

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

BUSH-THATCHER

Stop their war drive

GULF CRISIS — THE PEACE KEEPING FORCE FLIES OUT



Bush and Thatcher are threatening a long and bloody war in the Gulf. They may talk about "detering aggression", the rule of law and the "peacekeeping" role of the United Nations. But their real intentions were shown by the enormous build-up of Western forces in the Gulf.

As US military commentators repeated: "The question is not whether there will be a war but when". Instead the Pentagon announced it would soon have enough ground forces in place "to be sure of defeating the Iraqi army with a minimum loss to American forces." Bush, Thatcher and the rest say they cannot stand back and watch another country invaded.

Yet 8,000 people were killed in just a few days when Bush ordered the invasion of Panama—far more than died in Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. And the US continues to back Israel while it occupies Palestinian territories, murdering 1,000 Arabs who have fought back in the intifada. No task force steamed off to stop those invasions.

Hussein may be a tyrant. But for eight years the West backed him to the hilt in his war against Iran. No-one then seemed to mind that his air force was slaughtering thousands of Kurdish villagers with poison gas. Only now is he a "monster". The reason for the double standard is easy to see: oil. Former US Assistant Defence Secretary Lawrence Korb hit the

nail on the head when he said: "If Kuwait grew carrots, we wouldn't give a damn." The super-rich royal family of Kuwait were happy to let the West take all the oil they wanted at low prices. Saddam Hussein is not. That is the only reason Bush and Thatcher want to stop him. Continued on page three

EAMONN McCANN

The marching season

"There seems to be a Republican 'marching season' emerging to parallel and rival the Orange marching season", one newspaper columnist remarked last month.

He went on to refer somewhat cynically to a "packed programme of commemorations".

In fact, there have been more Republican marches than ever before in the North this summer, and this does have a political significance—although probably not the significance the columnist had in mind.

In the Short Strand in Belfast, for example, there was a march in June to mark the 20th anniversary of the "Battle of St. Matthews", when four Loyalists and a Republican died during an attack on the small Catholic enclave in the east of the city.

In July there was a march to commemorate the 'Falls Curfew', the event in 1970 which can be taken as the definitive end of the 'honeymoon' between Northern Catholics and the British Army.

And of course there have been all the now-traditional marches, such as the internment anniversary demonstrations in August, and so on.

One reason for the 'new' marches has to do with the prolonged nature of the Troubles. Ten or twenty years on are always suitable occasions to look back on particular events, and every year now sees the 10th or 20th anniversary of something or somebody who deserves commemoration.

1988 saw the 20th anniversary of the civil rights eruption. Last year was the 20th anniversary of the entry of British troops into the fray. This year it's 20 years since the first major armed clashes, next year will 10 years since the hunger strike deaths and 20 years since internment.

It's as if the commemorative calendar winds round, and the casualties of war are recalled even as new casualties fall.

All of these marches are, to some extent or other 'community events'. Physically, they tend to take place within particular communities. Apart from anything else, in Belfast particularly, the RUC almost invariably refuses to allow nationalist demonstrations to encroach outside specifically nationalist districts. And the focus of the marches is invariably on things done in and to the community.

Thus, one of the functions of the marches—it doesn't matter much whether this is the intention or not—is to weave the

war into the community's sense of itself, and to deepen individuals' identification of themselves as members of the community. 'Communal consciousness' is deepened.

There's nothing wrong with this. It's right that people in the Bogside, for example, should remember Bloody Sunday, and the fact that the killers were heaped with praise by the entire British establishment. It's right that West Belfast should recall the curfew, and that communities everywhere should regularly bring to mind the morning men were rounded up like animals to be kept in cages without charge or trial.

It's right that people should resolve to continue resisting the force which visited these things upon them.

But the marches and so forth have another function, too, which from the socialist point of view is entirely negative.

They encourage a belief, or an assumption, that it is as members of the community that we can advance, that it is the struggle of the community, rather than the struggle of the class, which is the key to ending oppression.

(This assumption is at the heart of a great deal of activity in nationalist areas at the moment, involving not just members of the Republican Movement, but cultural activists, a layer of academics in sociology and such,

workers in 'community development', promoters of various 'alternative' economic schemes and so on.)

