the board of Aer Lingus by Seamus Brenna, Fianna Fail Minister for Tourism and Transport.

It should surprise no-one to hear that Manson and Brennan are buddies and that Manson is a longtime supporter of Fianna Fail!

## Suicide: Jobless link-official

A MAJOR study, recently published, shows that between 1970 and 1985 there has been a sixfold increase in the suicide rate in Ireland. Unemployment was one of the major factors in this increase.

In Cork, two thirds of the men who killed themselves were out of work. "Good men are men with good jobs" the report stated, and unemployment was associated with a loss of face and prestige.

# Sinn Fein ducks the questions

THE Sinn Fein Ard Fheis was held in Dublin in February. Unlike the previous few years, this was a low key affair. No great or divisive issues were up for debate.

There can be no doubt that there are major problems inside the Sinn Fein organisation. The ballot box strategy is going backwards, having made no impact at all in the South of Ireland, while the military struggle, because of the high level of civilian casualties, has lost them support in the North.

No doubt these problems are being debated internally, but did not surface at their annual conference. Gerry Adams' presidential address covered a wide range of subjects from Eastern Europe to the Irish language without saying anything new or of any depth on them. Those searching for any hint of new policies or direction will have to look elsewhere.



Gerry Adams

### SPECULATION

There was some speculation that Adams might open a debate on the armed struggle, but other than to extend solidarity to the men and women of the IRA, he said very little on the subject. His comment that the British government knew that talks are essential and inevitable may have some significance, given Martin McGuinness's statement that a ceasefire or a British withdrawal are negotiable as conditions for talks, made two weeks after the conference.

There was recognition that if Sinn Fein was to expand its base of support, it had to connect up with those people beyond the republican movement. In the section on "mobilising the base" the conference discussed its objective of building a broad front which could develop a programme of agreed demands on democratic, political, economic and cultural issues. Jim Gibney talked of the success of the Palestinian Intifada and the mass movement in South Africa as evidence of what can be achieved by broad front campaigning. The August FADA march, which mobilised up to 10,000 people protesting against twenty years of British imperialism, was cited as evidence that the mood was changing and that it was now possible to build a mass movement mobilising those beyond republican supporters.

The problem was that no political strategy was put forward on how to build a mass movement. The resolutions and the debate talked of Sinn Fein members getting involved in the various campaigns

and movements that exist. All that was on offer was a plea to get more involved in practical work in the trade unions and the community. But one got no feeling that this was to be the central strategy for the coming period. This was just to be another area where support for the movement could be built.

The reason why the debate could get no further than calling in quite an abstract way for a mass movement to be built was that the central strategy of Sinn Fein, the armed struggle, was not up for debate. A mass movement cannot be built where it is subservient to a military campaign.

### MOVEMENT

We believe that a mass movement needs to be built in this country. But that can only be done by unifying the fight against unemployment, the cuts in education and the health service with the working class in a general fight against the ruling class, and by pointing out that it is the very same people who have created the problems that face ordinary people who collaborate on extradition and discrimination in the North—to link together the national question and the class question in a way that makes sense to people.

Such a strategy was not on offer at the Sinn Fein conference, and the delegates cannot have come away any more confident about the next year than they were in the past.



# WE THINK

## Left must stand up to bigots



THE CAMPAIGN for the right of women in the Republic to information about abortion will have to again go on the offensive. Otherwise, it is in danger of spluttering to a stop, or, at best, becoming a small support-group trying to maintain interest in the issue as it wends its way towards the European Court.

The campaign quickly attracted widespread backing when it was launched following the 1988 Hamilton ruling against the Well Woman Clinic and Open Door counselling.

There was outrage that religious bigots should be able to impose their morality on groups offering non-judgemental help to women facing problems with a pregnancy.

The Well Woman was forced to stop giving out abortion information and Open Door forced out of existence

altogether, to await the outcome of an appeal to Europe.

The focus then switched to the colleges as students decided to distribute abortion information in hand-books or directly to women students who specifically requested it.

When SPUC targetted the students, the same 'progressive' coalition rallied to support. Again, the eventual outcome was a reference, by a different route, to Europe, and a ruling that it would be illegal in the meantime to distribute the information.

### ENERGY

The diversion of attention to the courts had the side effect of draining energy away from the campaign at rank and file level. This was evident in the referendum campaigns in UCD, UCC and UCG—which voted to stop distribution.

The result has been confusion and demoralisation, and wavering even by some of those who do wish to sustain an active campaign.

The USI leadership is divided, while at Trinity—where there

was a big majority to defy the ruling—the student leaders allowed themselves to be pressurised by SIPTU members working for the students' union into an agreement *not* to put the referendum result into practice.

The demoralisation feeds on itself. There was scarcely any reaction when two British magazines, *Cosmopolitan* and *Company*, withdrew features containing information about abortion from copies put on sale in the South.

Had there been a strong campaign of defiance of the court rulings, the censorship of the magazines would have sparked off angry protests—even from liberal sorts who won't take a stand on abortion information as such, but who would oppose pages being ripped out of magazines. And that in turn would have helped push the issue itself back towards centre stage.

Some of those who had been half-heartedly involved in the campaign, appear to see the issue in abstract terms, to be taken up or not depending on whether it suits their particular priorities at any time.

But for many women this is a

practical and very urgent matter which cannot be taken up or dropped according to taste. Any woman with an unwanted pregnancy needs information about all the options open to her *now*. In the last few months there has

### DESPERATE

been a number of harrowing scenes in women's clinics as desperate women have demanded information which staff were under instructions not to provide.

In this situation the SWM calls for open defiance of the SPUC censorship ruling, so as to provide a focus for rebuilding an active mass campaign. It is particularly important that this happen at Trinity in line with the wishes of a clear majority of the students.

The SWM is involved in organising Right to Information contingents on the International Women's Day marches. The marches provide a context in which to argue for defiance and for defence of anyone threatened or targetted by SPUC as a result of defiance.

We call for resolutions to be put to union branches demanding that the Dublin phone number from which preliminary information on abortion can be obtained—794700—should be published in union journals for the benefit of union members.

Leaders of both the main Left parties declared their solidarity with the students in originally defying the bigots and supplying

the information. But if they believe women students have the right to this information, they must believe the same of their own women constituents.

We call on rank and file members of Labour and the WP to press their leaders to make the information available at their constituency clinics. We call for pressure on the left TDs to announce the telephone and other relevant information in Leinster House. Under parliamentary privilege they are uniquely safe from any legal comeback. They would risk nothing—except, of course, the wrath of the religious fundamentalists.

And that is precisely what the Left is now called on to stand up against.

## Derry Trades Council hits out at ICTU stitch-up

Most of the arguments made against the Programme for National Recovery at the recent ICTU special conference were about the effect the PNR has had on workers pay and living standards, on unemployment, emigration, the health service etc.

And rightly so. The anger of rank and file workers against the union leaders who've promoted the PNR

was seen outside Liberty Hall on the day of the special conference when hundreds picketed the gathering.

It was clear that the vote was going to be very close. As a result, the ICTU Executive asked unions with members in the North, and Derry Trades Council to send observers only to the special conference. SWM member Goretti Horgan was a delegate from Derry Trades Council. We print here the speech she made to

the conference before voting against continuation of the Programme.

There has been a lot of controversy about Derry Trades Council's insistence on sending voting delegates to this Conference. But Derry Trades Council believes that every issue, social, political and economic that affects workers in the South is relevant to workers in the North too.

Events in Eastern Europe in recent months have shown that ideas are not stopped by borders. That is why we have brought resolutions before Congress not just about privatisation and cuts in the public sector in the Six Counties, not just about extradition and plastic bullets, but also resolutions on, for example, the right of women in the South to

information about abortion.

Workers in the North need a fighting Trade Union movement in the South. The only way the trade union movement will undercut sectarianism is by showing in practice that it is ranged against the narrow, conservative nationalism of Irish society.

That can't be done if we blur the edges of the class division between the



Bertie Ahern

people that this movement represents and the people represented by Charles Haughey's government. This is a right-wing Tory government. If the organised working class movement is to present a vision of an alternative society to working class people North and South, Catholic and Protestant, not only must it not be in collaboration with the Green Tories, it must be clearly seen to be fighting against them.

You can't make common cause with Charlie Haughey one day and hold out the hand of class solidarity to the workers of Belfast the next. It is this consideration which makes the decision today on the PNR directly relevant to trade unionists in the North. It is why Derry Trades Council delegates are voting today and why we urge a vote against the programme.

## Kilkenny jobs fight

FOUR hundred and fifty jobs are on the line in Kilkenny.

The closure of Mahon & McPhillips Building Group, which went into receivership on Wednesday 14 February, has sent the city and the workers into total shock.

One worker said bitterly, "All my life I have been working for Mahons, and the only information I received was, 'your job is on the line'."

Tom Reynolds, Director General of the Construction Industry Federation (CIF) said that the receivership was "unfortunate".