This can give the community great durability, and belief in itself—but at the enormous cost of confining the struggle to the community.

For example, nobody can doubt that one of the great weaknesses of the struggle against the Northern State has been its failure to ignite mass support among workers in the South.

One obvious factor in this is that workers in the South haven't shared in the experience which has shaped the consciousness of the Northern nationalist communities. They can sympathise with the nationalist struggle in the North, and many do, but they cannot become a part of it.

Even when Southern workers are involved themselves in a relatively high level of struggle—at Gateaux, for example—they don't feel any necessary connection with the struggles of the Short Strand or the Bogside.

For as long as the struggle in the North is based on the experiences and consciousness of the nationalist community, and a celebration of the community's unbeaten spirit, it will, no doubt, persist.

But it will also remain confined to the nationalist community.

It will remain trapped within the ghetto, and for as long as that's so, it won't win.



After 15 years in prison . . .



THE BIRMINGHAM SIX

BRITISH HOME SECRETARY David Waddington is trying a particularly sly manoeuvre in relation to the Birmingham Six.

Although nothing can be taken for granted, the signs are that it has now become more embarrassing for the British ruling class to keep the Six in than to let them out.

But in order to avoid facing up to the full implications, Waddington has announced that 'doubts have arisen' as a result of a new procedure—Electro-Static Deposition Analysis.

This apparently shows that the 'notes' of an interview with Richard McKenny were doctored after the event.

The implication is that if this technique had been available, it would have been admitted long ago that the six men were

framed.

This is not so. Lord Denning's 'appalling vista' judgement in 1981 said clearly that the reason the men had to be kept in prison was that the British establishment couldn't afford to admit they were innocent.

QUESTION

The question of whether they really were innocent didn't come into it.

At the men's second

appeal in 1987, the forensic evidence against them was comprehensively discredited and witnesses, including a former policeman and a former policewoman testified that they had been beaten to extract 'confessions' from them.

The dismissal of their appeal by Lord Chief Justice Lane was purely political.

Between them, the Six have served almost a hundred years in jail. Nothing the British establishment can do now will make up for that.

We should also note the total hypocrisy of the Dublin politicians who have 'welcomed' the latest development.

Only four months ago Haughey's government sent two diplomats to visit the men and urge

them to apply for parole—which would have involved them 'admitting' they were guilty.

This would have got Haughey off the hook regarding the complaints that he wasn't doing enough to highlight the case during his presidency of the EEC.

And of course, the Dublin establishment 'imported' the Denning judgement in the High Court in order to stop Nicky Kelly pursuing his case against the guards who framed him.

The Irish ruling class and its political representatives are every bit as corrupt and vicious as their English counterparts. The proper response to the Birmingham Six case is to redouble our efforts to get rid of them all.

Belfast demo lost chance

LAST MONTH'S anti-internment march in Belfast was impressive, totalling several thousand and demonstrating the continuing strength of opposition to the Northern State and its sectarian police force.

The marchers were mostly from Belfast but were supported by foreign delegations. Socialists were heartened by the strong presence of political groups and banners.

However Sinn Fein speakers at the rally in Andersonstown left a lot to be desired. SF General Secretary Tom Hartley saw the "power relationship that exists in the Six Counties" as

between the 'People' and the British army and RUC.

But the march did not contain a cross-section of the North's or Ireland's 'people'.

BALANCE

The marchers were predominantly youth, workers and the unemployed, i.e. they were from the working class, people with a real economic interest in radical social change and enough in common to work together to achieve it.

Not only did Sinn Fein ignore this, they tried to 'correct' the balance by placing together speakers from the American Ancient Order of Hibernians and British Black Civil Rights organisers,

NI jobs bias—official

RECENT REPORTS from the North's Fair Employment Commission have produced evidence of continuing discrimination in employment against Catholics.

The FEC examined the workforces in Antrim, North Down, Ards, Carrickfergus and Newtownabbey District Councils.

There was a distinct under-representation of Catholics among senior Council officers in Antrim, Ards, North Down and Carrickfergus. The FEC reports don't give details of numbers for each individual Council—and no wonder. There are sixty six senior officers between the five Council areas. When the Council with fair staffing at all levels is added in, only two of the sixty six senior officers are from a Catholic background.

In other words, at least three of the Councils have no Catholics employed at senior officer level!

people who could not have less in common.

BROAD FRONT

There was no indication of a readiness to look to our own working class. Hartley's broad front against British im-

perialism does not even mention the protestant working class never mind making a serious effort to grapple with the problem of how to win them to the side of anti-imperialism.

Thirty copies of Socialist Worker were sold.

RICHIE McVEIGH

WE THINK

USA-Britain out of the Gulf

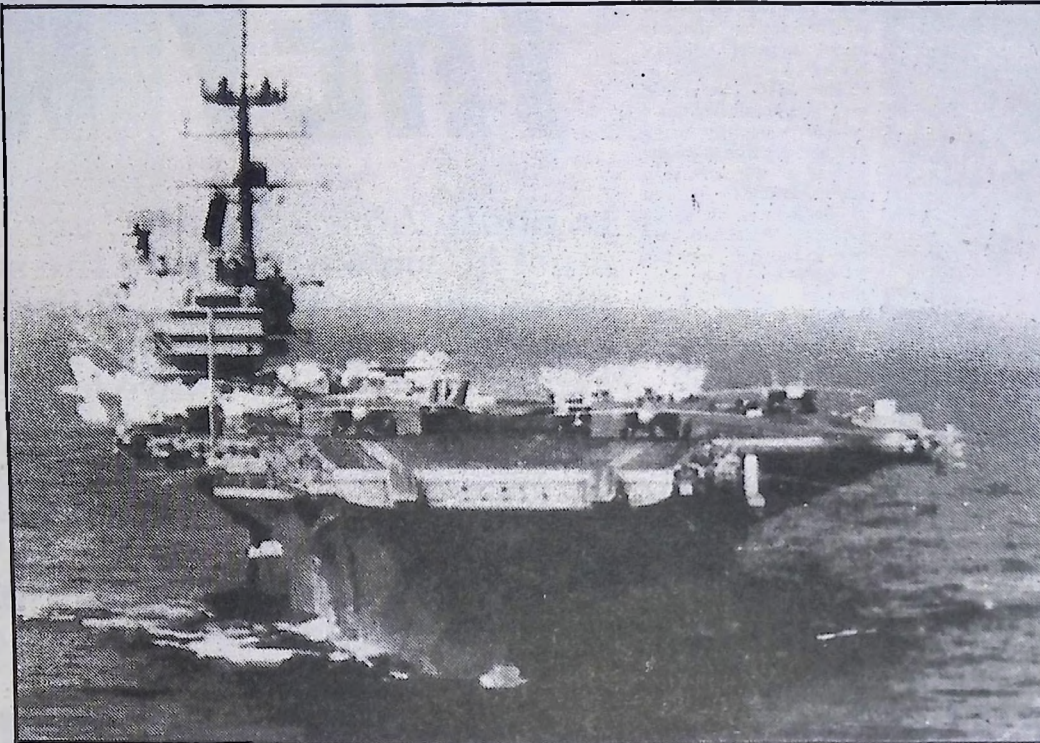
THE CAUSE of the crisis in the Gulf is clear. Western capitalism wants to control the flow and price of the region's oil and is willing to risk all-out war for the purpose.

That is to say, US, British and other outside forces are in the area for imperialist purposes. In this situation, the role of socialists, in Ireland and elsewhere, should be to campaign for their withdrawal.

And if they go to war to campaign for their defeat.

Elsewhere in this issue we deal with the hypocrisy of Thatcher and Bush regarding 'gallant little Kuwait' and their phoney concern for the safety of hostages. On pages six and seven we also look at the humbug from many on the Left about the role of the United Nations.

Socialists should recognise that western capitalism is out to create a new world order in the nineties. The liberal commentator and historian of the oil industry Anthony Sampson has summed it up: "Viewed from much of the Third World it looks like a dreaded nightmare. The rich countries are united, in league with the Soviet Union, to ensure that they can maintain the supply of their cheap raw materials. The Americans supply the armed force, the Japanese supply some of the



US Aircraft carrier steams to the gulf

money, and the Soviets add their own diplomatic pressure".