This is just not good enough. Kilkenny has been badly hit by job losses in the last five years. Last Christmas

sixty jobs were lost in Kilkenny Textile Mills (KTM). KTM is on the old Fieldcrest site. Fieldcrest was a textile factory which opened in the mid 1970s and was closed in the early '80s with the loss of 600 jobs. The workers in Kilkenny are still suffering from the Fieldcrest closure. Most of the massive Fieldcrest site still stands idle since that time.

The IDA have recently brought out a glossy leaflet with colour pictures of the site and have changed its name to "Kilkenny Industrial Park". The irony of this is that the man who closed down Fieldcrest was none other than Des O'Malley, the then Minister of Industry.



## INTERNATIONAL

THE release of Nelson Mandela has led many commentators to suggest that we are seeing the end of apartheid.

The ruling Nationalist Party, which has dominated white South African politics since it came to power in 1948 on a platform totally committed to apartheid, now suddenly appears to be changing its old racist habits, leading some to believe that apartheid will now, piece by piece, wither away.

The reality is very different. Despite all the rhetoric, the state of emergency still remains in force and the three key pillars of apartheid have not been touched:

■ the *Population Registration Act* which classifies all South Africans according to race;

■ the *Group Areas Act* which states where each group is to live;

■ the *Land Act*, which reserves 87 per cent of South Africa for whites. Apartheid is alive and well.

The release of a man who has spent over 27 years in jail is hardly evidence that the South African government are becoming starry-eyed liberals.

The real motivation behind De Klerk's reforms is more straightforward—the attempt to solve the crisis in the South African economy.

Because of the Nationalist Party's failure to break the back of black resistance in the townships and factories, despite the state of emergency and repression since its introduction in 1986, they have been unable to sufficiently calm the nerves of international capital that South Africa is a politically secure place to invest in.

The result is a drying up of new investment and dropping growth rates, and an increasing reliance on foreign banks for new capital—so much so that the South African government has run up a £5.26 billion foreign debt that must be repaid by 1992.

## BANKS

However, now even the banks are getting worried and have introduced lending restrictions. As the *Financial Times* noted: "Shortage of new capital is the single most important factor restraining growth in South Africa."

The banks did not half lending to South Africa because they objected to Pretoria's morals; they did so because political instability made them reluctant to put large amounts of capital at risk there."

In order to ease this pressure the Nationalist Party have been forced to take steps towards liberalisation and to engage the opposition, in particular the ANC, in negotiations. Their aim, however, is not fundamental reform. Majority rule is



Nelson Mandela

dismissed.

De Klerk's solution is to try and incorporate a layer of the opposition into negotiations aiming at a new constitutional framework that will still leave real power in the hands of the white minority.

## WORDS

In the words of one of De Klerk's Ministers, Stoffel van der Merwe, their aim is "to get a sufficient number of prominent leaders to participate so that eventually those who still lust after revolution will become as irrelevant in South Africa as they are in the US or Britain".

The extent to which they will be successful in quelling the demands for real liberation will not be determined by the negotiating skills of Nelson Mandela and the ANC, but rather by the ability of opposition forces to exert mass pressure on the apartheid regime.

In Ireland that means exposing Haughey's hypocrisy about sanctions (Ireland still trades with South Africa to the tune of nearly £70 million) and demanding full sanctions now.

In South Africa it means looking to the only forces that have the power to paralyse South African capitalism and overthrow the racist regime there—the black working class.

GER FRANCIS

*South Africa: Between reform and Revolution* by Alex Callinicos, £4.95 plus 50p from SW Books PO Box 1648 Dublin 8

# Is this the end of Apartheid?



South African cops still brutalise blacks

## Crisis rocks Sweden

SWEDEN is in crisis. Last month the government resigned when their austerity measures were defeated in parliament.

Meanwhile fifty thousand bank workers were locked out of their jobs for demanding a 12 percent increase.

These events have been overshadowed by the upheavals in the East and the release of Mandela in South Africa. Yet Sweden's crisis is of major significance.

Firstly, it proves that "Western-style" democracy does not guarantee peace and harmony.

For years, Sweden has been seen as the polar opposite of the police states of Eastern Europe or South Africa. There has been a long tradition of consensus between government, unions and bosses, and Swedish workers appeared to be quite well off.

But now as an economic crisis starts to grip Sweden, consensus does not appear to be working.

The Swedish events are

also significant because of the illusions that many leftwingers have had about Sweden.

The country has been seen as the perfect "halfway house" between Eastern totalitarianism and the unbridled free market capitalism of the West. In fact many on the Russian and East European left see Swedish-style "market socialism" as the alternative to stalinism.

The Social Democrats, who have governed for 52 of the last 60 years, have been seen as the symbol of Sweden's model democracy. Yet now they are behaving like any "Thatcherite" government faced with a capitalist crisis. They are attacking the working class.

The Social Demo-

crats' proposals included a two-year wage freeze and a ban on strikes. Workers who went on strike would be fined up to £500 a month. So much for Western democracy!

Faced with massive hostility, the government dropped its strike ban proposals. But the rest of the austerity measures went to the vote in parliament, where the government hoped to win the support of the Communist Party and the Greens. However, the proposals were defeated.

## MANAGE

Like Social Democrats everywhere, the Swedish government has tried to manage capitalism rather than overthrow the system. So far it had appeared to work, but now the bubble has burst.

This year the Swedish economy is expected to grow more slowly than

any OECD country—1.2 percent compared with an OECD average of 2.9 percent. The national current account deficit is expected to grow from just under four billion dollars in 1989 to over six billion dollars in 1991.

Sweden's leading capitalists want a switch away from centralised wage bargaining to company deals. This reflects their desire to compete more efficiently on the world market. It is similar to Russia's attempts at decentralisation of the economy, and reflects the same type of crisis.

Following the resignation of Ingvar Carlsson's cabinet, all eyes are on the prospect of a general election. But crises do not end simply because a new government comes to power. Whoever takes over will probably impose austerity measures anyway.

Far more important than any election is the development of workers' militancy.

Following the lockout of bank workers, manual workers in the public sector demanded a 12.5 percent wage increase and threatened strike action. They settled for a 13 percent increase, as the government tried to quell discontent.

Other groups of workers have also threatened action. If it becomes a reality, another major illusion will be shattered. That is the illusion that the working class is no longer a force for change.

Leftwingers who push this idea use Swedish workers as the perfect example. They are "pampered" by Western consumerism and, unlike workers in the "Third World", they are happy with the system. Moreover many of them are white collar workers who are not class fighters, goes the argument.

But the present crisis shows that Swedish workers are far from happy and are looking to trade union organisation rather than Social Democracy for an answer.

And as for white collar workers not fighting? Well, fifty thousand bank workers can't be wrong!

■ DAVE McDONAGH



**'It used to be the case that a parent had to die for their child to get a residential place, but even that is not enough any more.'**

# Who cares?

by PETER JACKSON

WHEN Finance Minister Albert Reynolds increased the allowance paid to people who look after dependent relatives from £28 to £45 a week, he was praised as a generous man. Even if he was a bit stingy in some of his other budget measures, you could hardly complain about the magnanimous handout to the "carers". Or could you?

Didn't such uncharacteristic kindness make you suspicious? Could a man who had just given twice as much to dogs and horses as to the mentally handicapped be genuinely concerned about people in need?

The answer is, he wasn't. It was a classic piece of codology.

There are 66,000 people in the Republic who look after dependent relatives on a full time basis, but a mere 2,000 of them received the pre-budget allowance of £28 a week. If the new £45 a week reaches the same numbers as before, this wonderfully generous gesture will cost the government a miserly £34,000.

That might just about keep two geriatric patients in hospital for a year.

The government's apparent generosity is simply a cover for passing the buck, for getting people—women mostly—who are already overburdened, to take on the job, and the expense, of looking after those the state has abandoned.

The government wants to

shift responsibility for those in need of constant attention from the state to individuals. But it is not prepared to make sufficient resources available for carers to take on the tasks.

The number requiring permanent care has soared in recent years because more disabled children survive infancy and old people live longer.

But this has not been met by any growth in state provision for their needs. Quite the reverse: the cuts of recent years have pushed thousands of totally dependent people out of institutional care and into what is euphemistically called "the community".

Patients released from psychiatric hospitals such as St Brendan's, which has all but closed in recent years, have found virtually no provision for their welfare in the unfamiliar world outside. Resources for community nursing—presented as the alternative to dungeon-like institutions—have been slashed.

## RESULT

The result has been a huge rise in the number of suicides among people suffering from mental disorders who have simply been left to their own devices.

The "community", as often as not, means the family and within the family it is almost without exception the mother or daughter, wife or sister who is destined to be the "carer".

The love that is felt—or assumed to be felt—for a relative is supposed to motivate and sustain the carers. With love, who needs money or help?

But the real world just isn't like that.

The tragic cost in terms of human suffering in this twilight world was brought home by

two recent cases that momentarily made the headlines.