The reason for this much-vaunted unity of the "international community" is that the stability of the entire capitalist system is at stake.

The crises brought on by the 1973, and then the 1979, oil price rises showed how crucial oil is to world capitalism. This is not just a matter of its importance as a source of energy. The chief economist of

the leading British investment bank, Midland Montague, declared in a recent report: "Oil is not only a vital factor in the manufacturing process, it is at the nub of the

RISK

world's financial system. Tamper with it and just about every significant economic relationship

has to change".

"Such simultaneous changes risk straining the system to breaking point".

More than half of western capitalism's imported oil passes through the Persian Gulf.

On top of this, the collapse of the state-capitalist economies of Eastern Europe has left the US and its allies free to undertake military adventures which they'd have hesitated about just a year

or two ago.

While the USSR was in economic, and therefore military, competition with the West there was at least some restraint on American imperial arrogance.

Now the USSR ruling class is in such desperate need of aid from the West that it has an overwhelming interest in helping shore up the Western economies.

The same goes for China. And thus Bush and Thatcher can be certain that their former adversaries won't even use the veto to deny their imperialist aggression the fig-leaf of UN approval.

If Bush wins in the Gulf, the confidence of the US military in its ability to impose its will anywhere in the world will be significantly boosted.

World capitalism, led by the US, will tighten its grip on the world's vital raw materials—oil in the Middle East, cobalt in Zaire, uranium in Namibia, whatever.

It is in this context that we have to see the confrontation between Bush and Saddam. We know Saddam is a thug. We also know that this has nothing whatever to do with why Bush wants him out.

The fundamental conflict in the region is between western capitalism and the mass of the Arab people. At issue is control of the region's wealth.

Viewed in this perspective, socialists must not be neutral. We should recognise which side is the main enemy of the working class, both in the Middle East and in the world as a whole.

A defeat for Bush and Thatcher would strengthen the working class. That, for socialists, should be the beginning and end of the matter.

Continued from page 1

And suddenly the mask has slipped from Irish "neutrality".

US combat personnel and their troop-carrying aircraft are being re-fuelled in Shannon airport.

Meanwhile throughout the Middle East, hundreds of thousands of Arabs—who have no love for Saddam Hussein—have taken to the streets demanding the expulsion of the US and her allies from the Gulf.

They understand what it will mean if the US succeed in smashing Hussein. It will mean the strengthening of Western domination throughout the region. It will mean a renewed self-confidence for US imperialism in its self-proclaimed as the world's policeman.

It will mean anti-imperialist movements like the Sandinistas in Nicaragua will not take ten years to crush by covert action and Washington-inspired Contras, but less than ten weeks as the US sends in the marines anywhere it likes.

That is why Socialist Worker says Troops out of the Gulf, that is why we demand an end to Irish complicity in UN action, including sanctions. That is why we demand an end to the imperialist war drive. If, as looks probable, it comes to war we are on the side of Hussein against the US and its allies.

Cats and dogs fight back

DUBLIN has gone to the dogs. Fourteen workers have been occupying the Dogs and Cats Home in Dublin's inner city. The Dublin Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals had informed the workers of the closure of the city's only facility for stray dogs and cats.

The DSPCA Committee want to relocate to a new premises in Rathfarnham with the emphasis on administration and education. The housing facilities for animals are being cut, with a loss of jobs.

The Dogs and Cats Home provides a central and cheap animal boarding home facility for working class people who are unable to afford private attention. Each week the home also humanely puts down around 200 sick dogs at a cost of £3. To go to a private vet for the same service would cost £25.

The workers are determined to keep the centre open. Shop steward Mary O'Toole told Socialist Worker that

"the main thing to stress is that the facilities of the Cats and Dogs Home are gone".

Presently the workers are effectively running the centre without the committee, although what this committee actually does is something of a mystery. Financing has come from bucket collections. To raise support they've circulated petitions and are attempting to lobby politicians.