On 22 January the body of Brendan O'Kelly was pulled from the sea north of Dublin. He had drowned himself. At his home in Santry the body of his wife Maeve was found, stabbed to death. He had killed her. "It's simply a suicide and murder," said the police. End of story.

But what they didn't reveal was that for years the family had been denied help with two disabled children, 15 year old John who suffered from cerebral palsy, and 14 year old Yvonne who was mentally handicapped. Only after the death of their parents was the most severely disabled child taken into care.

A few days after the death of Mr and Mrs O'Kelly, it emerged that staff at a day centre for the mentally handicapped were taking patients home with them because there was nowhere for them to go at night.

One of them, Samantha Webb, is totally immobile with a severe mental handicap. She has to be lifted everywhere and at 22 years of age, she wears a nappy. Her father is chronically ill. Her mother, Marie, died at Christmas aged 43, exhausted and worn out after years of struggling with no support from the state and no hope of ever getting her daughter into care.

Six years ago Samantha's name was put on a waiting list for St Michael's House in Dublin. Within a year the government had frozen spending on the mentally handicapped. In the years since, the waiting list at St Michael's has gone up from 47 to 112. Samantha hadn't a chance. And her mother's death and father's hospitalisation still won't get her into care.

*'It used to be the case that a parent had to die for their child to get a residential place,' the head of St Michael's said, 'but even that is not enough any more.' The staff will have to keep on taking Samantha, and scores like her, home with them at night.*

Children in residential care don't do so well either. The Association of Care Workers revealed recently that it is now common for one worker to be looking after as many as 15 children for 24 hours at a time, alone and unaided.

*For a society that prohibits abortion because it claims to love its children dearly, the hypocrisy could hardly be more glaring.*

Altogether there are estimated to be over 600 severely mentally handicapped adults in need of residential care in this country. The Eastern Health Board, which caters for the greatest part of the population, urgently needs £7 million to provide 300 residential places and 362 day places.

But the budget granted just £2 million for the provision of care for the mentally handicapped nationally, a sum that barely begins to restore the cuts that have caused such misery and death over the last five years.



Child allowances up 19p per week!

The same budget gave £3.5 million to the horse and greyhound racing industry, not to increase the wages of the thousands employed there in serflike conditions, but to improve the facilities for the elite members of the Turf Club.

This government has just spent £17 million tarting up the conference suite at Dublin Castle so Charlie Haughey can strut his stuff among European dignitaries during his pathetically unimportant six month stint as President of Europe.

In the same vein—or is it vain?—the government is spending £15 million for a new executive jet for Charlie to fly around in a style befitting the most important man—now that Ceaucescu is dead—in the universe.

## SINGLE

These two single items of expenditure would have provided residential care facilities for all who need them and gone a long way towards eliminating hospital waiting lists.

And if there are still any doubts as to the inequity of it all, consider this: The tax cuts in last month's budget gave an extra £60 a week to Haughey's pals, the businessmen, barristers, accountants and other

parasites who earn £100,000 a year. Those who break their backs for £10,000 a year got £3 a week out of the budget.

The long term unemployed—more than 100,000 out of work for over a year—are to get an 11 percent increase in benefit. Heralded as an act of unbounded generosity, this was one of the main selling points in getting the unions to stay in the Programme for National Recovery. It means those whom the state has written off as virtually unemployable will get an extra £5 a week. Total cost to the state: £500,000, one-thirtieth of the cost of Haughey's new jet.

With over a quarter of a million children living in households headed by an unemployed person, child allowances are critical to staving off the worst ravages of poverty. The child allowance went up to 19p per child per week. That would pay for two sausages, but not for the gas to cook them on.

Do you think that after the revolution, when Charlie and his pals have been put against the wall, Romanian journalists will flock to Ireland to report on the dreadful injustices suffered by the people of this country and to ask the question we asked of them: Why did they put up with it for so long?



# FROM STRUGGLE

# Trade Unions Fianna Fail



THE ICTU recently voted narrowly to re-endorse the Programme for National Recovery despite the fact that it provides low wage rises and the run down of the public sector.

The Programme is an endorsement by the union leaders of the economic strategy of Fianna Fail.

This isn't a new development. There has been a long history of union leaders' collaboration with Fianna Fail.

Here KIERAN ALLEN looks at the process by which Fianna Fail in the 1940s first pulled the unions into its orbit.

THE COMING to power of Fianna Fail in 1932 was to bring a revival of Irish industry. By imposing a stringent set of tariffs, De Valera sought to break the pattern which made the country an "outgarden" of Britain. For the first time native Irish capital got a chance to expand. The numbers employed in manufacturing industry grew from 60,000 in 1931

to 101,000 in 1939. The revival of industry strengthened the unions. ITGWU membership doubled. Workers' confidence grew. The number of strikes increased. In 1937, a major building strike in Dublin and Cork secured the 44 hour week.

In response to this the Irish bosses demanded a crackdown on union militancy. A key figure on the FF backbenches at the time was Erskine Childers who was general secretary of the employers organisation, the Federation of Irish Manufacturers.

The FIM began a campaign for outlawing strikes in essential services, registration of the unions, and compulsory strike ballots. Childers praised the fascist state in Portugal and said in the Dail "we had better ask our people to give up the extreme liberty they have had in this country in industrial relations".

The Emergency which was proclaimed at the outbreak of World War 2 gave FF a chance to carry through attacks on the unions. Finance Minister Sean T

O'Kelly demanded a wage freeze at the start of the Emergency.

But strong sections of workers ignored the advice. Dockers, gas workers, and rail workers flexed their muscles and won hefty wage increases.

Fianna Fail prepared a counter offensive. When corporation workers struck for wage increases in March 1940, they sent the troops in and called for volunteers to man the fire service.

Union leaders were called in to meet Industry Minister Sean McEntee and told that if they built support for the strike, FF would treat it as if they had a revolution on their hands. Through such pressure the corporation workers were beaten.

In the aftermath of the strike FF planned more widespread attacks on the unions. Civil Servants were told to draft anti-strike laws based on British legislation of 1919 and 1927—the latter drawn up after the defeat of the 1926 British General Strike. Among their proposals was fines of a £1 a day for every member of unions who called strikes without following proper procedure.

FF also widened their offensive to attack the unemployed. A plan for labour camps on "an experimental basis" was drawn up.

Single unemployed men in Dublin were "offered" employment at the Clonast Bog in Partarlinton for 5/- a week—plus maintenance. Failure to comply meant no unemployment assistance.

A protest meeting organised in Dublin was baton charged by the Gardai and the organisers arrested under the Offences Against the State Act. In Cork, 600 unemployed people rioted when the scheme was extended to the area.

By 1941, Fianna Fail felt confident enough to impose a Wages Standstill Order. Wages were frozen but the blackmarketeers who traded in tea, petrol and other items could still make fortunes. In May Fianna Fail finally unveiled their plan to curb union power.

The Trade Union Bill demanded that unions register by placing deposits of thousands of pounds with the High Court. British based unions came under attack with a provision that only "Irish" unions could apply for exclusive negotiating rights in industries where they had the

majority. This Bill was a real threat to union activity. But there was a shift away from the draconian provisions that Fianna Fail had originally envisaged. The reason for this soon became obvious.

William O'Brien, leader of the ITGWU had become involved with FF in a secretive relationship. O'Brien had been among the first union leaders appointed to high office—getting a seat on the board of the Central Bank in 1938.

His obsession with driving out British-based unions brought him into alliance with FF and allowed FF to shift the focus of its attack.

Both O'Brien and FF now argued that the 26 counties was entitled to a union movement that was loyal to the institutions of the state.

In return, O'Brien hoped the unions would be included in consultation with the government and 26 County bosses and would be able to leave behind the "old" weapon of strike action. Despite the almost universal dislike of O'Brien today, it is this aspect of his legacy that has most influenced the role of the ICTU in Southern Ireland.

O'Brien's support for FF was to be crucial. The Wages Standstill Order and the Trade Union Bill was met by a blaze of working class anger. A Council of Action was formed in Dublin and public meetings held in every working class area.

The trade union demonstrations against the Trade Union Bill were the largest seen since the heady days of 1918-23. But the ITGWU ensured that the anger did not translate into industrial action.

## LARKIN

None of the union leaders, except for Larkin, made any serious attempt to mount a campaign to block registration. Within months, FF had won a complete success.

O'Brien's support for FF's strategy in ensuring this outcome was often underhand. Verbally, he opposed the Trade Union Act and cursed FF for linking it with the Wages Standstill Order. But he also kept arguing that the measure was inevitable and had to be accepted. How was O'Brien able to get away with this?

The first asset, he had was 26 county nationalism. The ITGWU never lifted a finger when De Valera pushed through the Off-

ences Against the State Act. It did nothing about its own members who were interned. Thus, while it projected a republican image, its nationalist political ideology rested on allegiance to the 26 county state.

At the start of the Emergency, the ITGWU gave an interest free loan of £50,000 to the 26 County state to set a "good headline". It endorsed completely the policy of neutrality—from the ruling class point of view.