Useful lessons for this occupation can be drawn from the successful action taken by the Women's Centre in Rathmines, where the workers removed the committee and obtained direct financing from the Corporation to run the centre.

To raise wider support the case should be taken into other work places and trade unions.

Messages of support and donations should be sent to MPGWU Strike Committee, Dogs and Cats Home, Grand Canal Street, Dublin.

Dreaming of the 'New Ireland'

The Emerald Convention Centre in the Europa Hotel, Belfast, was the improbable but appropriately named venue for "Ireland—the Way Forward", an International Conference organised by Springhill Community House during August.

This extremely well-organised and well-attended conference was convened to discuss nothing less than the future of Ireland—the kind of state we Irish shall establish by ourselves alone when the British finally withdraw.

The decision to host the conference in the Europa was significant in itself. It was done out of sheer badness

It was done to annoy. It was done also to claim a proper dignity for the proceedings, to demonstrate that the oppressed nationalist people were at last out of the ghetto and capable of handling power with some panache.



Let it also be said that it provided the mainly American and European audience with the kind of plush and polished surroundings most seemed more than well used to.

As far as the hotel management was concerned, the Europa was merely open for business as usual. The trappings of power were for temporary hire by anyone with the necessary ready.

The conference took for granted that the British were inevitably going to withdraw—because of their political and moral bankruptcy. That seemed to be accepted without question. No one, however, addressed the question of how

this desirable and imminently anticipated situation might be brought to pass.

Throughout the conference speakers talked quite naturally of a "post-colonial Ireland" and of the need for a written constitution and a bill of rights to protect individuals and minorities in the new Ireland. But nowhere did anyone examine what our present "colonial" status is nor how we were actually to get to a "post-colonial" condition.

The only person to question the benefits of representative or formal democracy and to introduce the politics of struggle was Bernadette McAliskey. In a

speech that was part personal biography, part oral history, she argued that freedom, democracy and liberty could only be guaranteed if they were underpinned by hard economic rights. Human rights ideals would be useless without equitable distribution of wealth in society. The import of her closing remarks, however, that "the only way to get freedom, democracy, decency, fair play, a fair economy will be when we take power—we'll have to do it ourselves and do it right" was not pursued in discussion.

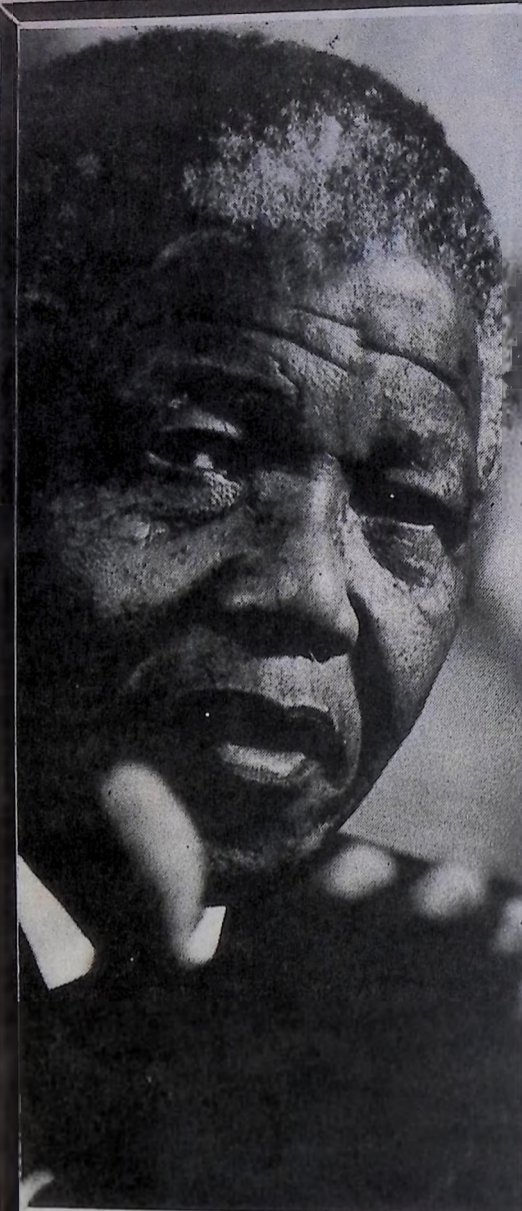
The question of power and how to take it were obviously not worth talking about.