ITGWU officials who edited the paper, *The Torch*, supported wartime censorship on the basis that "no act, nor word should breach neutrality".

When the Trotskyist Paddy Trench raised a resolution at the Labour Party conference to couple support for neutrality with an anti-imperialist outlook that backed struggles in India and China, he was told by ITGWU official PJ O'Brien "they had enough trouble looking after their own house".

## ANTI-FASCIST

While the ITGWU leaders could rightly show up the crimes of the supposedly "anti-fascist" British empire, they did so—in order to bolster support for their own rulers at home rather than with the aim of fighting British imperialism from a working class view point.

The second asset O'Brien had was Stalinist influence on the Irish Left. The Communist Party of Ireland campaigned for the South to join the "great anti-fascist war".

Their supporters in the unions pushed for the Labour Party to join Fianna Fail in coalition as a bridgehead that would push the South closer into the allied war effort.

Union leaders of the Left, such as Sam Kyle, the leader of the ATGWU went along with this strategy and supported the allied war effort.

This enabled O'Brien and the right wing nationalist leadership of the ITGWU to politically undercut the left. O'Brien jeered at the CPI because the British Communist Party leader Willie Gallagher was singing the praises of Churchill.

He pointed to their twists and turns over the Hitler-Stalin pact. Rhetorically, ITGWU leaders pointed to the internment camps of the North to show up the hypocrisy of British imperialism's opposition to fascism.

The failure of the left to put forward a vigorous anti-fascist



William O'Brien

Labour Co

strategy that class action basis rather than Churchill's imperialism made sense.

One Fianna Fail development was the Labour Party in 1941—when vote ever supporting struggle—were ITGWU disaffected party claiming infiltrated by the Labour Party.

They tried to respond to the Labour Party's policy and push the South closer into the allied war effort.

In 1945, Fianna Fail's greatest split in the movement. British-based conference called the Trade Unionists' split away from the Labour Party.

The failure of the left to put forward a vigorous anti-fascist



# Unions and a Fail ...TO COLLABORATION



Labour Court, 1946

strategy that relied on working class action on an international basis rather than support for Churchill's imperialist war aims meant that right wing nationalism made steady progress in Ireland.

Once Fianna Fail had carried through their offensive by 1942, developments in the Labour movement became progressively worse. Gains made by the Labour Party in the election in 1943—when it got its highest vote ever on the basis of supporting working class struggle—were destroyed as the ITGWU disaffiliated from the party claiming that it had been infiltrated by communists.

The Labour Leader, Norton, tried to respond by claiming that they "proudly acknowledge the authority of the Catholic Church in all matters related to public policy and public welfare". Even though Labour expelled some left-wing members, it was not enough for the ITGWU. They were by now completely under Fianna Fail influence in projecting all left wingers as "anti-national".

In 1945, Fianna Fail achieved their greatest success when they split the entire Irish trade union movement. Support by the British-based ATGWU for a conference called in London by the British TUC to organise a World Trade Union Movement was attacked by O'Brien as evidence that British based unions were trying to breach Irish neutrality.

The ITGWU and 13 smaller unions split away from the Irish TUC to form the "Congress of Irish Unions". Their first conference was opened by the right

wing Bishop of Galway, Bishop Browne who said in his address that "the men who govern the unions should accept loyally the industrial and financial obligations of the nation". It was a very clear message and the union leaders accepted it willingly.

Once Fianna Fail had smashed the militancy of the Irish unions, they readily opened up new space for the union leaders. In 1942, the Wages Standstill Orders were modified to allow slight increases through incredibly tortuous procedural arrangements.

Unions officials, appeared before a Tribunal to first process applications for standard wage rates and at a later stage for an actual increase. The procedure took months and the maximum wage rise on offer between 1942 and the end of the emergency was 16/-—even though inflation went through the roof.

But the whole complicated procedure involved union officials in a practise of winning small gains without the need to resort to strike action. By the end of the Emergency, union leaders such as McMullen of the ITGWU was hailing this new style of procedure-wrapped trade unionism as a great advance.

The stage was now set for the formalising of this type of arrangement in the post-war era. The Congress of Irish Unions hailed the "new times" that were on offer when consultation replaced confrontation.

Lemass, the Fianna Fail Minister for Industry and Commerce, built on the experience of the procedures during the Emergency to tie the union leaders

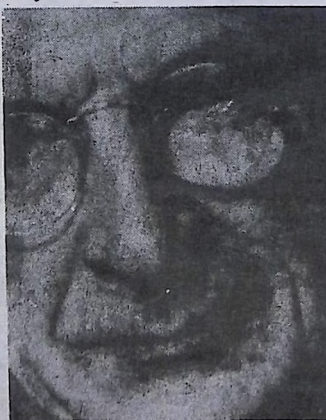
even closer to the state. They were invited to constant consultations. Union leaders were even allowed to participate in the drafting of the industrial relations Act of 1946.

The Industrial Relations Act has become the corner stone of negotiations ever since. It set up the Labour Court and established the whole process of procedure and consultation on a formal basis.

By smashing trade union militancy with the help of union leaders Fianna Fail were able to move on to producing a tame union movement tied tightly to the apron strings of the 26 county state.

This has been the background to the series of national pay deals, "understandings" and "programmes for national recovery".

It is the job of socialists in the unions to oppose not just these individual deals but the entire strategy and history—on which they are based.



De Valera

## EAMONN McCANN Told you so!

SUPPORTERS of the political tendency represented in Ireland by the Socialist Workers Movement have in recent months been sorely tempted to say: "We told you so."

For a long number of years we have argued that the states in Eastern Europe were not socialist but state capitalist. We have insisted that they were riven with the same contradictions and conflicts which affect free enterprise capitalism in the West. We predicted that sooner or later the working class in the East would rise up and overthrow their oppressors.

We have been proved right.

The temptation to proclaim "We told you so" is increased by the antics of those political tendencies which are now in intellectual disarray as they try to come to terms with the scale of what has happened.

Of these groups, the Workers Party could be said to be handling its problems best—albeit in breathtakingly dishonest fashion. WP spokespersons are simply denying point blank that they ever supported the stalinist regimes in the first place.

On RTE's "Liveline" on 23 February, for example, WP leader Proinsias de Rossa assured Marion Fennecane that his party had always condemned the cruelties and oppressions of the Eastern regimes.

A version of history totally at variance with the facts has now been instituted as the official WP line on this matter. Funnily enough, this re-writing of history is reminiscent of nothing so much as the stalinist regimes which are now themselves making their exit for history.

### NOTING

It's worth noting what this tells us about the Workers Party, and indeed about a number of other groups which have argued that the USSR and its satellites were in some sense "workers' states".

Most, if not all, members of the Workers Party know that their party was uncritically supportive of the Eastern states for many years. They know that de Rossa, MacGiolla, Lynch, Garland etc etc have for years been attending the annual conferences of the Communist Parties of the Eastern Bloc states as honoured, "fraternal", guests, and that their acceptance in these circles was presented to party members as proof that they, the Workers Party, were the most authentic expression of socialism in Ireland.

The Workers Party leadership cannot point to a single substantial criticism of the Eastern



Hungary 1956

states in any official statement of party policy or in any official party publication.

The members of the party know that their own annual conferences have regularly been graced by representatives of Eastern regimes. Indeed, at last year's WP Ard Fheis, Garland and MacGiolla were happy to pose for pictures with "fraternal visitors" representing perhaps the most vicious of the remaining stalinist regimes, that of the megalomaniac thug Kim Il Sung of North Korea.

What does it tell us about the Workers Party that de Rossa can now stand up in public and calmly deny that any of this is so?

If nothing else, it indicates how deeply intellectually corrupt the party has become through its association with the stalinist regimes.

### TRUTH

De Rossa must be confident that his own members will shrug off the fact that they are being required to live a lie.

It's as if truth doesn't matter, as if "truth" doesn't refer to acknowledgement of facts but to whatever serves the immediate interest of the party.

Certainly, the interests of the party are given clear precedence over the interests of Irish working class people: it can hardly be to their advantage that WP kowtowing to stalinism is glossed over.

A similar, if somewhat less grotesque, process can be observed in those groups which, while critical of some aspects of the Eastern Bloc states, have nevertheless argued that they are "workers' states" of one sort or another. Much the biggest of these groups in Ireland is Militant.

Over the past few months members of these groups have, like everyone else, been able to see the workers in Eastern country after Eastern country rise up against the system they have lived under. Clearly, these states have not been regarded as "workers' states" by the actual workers who live there.

Yet at a number of meetings recently this simple fact has been dismissed by comrades from Militant as irrelevant. It is suggested that it is somehow improper to raise the question: who exactly are the workers referred to when Azerbaijan is described as a "workers' state"?

Again, it's as if words don't have to mean what they say when they are used by socialists. As if the word "workers", when used in discussion between leftists, doesn't have to refer to all to flesh and blood human beings who sell their labour power to make a living, but has some alternative, secret/abstract meaning discernible only to the exclusive brethren.

This brings us back to the theory of state capitalism.

When first developed in the forties, the theory represented a clear break from the traditions of both stalinism and "orthodox trotskyism". The theory wasn't derived from an academic analysis of abstract concepts. On the contrary, it arose from a consideration of the simple, observable facts of the nature of the Eastern Bloc states.

Its first prerequisite was a willingness to "look the reality of Russia in the face".

The theory insisted that the nature of any system is determined not by who the constitution and the law of the land said was in control of the means of production but by who was in control. That what mattered was not legal title but effective possession.

If it was the case—and it was—that the working class of the Eastern Bloc states was completely excluded from control of production, that workers had to sell their labour to a privileged minority which was in control of production, then, the theory argued, these were class divided societies as surely as were the societies on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

Then, as now, there were those on the Left who regarded this form of argument with great suspicion, as if Marxists ought not to lower themselves to the level of grubby reality.

What's happening in the East today is real enough. It's about time all socialists began to face up to it.



## ANALYSIS

# Sex, class and socialism

Socialist Worker reviews a new book on women

SIXTEEN years after equal pay legislation, women still earn an average of only two thirds of men's wages. Far from more women's rights being won, the small gains of the late 70s are being pushed back as women are denied the right even to information about abortion. In the middle of all this gloom, *Goretti Horgan* discovers a new book on women which offers not only an analysis of women's oppression but also a solution.

When contraception was made slightly legal in 1979 it seemed as if the Republic's social legislation was gradually moving in the direction of the rest of Europe. Many socialists and feminists were confident that as the 80s proceeded women's rights would advance.

The 80s turned out very different. In the South, the anti-abortion referendum of 1983 and the divorce referendum of 1986 were massive defeats for women's liberation. And the right-wing hysteria of SPUC and Family Solidarity didn't stop at the border. Every defeat for women's rights in the South had its effect in the North too, poisoning the political climate against progress for women and further unnerving politicians against taking a stand on women's issues.

But while SPUC and Family Solidarity have demanded that women be pushed back into the home and ensured that 'family values' have been strengthened, they have been unable to reverse the trend of women entering the workforce. Despite SPUC's best efforts, women in Ireland today expect a life outside the home. Their primary role might still be seen as that of wife and mother, but the reality is different. Despite the fact that Ireland missed out on much of the post-war economic boom, more women are working outside the home than ever before.

Women make up 43 per cent of the workforce in the Six Counties, 32 per cent in the South. While only 36.5 per cent of working women in the South are married, 62 per cent in the North are married. In fact, one in every two married women in the North is employed or looking for employment—as opposed to only one in every five in the Twenty Six

Counties. But North and South, government statistics show the trend is clearly towards women working outside the home. The numbers of women in the Republic's workforce grew by over 40 per cent between 1971 and 1987 while the number of married women in paid work grew by nearly 500 per cent.

Despite these facts, the image of women that is promoted by the education system, advertising, and the media is that of housewives and mothers. What makes Lindsey German's *Sex, class and socialism* different is that it challenges this view of women as 'naturally' home-makers and child-carers which has come to be accepted even by feminist writers. German traces the development of the family as we know it today and finds that it would be unrecognisable to women of previous generations.

## BELIEVE

On both the Left and the Right, there are those who believe that women's oppression has always existed and will always exist. Marx and Engels had looked at ancient societies where women's status was equal, often higher than men. They linked the rise of the oppression of women with the division of society into classes and the development of

ways of producing goods gave rise to different forms of society—for example, a society based on slave labour was very different to a feudal one. And as society changed so the family form changed.

As we approach the end of the 20th century, women may be better educated and may make up a large part of the workforce and general ideas of equality may be widely accepted but women's oppression is still very much part of capitalist society and at the heart of that oppression lies the family. It is the family that shapes women's role in the workforce and her position in society. It ensures that women's wages remain substantially lower than those of men, that jobs are often divided into 'men's jobs' and 'women's jobs', that childcare is not socialised but remains the responsibility of the individual family and that men are still seen as the breadwinners, with all that means for women's low pay and status in society.

What comes across clearly in *Sex, class and socialism* is that the particular form of the family which we know today may have emerged in different ways and at different times in different countries—but that the drive behind it was exactly the same everywhere. It was to allow the greatest possible extraction of labour power from the working class in



Happy families

private property. Alongside this went, in Engel's phrase "the world historic defeat of the female sex"—the establishment of the family.

As society developed, oppression took on different aspects. Different

order to encourage the most efficient accumulation of wealth by capitalists for further investment in industry.

The 1842 Mines Regulation Act which prevented women in Britain

from working underground in coal mines is generally seen as a paternalistic attempt by capitalists to spare women and children the worst effects of coal-mining. The offence given to Victorian morality by the fact that women worked underground naked from the waist up is also stressed. But the employers' support for protective legislation, German argues, didn't come from either a concern about morality or about working class living standards. Rather they were attempts to impose discipline and control over a new and young industrial workforce.

The growth of Chartism in the 1830s and 1840s had increased the ruling class fear of workers and "representatives of management felt that a prohibition of female and child labour, by making colliers responsible for the whole of family maintenance, would force them to change their irresponsible habits" A more docile workforce is more productive and more reliable. Protective legislation also helped to shape the sexual division of labour and, while it only seriously affected a small minority of women workers, gave a great boost to the family and to the notion of woman as wife and mother rather than worker.

## BOOST

The role of the family in Irish society got a similar boost at much the same time, though under very different circumstances. The 1840s marked a turning point for women in Irish society. Before the Famine, women's economic contribution to the family economy—spinning, weaving, sowing crops etc. meant that they enjoyed considerable independence. As late as 1841 women accounted for more than half the non-agricultural workforce in Ireland. But the Famine marked the end of the domestic textile industry. The number of spinners of wool, cotton and linen fell by 75 per cent in the decade between 1841 and 1851.

The Famine also allowed a shift from tillage to livestock farming—a less labour intensive agriculture. This meant that women's labour was less necessary to the economy and, as in Britain, there was a lot of talk about how much children needed their mothers at home with them.

In Ireland it was the Catholic Church, rather than protective legislation, that provided the ideological boost to the idea of the



Married women in work on the increase

family and to the notion that a woman's vocation in life is to be a wife and mother. Here the ideology of the family was used less to marginalise women from the workforce (they had largely been marginalised already) and more to enforce a moral and sexual discipline that would allow a consolidation of farm holdings and an accumulation of wealth. This allowed the larger tenant farmers class of the 1840s to become the dominant class in the Free State of the 1920s.

There are other parallels between the development of the modern family in Britain and Ireland—the increased 'childhood' of children which was a relatively new phenomenon connected with the expansion of education, which was

## STANDARDS

seen as a means of increasing the general level of skill and of instilling order and discipline in the next generation of workers. Housework, too, grew in importance as living standards increased. When men, women and children worked a twelve hour day in mill, factory or mine, housework was virtually impossible. Housework was similarly impossible in Ireland where, in 1841, more than three quarters of homes were mud cabins or cottages made of mud. By the turn of the century, however, the late marriages, permanent celibacy and emigration enforced by the Church through the family had ensured that the bulk of the population now lived in houses with floors that had to be swept, beds with sheets that had to be washed and food that needed more preparation than just a pot of spuds. And all this was "women's work".

*Sex, class and socialism* shows that the modern family, like previous forms of the family, emerged from specific economic and social circumstances. And here is where the power and optimism of the book lies. Because it makes clear that just as the form of the family changed between slave society and feudalism, between feudalism and capitalism, it can change again when capitalism is replaced by socialism. And under socialism the basis can be laid to do away with the private family and so at last liberation will be possible for all women.

*Sex, Class and Socialism* by Lindsey German.

£5.95 plus 50p post from SW Books  
PO Box 1648, Dublin 8



# What's on: SWM meetings and activities

The Socialist Workers Movement is a growing organisation with branches around the country which meet regularly. Those who are interested in the politics of the SWM are invited to attend these meetings.

The meetings begin with a political discussion with plenty of time for questions and debate.

### Belfast Branch

Meets every Monday at 7.30pm in the Ulster People's College, 30 Adelaide Park, Belfast (between Lisburn Rd and Malone Rd, opp. Queens Elms Halls of residence)

Mon March 5 / Can Protestant and Catholic Workers Unite?

Mon March 12 / South Africa—Can Apartheid be reformed?

Mon March 19 / Women and Perestroika

Mon March 26 / Pornography and Censorship

### Bray Branch

Meets every second Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Hibernian Inn, Marine Terrace

### Cork Branch

Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Anchor Inn, Georges Quay

Tues March 6 / What causes Child Abuse?

Tues March 13 / Sweden—A model of Socialism?

Tues March 20 / Election Time in Russia—will Perestroika Win?

Tues March 27 / Nicaragua—Can the Sandinistas hold on?