The conference moved towards its conclusion. European Parliamentarians received rapturous standing ovations when they revealed the harassment they had to endure at the hands of the RUC to get to the conference. They had actually been asked where they lived!

Constitutional conferences, written constitutions, Bills of Rights and UN votes may be viewed by many now as the way forward in Ireland. The central role of the working class of the entire island in creating its own future is entirely ignored.

The "solutions" available at the Europa had little to offer and are doomed to failure.

KEVIN O'CARROLL



Nelson Mandela

MORE THAN 500 PEOPLE were killed in a two-week period last month in violence in South Africa between supporters of the ANC and followers of Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha movement.

The violence was greeted with glee by supporters of apartheid who held it up as an example of the savagery of 'the blacks'.

The government of FW de Klerk used it as an excuse to bring back some of the 'special' powers it had given up as part of the reform process. A 'mini state of emergency' was imposed on 27 black townships.

The police and South African defence forces pose as 'impartial', keeping the warring 'tribes' apart.

In fact, the State forces had openly sided with Inkatha. They have been using Inkatha in Natal province since the mid-eighties to terrorise the ANC and its supporters.

Three black policemen who had deserted told reporters that in Kagiso, near Johannesburg, "The white policemen are even transporting Inkatha in their armoured cars. They come marching in behind Inkatha when they attack, then if the residents fight back they use tear-gas and even guns."

The clashes have put severe strain on the strategy of the ANC. Last month Nelson Mandela announced the abandonment of the armed struggle.

Then, leaders, including Mandela, called for the South African Army to be sent into the townships, demanding that it act

impartially. At the same time, Mandela called for an end to the 'mini-emergency' and denounced Law and Order Minister Adrian Vlok for allowing police collusion with Inkatha.

Meanwhile, the far-Right Conservative Party and neo-Nazi groups like Afrikaanse WeerstandBeweging boast of the support they enjoy in both the police and army. Members of both organisations are widely believed to be implicated in a series of terror bombings.

The euphoria which surrounded the release of Nelson Mandela just six months ago has now been largely dispersed.

PRESSURE

Mandela is under strong pressure to make an alliance with de Klerk and to help put an end to protests, strikes and demonstrations so that full-scale talks on a new constitution can get under way.

But if the ANC does this it risks losing support—particularly of young people in the townships—mainly to 'black consciousness' groups such as the Pan-African Congress.

The ANC strategy, as spelled out in its 'Constitutional Guidelines'

published in 1988, is to establish, by negotiation, a 'democratic and non-racial state' with a 'mixed economy', as the first 'stage' on the road to socialism.

Just five years ago, during the great township risings of 1984-'86, ANC president Oliver Tambo talked of creating 'liberated zones', and of 'making the country ungovernable' and overthrowing the white minority regime with one mass insurrectionary heave.

The ANC leadership may have considered this a serious possibility in the mid-eighties. But since the defeat of the township risings, despite the heroism of the fighters, all of the various ANC tactics have been intended to pressurise the government into negotiations while putting the ANC in as strong a negotiating position as possible.

OBVIOUS

Guerilla actions, strikes, boycotts, economic sanctions, peace demonstrations, all have been directed towards this aim.

To a wide range of forces this has seemed the obvious way forward. It has the support of the Frontline States, who want the anti-apartheid struggle out of the way so that they can concentrate on solving their own economic crises—crises rooted in the fact that, although politically independent, they are still economically in the grip of Western imperialism, crippled by debt repayments and dependent on Western credits.

The USSR under Gorbachev has been anxious for a negotiated settlement. With its own desperate economic problems, it wants out of regional confrontations everywhere.

On top of this, the white minority regime was itself under growing economic and diplomatic pressure. The idea that it could be peacefully by a black majority government didn't seem as far-fetched as it had in the seventies.