### Derry Branch

Meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Dungloe Bar, Waterloo St

Tues March 6 / The Fight for Abortion Rights in Ireland

Tues March 13 / The Theory of State Capitalism

Tues March 20 / What is Revolution?

Tues March 27 / Kampuchea—Ten years on

### Dublin Branch

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

Pornography cause Violence against Women?

Wed March 14 / Is the Arms Race Finished?

Wed March 21 / James Connolly

For more details of the

**SWM in BELFAST, BRAY, CORK, DERRY, DUBLIN, DUNDALK, DUNGARVIN, GALWAY, KILKENNY, PORTLAOISE & WATERFORD contact SWM PO Box 1648, Dublin 8**

# 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 re-callable 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.

The marginal privileges given to Protestant workers are just that: marginal. It is in the immediate interest of Protestant 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 leaderships 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.

## Socialist Workers Movement Conference 1990

SWM holds its annual conference in Dublin on April 6,7, and 8. Socialist Worker readers who support SWM politics are invited to apply for observer tickets.

Sessions include:

- ★ Eastern Europe in Revolt
- ★ Women's Liberation and the Fight against SPUC
- ★ Socialist and the Environment
- ★ Trade unions and the Programme for National Recovery
- ★ SWM Perspectives
- ★ Socialist and the Protestant Working Class
- ★ Republicanism and the Armed Struggle

For information on observer tickets write to: SWM National Secretary, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

## SWM poll well in Queens

Socialist Workers Movement member Richie McVeigh polled over 400 votes when he stood for election to the executive of Queens University Student Union.

His opponent—who was backed by both the SDLP and the Unionists—polled 600 votes to win. The Unionists and the SDLP carried through their alliance to oust most republican supporters from the SU executive.

Richie ran on an open SWM ticket. Speaking to the Socialist Worker he said: "Student Union politics in Ireland have for years been dominated by closet socialists who never said where they stood. It is important that revolutionary socialists break that tradition and fight openly for their politics".

## Derry Mandela Disco

The Derry Branch of SWM held a disco to celebrate the release of Nelson Mandela days after his release from prison last month. Over a hundred people joined in the celebrations.

An eight foot tall portrait of Mandela—painted by SWM's Colin Darke—dominated the proceedings and was later presented to the local branch of the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

£110 was raised for the International Book Fund's "Books for South Africa" appeal.

For abortion information: Telephone 794700

## Day of Defiance against SPUC

On March 9, the Socialist Workers Movement has called a Day of Defiance against SPUC in Ireland.

SWM members and supporters will distribute leaflets with details of telephone numbers from which abortion information can be obtained.

Leaflets will be distributed at the GPO and Tara St Dart station from 5.00pm to 6.30pm.

In a statement the SWM said:

"We invite all socialists and defenders of women's rights to join us on the Day of Defiance. Every gain for women's rights in Southern Ireland has been won through breaking reactionary laws. We believe that all parties of the Left must show a clear commitment on this issue."



## Two new pamphlets from SWM Is Southern Ireland a neo-colony?

This is a greatly expanded version of an edition which sold out. Written by Kieran Allen, it takes up the republican argument that nationalist politics offer a solution to the economic misery of the South.

By showing how the South can no longer be regarded as a neo-colony of Britain, Allen opens the way for a clear Marxist interpretation of the national question in Ireland.

Price £1.50



## Abortion: Why Irish women must have the right to choose

This is a new pamphlet written by Goretti Horgan. It takes up in detail the arguments of the anti-abortionists. It shows up the hypocritical position of the Catholic Church which has not had a consistent stance on the issue.

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CLASS STRUGGLES IN EASTERN EUROPE 1945-83

Chris Harman



## REVIEWS

## Soweto's anguish

*A Dry White Season*, Adelphi 2, Dublin

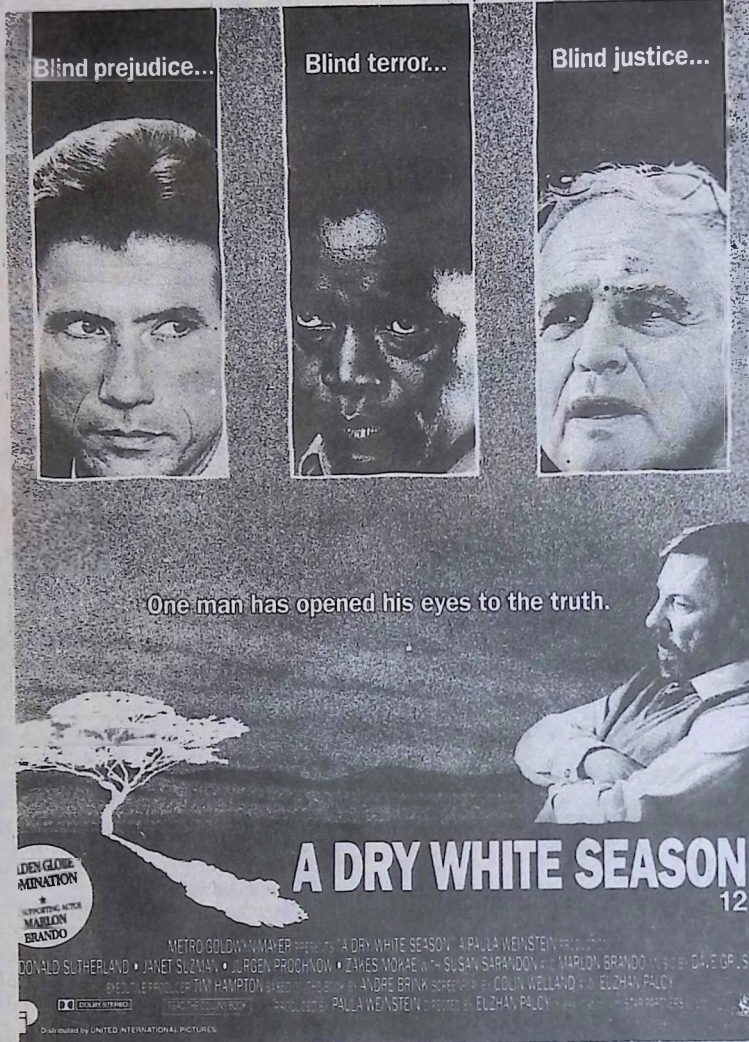
PEOPLE think they know about South Africa, but they don't.

Even if you know in theory about police killing children, the atmosphere of terror, anguish, rage and defiance in the townships, the reality is—or has been—far beyond what any of us can imagine, probably difficult or impossible even to describe to someone who hasn't experienced it.

This film makes a brave attempt to show some of what was going on, and why, in 1976, during the Soweto uprising. Although the central character is white—a middle class Afrikaner shaken out of his affluent blindness after becoming unwillingly caught up in events surrounding the police crackdown on revolt—the film is really about the nature of the state itself.

It starts with a big demonstration by school children protesting against being taught in Afrikaans and given an insulting "education" in the language identified with white domination, designed to turn them into servants and cheap labour.

Groups of people are shown swelling the dancing, clenched-fist march from side streets of the township like tributaries into a broad river, chanting songs of optimism and freedom, then coming to a halt before a wall of stony-faced cops, armoured cars, the paraphernalia of repression.



A brave attempt to show some of what is going on

Teargas, quickly followed by bullets, screaming, blood, weeping, the search in hospitals, jails and mortuaries for missing children. The torture and murder in police custody of a father

looking for his son, and a farcical judicial cover-up in the court that is finally forced to put on a semblance of an "inquiry" into it.

The paranoia of most of the whites, whether

part of the state apparatus or just determined not to know about anything

which might upset their cushioned lives, except for the few who come face to face with the

regime and try to fight against it in whatever way they can, as millions of blacks are forced to, for survival, nearly every day of their lives.

Nevertheless, this film doesn't tell the whole story. Apart from the opening scene the blacks are shown almost entirely as victims or martyrs, powerless against a mighty and granite-like power structure, needing the intervention of sympathetic whites to achieve even minimal chinks in the fortress of state repression.

## EVIL

The evil of the system is largely embodied in one man—special branchman, hitman, interrogator/torturer, perjurer, political ideologue, evictor of women and children rolled into one—and when he is shot by a single black comrade at the end of the film it may be satisfying but leaves nothing changed, everything is still as before.

There is no suggestion in the film of the growing power of black resistance from below, the defiant class consciousness of millions of workers becoming organised in unions, and the precariousness of the state in the face of it.

It is based on a novel by South African writer Andre Brink, written probably at a time of demoralisation, especially among liberals. If such a film was made now about the same events, but particularly if made by workers actively involved in the present massive push to topple the regime, the message would almost certainly be totally different.

■ NAN DALTON

## HISTORY WITH GAPS

*The Dynamics of Irish Politics* by Paul Bew, Ellen Bazelkorn and Henry Patterson. Lawrence and Wishart, IR£9.65.

AT last, a book that can be used to strain rice. Admittedly, any attempt to cram seventy years of Irish politics into 200 pages will end up with a few holes, but this offering from three Workers Party supporters leaves out so much that it's close to being pointless. Even the title is misleading, since the book doesn't deal with the North.

It claims to offer the Left at home and abroad a "serious and radical analysis" of the Southern state, with the objective of weaning people off a "soft-headed identification with the anti-imperialist struggle", as the authors put it. And it really shows.

Its first major failing is its treatment of the foundation of the state. The period from 1916 to 1923 is covered summarily, so that the Treaty and subsequent civil war are summed up in a paragraph. Apparently, former comrades fell out over the oath of allegiance, and the split had "little social or economic dimension to it".

Yet "the clear reliance of the anti-treatyites on the small farmers of the West" and the "conservative evolution" of Cumann na nGaedheal are commented on, but not as evidence of just such a dimension. Obviously, then, there was more to the rift than a mere reluctance to kow-tow to kings, and a thoroughgoing assessment of the different interests represented by the warring factions is the key to understanding the real basis for the split and subsequent development of Irish politics.

## LABOUR

The pre-independence labour militancy is given the same short, sharp treatment. No mention here of soviets and rail strikes, but at least there's time to consider the options available to the working class: either "a sectional defence of its interests" or a "national" alliance with other groups that would "necessarily involve a dilution of the class strategy". The first is dismissed as "amorphous, incoherent and transitory" syndicalism and an attempt to try the second option, whereby unity would be forged between urban workers, small farmers and landless labourers as in Russia 1917, is also considered a non-starter because the nationalists were too strong in the countryside.

Not surprising then that labour lined up behind Sinn Fein. The problem here is that we're presented with history as though it were physics. No serious attempt

is made to account for this state of affairs beyond a vague reference to the "fatal ambiguities in Connolly's legacy", a flimsy and scant explanation that will be of no use to anyone seeking to unearth the roots of "labour's" failure.

Then again, the book will leave you an expert on the Blueshirts. Twenty-four pages are devoted to what should surely be considered not much more than an episode in the history of the state. We're also treated to ringside commentaries on Fianna Fail leadership wrangles, Fine Gael policy disputes and Progressive Democrat agonising. But who gives a monkey's about any of this? It doesn't throw much light on who and what this lot really represent, and where they think they're taking this country.

There's the usual stuff about the multinationals, but no mention of the Irish banks or the Smurfits, MacInerneys and Goodmans etc. We need to be told how these home grown millionaires got started and how their interests are served today.

The book does have its moments, describing well Fianna Fail's early adeptness at reeling in the rural poor without giving them much, if anything. In the same vein it's good on Fianna Fail's cosy relationship with the union bureaucracies, though here too something's missing—the membership.

## INDUSTRIAL

The "bout of unparalleled turbulence in industrial relations" in the 1960s is mentioned only in passing, whilst the vitally important restructuring of the working class together with the emergence of white collar militancy is hardly touched on. Instead, we're treated to an account of bureaucratic shenanigans, which could have come straight from an ICTU handbook. It's not that this stuff doesn't matter, but it's only half the picture.

The North apparently only affects Southern politics in as much as Charlie Haughey knows how to milk it. Not a word about the effect of recurring Northern crises such as the deployment of British troops, internment, Bloody Sunday, the Ulster Workers' Strike, the Monaghan and Dublin bombings, the hunger strikes, etc etc. On Fianna Fail's history of hanging and internment republicans and the lengths they and the others have gone to so as to protect the Border, along with the stability and legitimacy of the state—silence.

Coming up to date, Sinn Fein is dismissed as an irrelevance, with "some support from students", and even the Workers Party is given short shrift, though there's an understandable reluctance by its supporters to dwell on its republican past and Stalinist politics. A bit dishonest though for a history book, which leads the authors to claim that the Workers Party can trace its history right back to 1970. Really, that far?

The perspective offered amounts to a plea to ditch anti-imperialist "moralism and posturing" and to meet "the challenges", which appears to amount to little more than Labour and the Workers' Party patching up their differences. Not very dynamic.

■ DOMINIC CARROLL

## Casualties of Hollywood

## Casualties Of War

VIETNAM is a popular subject in Hollywood these days. The war that America lost continues to haunt the conscience of its liberal establishment.

That it is recognised by a large section of the American public that the Vietnam war was a disaster and unforgivable is certainly a good thing.

But that recognition is, on the other hand, often of a very narrow sort. This is most apparent in the glut of Hollywood films concerning the Vietnam war that have come out of the last few years—one of the latest being *Casualties of War*.

When films like *Apocalypse Now* or *The Deer Hunter* were released in the late seventies the war was barely over. These

films were overtly critical of America's involvement in Vietnam and were made to, and did, make people think.

Today, things are different. The Vietnam war has become a subject that Hollywood's money men know will sell. Consequently, the

## ANGER

bitterness and anger that made the early war films great is missing from many of the later ones. There are a few exceptions, like *Platoon*, but on the whole the edge is gone.

*Casualties of War* is a good case in point. It deals with the rape and murder of a young Vietnamese girl by all but one of a unit of American soldiers. On returning to base camp, the one sol-



dier (Michael J. Fox) who refused to take part (and tried to save the girl) wants to see justice done and has the men court-martialled—at great risk to himself.

*Casualties of War* isn't the worst of the Vietnam films, but it suffers from

the same flaw as most of the others. They all say the war was horrible, terrible things were done, some American soldiers acted like brutes, but they never say flat out that the real problem was America's presence in Vietnam in the first place.

Unless some filmmaker has the guts to break the mould (all eyes are on Oliver Stone) the "Vietnam film" is destined to become just another formula to keep the money rolling in.

■ EVE MORRISON



## INDUSTRIAL

# Help build Russian trade unions

LAST year miners in Siberia and other parts of the USSR went on strike. They demanded payment for time spent going down the pits, better health care and more food in the shops.

Most importantly, they demanded the right to independent, free trade unions.

From this struggle SOTSPROF was born—the first independent trade union for decades in the USSR.

Now they are desperately in need of funds to extend their organising drive.

#### Sponsors include:

Matt Merrigan (Treasurer); Sen. Brendan Ryan; Sen Joe O'Toole; Sen. Joe Costello; Phil Function, SIPTU, Kilkenny; Phil Toal, Dundalk Trades Council; Paddy Logue, Derry Trades Council; Eamonn McCann, NUJ; Brendan Archbold, IDATU; Bernard Browne, SIPTU; John Daly, IDATU; PJ Madden, INO; Brian Higgins, IDATU. All in personal capacities.

#### What you can do:

★ Raise the following motion in your union branch/stewards committee/trades council/student union:

This branch/stewards committee/etc, welcomes the establishment of SOTSPROF—an independent socialist trade union federation in Russia—and agrees to support their financial appeal to raise funds to expand office and printing facilities.

We agree to sponsor the SOTSPROF Appeal and make a donation of £ . We also agree to invite a speaker to our next meeting and/or sponsor a local public meeting.

★ Support the SOTSPROF Appeal benefit gigs in your area.

★ Send all money to: Matt Merrigan (treasurer), SOTSPROF Appeal, c/o 24 Crotty Ave, Dublin 12.

## Official unions incapable of defending workers' rights

"SOTSPROF is a federation of independent workers' organisations. Under the term worker we include intellectuals, engineers, and all those who live by their own labour.

In other words, SOTSPROF is an independent trade union.

Within SOTSPROF there are more than 30 organisations—in Moscow, Leningrad, the Donbass, Kharkov and other towns. The organisation numbers some 60,000.

SOTSPROF was started because there were no trade unions in the USSR.

The official trade unions are part of the state structure. They are Stalin's creations. They are incapable of carrying out their basic function—the defence of workers' rights.

SOTSPROF fights for workers' self-management and for collective ownership. It is for these reasons it calls itself "socialist".

In the struggle to defend workers' interests SOTSPROF supports fully all forms of working class struggle, including both economic and political strike action.

It was during the miners' strikes in the summer and autumn of 1989 that SOTSPROF sprang up in the Donbass and Vorkuta pits.

The Socialist trade unions put themselves forward as an alternative, but not in opposition to Gorbachev's economic programme. They believe that full implementation of a market economy would make workers even poorer and deepen the economic crisis.

Market relations are only one element of a general solution of the economic problem.

They can work only together with workers' self-management, democratic planning from below, and the transfer of the ownership of the majority of enterprises to the Councils ("Soviets").

The economic programme of Gorbachev, Ryzhkov and Abalkin says nothing about this.

We see the events of Azerbaijan as a bloody provocation by the party apparatus and the KGB, which led to the pogroms and to the vicious suppression of the democratic movement.

In Baku over 300 innocent people were killed—not the figure of 80 given in the Soviet press.

We demand the rapid removal of armed units from Azerbaijan and the release of the leaders of the Azerbaijan National Front and of the Armenian movement Miatsum. We demand the punishment of those guilty of this bloody tragedy."