RELEASE

And this seemed confirmed by the speedy pace of events over the past year—the desegregation of public places, the replacement of Botha by the more 'moderate'-seeming de Klerk, the unbanning of the ANC, the South African Communist Party and other anti-apartheid organisations, the release of political prisoners, especially Mandela, the ending of the death penalty, the ending of the State of Emergency etc.



HOW CAN THEY WIN?

In South Africa the ANC argues that apartheid must be smashed *before* the struggle for socialism can begin. In Palestine, the PLO argues that a Palestinian state must be established *before* there is a fight for socialism.

These are two versions of the 'stages theory'—the notion that democratic and socialist struggles represent separate and distinct stages. Eamonn McCann looks at why this strategy is coming unstuck.

However, despite all this progress and the international excitement it sparked off, for the vast majority of black people nothing has actually changed.

On top of that, even if—and it's a very big 'if'—the ANC did manage to negotiate a settlement with the de Klerk government, it has become increasingly plain that this wouldn't change much for the majority of blacks either.

The ANC would leave the economic structure of South Africa basically intact. This isn't said in so many words, but it's what is meant by giving assurances that there will be a 'mixed economy' in post-apartheid South Africa.

One result of this is that the ANC isn't offering anything fundamentally in advance of what Buthelezi's Inkatha is offering. The ANC's valid arguments against Buthelezi—that he was in apartheid's pocket because he was willing to talk with the minority white regime while apartheid remained in place, that he was anti-socialist, that he was in cahoots with the state security forces—has lost some of their impact. Buthelezi is able to say that the ANC's perspective has turned out to be not very different in practice.

This has left open the danger of differences coming down to traditional loyalties and tribal solidarity. And this despite the fact that the migrant Zulu workers in the hostels, where Inkatha has drawn its support in the recent violence, are workers.

A strategy based on an appeal to the class interests of black workers would have some hope of undercutting the divisions and uniting the masses to push the struggle forward.

This would contradict the ANC's 'revolution by stages' strategy.

It certainly would not help the 'negotiation process'.

But in fact the best way forward is precisely for socialists in South Africa to encourage black workers not to subordinate their class interests to the needs of negotiation with de Klerk but, on the contrary, to intensify the struggle against the state. The black masses should be armed, not invited to believe that it's possible for the forces of apartheid to behave 'impartially'.

And the struggle should be located not just in the townships but particularly in the places where the power of the working class can really be brought to bear—in the factories, the mines, the railways and other workplaces.

PLO in disarray

The PLO has been in disarray almost from the moment Iraqi soldiers crossed the Kuwait border. Over the following weeks it saw all the gains it thought it had made slipping away.

The degree of acceptance by the US which it had worked so hard to win has gone. There is no longer any great pressure on Israel to recognise the PLO and move towards a deal on a 'homeland', as Israeli Government officials have gloatingly pointed out.

Its main sources of finance, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, are furious at the PLO's initial backing for the Iraqi invasion.

At the same time, the Iraqi's reacted angrily when Arafat later tried to back away from this position.

At the Arab summit in Cairo Arafat, according to the leading Egyptian paper, *Al-Ahram*, "seemed a pathetic and isolated figure".

This hasn't come about because the PLO or Arafat personally have been incompetent or just picked the 'wrong' side. The situation is a direct result of PLO politics.

That is to say, it stems directly from the strategy of 'national liberation struggles'.

This is the strategy which says that first national independence has to be achieved, then the struggle for socialism can get under way. The strategy lays down that in this stage of the struggle there should be no stipulation on supporters to be socialists.

Instead, the widest possible support should be mobilised to win national independence.

This isn't just the PLO's strategy. It has been the dominant strategy in anti-colonial struggles in this century.

It is the strategy of the Republican Movement in Ireland today.

Arafat and the PLO have

implemented this strategy at least as successfully as any other contemporary movement.

Unlike the IRA, or ETA in the Basque country, or the KKP in Kurdistan, the PLO is widely recognised as a government-in-exile. Its offices have semi-diplomatic status in more than 50 countries.

Arafat has addressed the general assembly of the United Nations and the European Parliament, has had an audience with the Pope etc. etc.

The PLO has a budget of more than three billion dollars a year—bigger than the annual budget of at least 25 members of the United Nations.