■ OLEG VORONIN



Oleg Voronin: "Punish the guilty"



## Liebert stay out

NINETY-TWO SIPTU members at Liebert, an electronics factory in Cork City, are entering the fifth week of official strike action in protest at the dismissal of one of their fellow employees.

The dismissal followed an alleged incident at a night club in the city over Christmas. A supervisor at the factory claimed that he was struck by SIPTU member John Daly at a late-night disco. Despite the fact that the alleged incident would have taken place outside working hours and that no civil case was taken by the supervisor, management suspended Daly on the basis that he had struck the supervisor over a work-related problem, although the two men worked in different sections of the factory.

During the week-long suspension management

refused all union offers of conciliation and sacked Daly at the end of the suspension. An angry workforce voted unanimously for strike action. Following strike notice being served an official picket was placed.

As well as flying in the face of commonly accepted civil liberties, i.e. a worker's leisure time being his own, the sacking raises important questions for workers looking for better conditions in their work place.

John Daly is a member of the Liebert section committee of SIPTU. Along with other members he had taken a principled stand against the macho-style management of the company, which had constantly attempted to ignore the union in dealing with employees.

A favourite tactic used by management was to con-

front employees on a one to one basis and to attempt to enforce productivity increases by intimidating individual workers. The section committee had begun to resist this policy by insisting that proposed changes in work practice be negotiated only through the union structure.

Against this background, the sacking of Daly is seen by workers as a blatant attack on union organisation in the factory.

Local SIPTU Branch Secretary Frank Wallace, while initially supportive of the strike, has softened his line and is arguing for a return to work so as to pursue and win the case through "normal procedures", i.e. Rights Commissioner, Employment Tribunals, etc.

This has been rejected unanimously by the workers, one of whom pointed out: "If you are going to take cases like this through the courts, what is the point in being in a union".

The strike is enjoying considerable support, with

local residents bringing tea, cakes etc. More significantly, shop stewards in most electronic factories in the city have got together and are visiting the picket, raising the issue in their workplace and ensuring that a food collection is made in support of the strike.

## Nixdorf out

FOUR hundred workers at Nixdorf's computer plant in Bray face the dole.

The factory is to close as a result of "lack of demand and over-capacity in the industry".

The Bray factory has been the most profitable in the Nixdorf network since its opening in 1977. In the face of political pressure, Nixdorf has agreed to remain in production while the IDA seeks and alternative employer.

However they want 100 redundancies now and seem set to close by June whatever the outcome of the IDA search.

Hundreds of copies of a special Socialist Worker broadsheet were distributed in the town to Nixdorf workers and others. It argued that Nixdorf—the town's main employer—had a very profitable balance sheet boosted by over £5 million in IDA grants to date.

Bray SWM argued that SIPTU—which represents most of the workers at the plant, should be organising its members to force the IDA and government to keep open the plant and guarantee continuity of employment to all Nixdorf workers.

If necessary the workers should occupy the valuable factory and plant to defend their jobs.

## Barlo in

WORKERS in Barlo's of Clonmel have been on strike since 11 October of last year. Since 18 December they have been occupying the factory.

Barlo's, who make radiators, are attempting to shut the factory and transfer their entire operation to Manchester. The occupation, carried out in three-day shifts, is an attempt to prevent closure.

In January this year the company made an offer to the strikers. They would take back 73 of the 156 workers on a phased basis, between March and October.

Apart from the fact that 83 jobs would still be lost, there was a catch. There would be no more sick pay, service pay or special bonuses. Conditions fought for and won over 22 years would disappear

overnight.

Needless to say, the offer was rejected unanimously.

Pat Neill, Barlo shop steward, told *Socialist Worker* that the company directors are "locked into Fianna Fail". There are very close links with leading Fianna Fail activist, Charlie Acheson, and former Cathaoirleach, Tras Honan. Fianna Fail talk about creating jobs and developing the Irish economy, yet turn a blind eye when their rich backers export jobs.

Barlow workers have made it clear that they do not oppose workers being employed at the company's plant in Manchester. Indeed they have been to Manchester to look for solidarity.

The fight is not against English workers but against Barlo bosses.

■ DAVE MacDONAGH



# Socialist Worker

## An end to the

## armed struggle?

THE POSSIBILITY of an IRA ceasefire—or even of the outright abandonment of armed struggle—has become a major topic of discussion over the past month.

A number of television programmes and numerous newspaper articles have taken the possibility very seriously.

There was widespread reaction to a speech by Martin McGuinness at Dunley in Antrim on February 18th in which he asked Northern Ireland Secretary Peter Brooke to spell out how the British government would respond 'if the armed struggle ended'.

John Hume issued a statement urging the NIO to 'carefully study' what he described as McGuinness's 'very interesting' speech.

Around the same time a Dublin news agency quoted 'sources close to the IRA Army Council' as saying that a serious discussion about calling off the armed struggle was under way.

What right-wing commentators and politicians like Hume want is that the IRA should renounce armed struggle and that Sinn Fein should become a 'normal' political party seeking limited objectives by constitutional—ie electoral—methods. It is because they want stability, gradualness and a basic acceptance of the status quo that they urge an end to armed struggle.

But from the revolutionary socialist point of view the issues posed by the armed struggle, and the alternatives to it, are very different.

A far richer and more relevant debate about armed struggle has been going on for some time between socialists and republicans and generally within the broad working class and anti-imperialist movement. This particular discussion has been

given added point and urgency by a number of IRA actions since the beginning of the year which have focussed attention on the relationship between the armed struggle on the one hand and working class and anti-imperialist mass activity on the other.

The IRA bomb during the Bloody Sunday commemoration march in Derry was a case in point. The bomb in the Slieve Donard hotel during the ICTU women's conference was another.

The Slieve Donard bomb played straight into the hands of the right-wing Labour and Workers' Party elements. Their propaganda line—that 'these people are the enemies of the organised working class'—was made to look plausible.

Of course the bomb wasn't aimed specifically against the conference. Republicans have pointed out that the same hotel was bombed during a *businessmen's* conference at the end of last year.

### CLASS

But what that shows is that the armed struggle doesn't take class distinctions into account. It isn't, and cannot be, an expression of class struggle. The bomb during the Bloody Sunday march illustrated an aspect of the contradictions between armed struggle and mass anti-imperialist action. This point was argued in an article in *Derry Socialist Worker* by Eamonn McCann the week after the bomb. We reproduce parts of that article here.

A number of important questions remain unanswered about the IRA bomb during the Bloody Sunday commemoration. These questions will not go away.

We accept that the IRA did not set out to kill or injure civilians. We don't doubt that the widespread sympathy with the relatives of Charles Love was shared by republicans.

But the questions which

need to be answered aren't about the advisability or competence or the operation from a military point of view, but about the *politics* of the matter.

What message did the IRA intend the bomb to convey to the marchers and people of Derry in general? The march organisers had gone to great lengths to broaden its appeal, to make it plain this wasn't just a pro-IRA demonstration.

This understanding of the need to broaden the struggle—which was reflected on the march in the presence of the Trades Council banner and of dozens of trade unionists, some of whom hadn't marched on a Bloody Sunday commemoration for years but who had been brought out on the basis that there was room for non-card carrying Republicans. The presence of a contingent, with which the SWM was associated, carrying red flags rather than nationalist symbols is relevant to the same point.

The IRA must be aware of the belief that the bomb was intended to give such people a message that they are neither needed nor wanted: that the IRA will set the agenda for anti-imperialist politics and that everybody else can like it or lump it; that support for armed struggle is all the IRA wants or is willing to accept from the mass of people.

### SUSPICION

The suspicion that this is what the IRA intended to convey becomes stronger when we consider that it would have come through even more clearly if the bomb had succeeded in inflicting serious casualties on the British Army/RUC while avoiding injury to civilians.

The message would have been even starker: We'll do the job ourselves...You people tramping through the streets are mere 'extras'.



Thus the bomb showed contempt for the mass of the people. It belittled the people, and belittled their role in their own liberation.

The question here is not one of morality. The SWM leaves the moralising to the SDLP, the Catholic Church and the rest of the hypocrites. The question is one of political strategy.

Should the mass of people look to guerilla fighters to deliver liberation? The IRA answered 'Yes' to that question with the January 28th bomb.

The SWM answers 'No'. We argue, on the contrary, that the mass of people can only become free by *freeing themselves*. That guerillas can't do it any more than political elitists in parliament.

It's by involving the maximum number of people in the fight against repression, against discrimination, against the British presence, against

low wages, high unemployment, health cut backs, privatisation, anti-woman bigotry, anti-gay prejudice, across the whole range of social, cultural and economic evil, it's by involving the mass of people in these struggles that true liberation can be won.

Moreover, it is only by organising and going forward on this basis that we can hope to link up the struggle against the Northern State with the struggles of working class people in the South and, eventually, with the struggles of downtrodden Northern Protestants too.

There is a clear division here which cannot be fudged or glossed over between the politics of Republicanism and the politics of revolutionary socialism.

This—and not yet another constitutional nationalist grouping—is the real alternative rank and file Republicans should consider.