It has thousands of full-time officials. So the PLO has achieved some prominence on the basis of its strategy.

Nevertheless marxists have argued against this strategy and said that instead of looking for support for national liberation from all those who would give it, the Palestinians should look to the working class throughout the Arab world to join in a struggle aimed at bringing down the corrupt Arab regimes as well as the racist State of Israel and bringing about a new Middle East in which a secular Palestine would thrive.

This was dismissed by Arafat and his supporters as 'madness', 'extremist' etc.

Now look what's happened.

The PLO's militar...



Palestinian supporter of Saddam

headquarters, as well as other key institutions and 5,000 fighters, have been based in Iraq, since the expulsion from Lebanon in 1982. It was for this reason that Arafat publicly backed Saddam in his first statement on the Gulf crisis.

But the biggest single contributor to PLO funds has been Saudi Arabia, followed by the Gulf Arab states allied to Kuwait.

And its these countries' Western allies which have provided access to the United States.

So Arafat tried to repair the damage and establish a balance by issuing a statement from Tunis calling for a 'solution safeguarding the dignity and rights of everyone and not in favour of one side or the other'. Not many people were impressed by this formulation.

The reality is that every corrupt 'king' and military dictator in the Arab world has been happy to support the notion of a 'Palestinian homeland'. It saved their consciences but posed no threat to themselves.

In fact, it suited them. For example, there are 700,000 Palestinian workers in the Gulf, the majority working in and around the oil industry. Three hundred thousand work in Kuwait alone.

None of the 700,000 has a vote.

Potentially, this is a very powerful force. By fighting for democratic ownership

and control of the oil wealth, it could have the potential for uniting millions of workers across the Middle East against the 'royal families' and middle-men for multinational oil companies who exploit them and control the region by terror.

The influence on events could be immense. If the Gulf crisis has proved one thing it is how vital the Middle East oil is to the world economy. But bringing the power of the Arab working class to bear in this way means outright opposition to the Arab leaders whose financial and diplomatic support the PLO is dependent on.

This is ruled out by the 'realistic' strategy of Arafat.

In the long-term this is the only strategy which holds out any hope of defeating imperialism in the Middle East and laying the basis for a democratic non-sectarian state of Palestine within a federation of the region.

What's needed in the Middle East to give the Palestinians a realistic hope of success is a movement arguing for the struggle to be concentrated where wealth and power in the region really lies—in the oil fields, the refineries, the docks and loading terminals.

What's needed in Ireland is for those who want to see the defeat of imperialism here to learn the lessons of the PLO experience.



Yasser Arafat

TROUBLE has been brewing among workers employed on the Social Employment Scheme (SES) in Waterford since late July, when they realised that they were not going to benefit from the general increase in social welfare payments that month.

They were told by the Department of Social Welfare that they were not entitled to the increase as they were workers, not social welfare recipients.

When they enquired whether they would benefit from the Family Income Supplement (FIS) the Department said that they wouldn't because they were not workers.

Pat Dalton told *Socialist Worker* "We're neither unemployed nor properly employed so cannot benefit from either scheme according to the Department".

"We're being ripped off," another worker told *Socialist Worker*, "because we lose the fuel scheme, butter



vouchers and the double week at Christmas. As well as that, we get 'double docked' if we miss a day at work or are late starting."

Anger rose when the workers learned that they were not going to benefit from the much publicised back to school payments. Again the Department said that only people on social welfare were entitled to claim. A

married man with three kids could expect up to £100 under the scheme.

APPROACH

People quickly realised that they would have to organise. Following a meeting it was agreed that they should approach SIPTU for membership on a reduced rate. They are also campaigning for the

ICTU to review Congress support for the scheme.

There are 11,500 people on these schemes nationally.

Socialist Worker supports the demands of the SES workers and calls for a campaign nationally to organise people on such projects. They are a scam and an excuse to provide cheap labour.

All the people on the schemes in

Waterford are doing the type of work full-time Corporation workers used to do.

We call on the workers to ally themselves to the organised strength of workers in industry and to take industrial action when necessary as the only way of ensuring a victory from which the whole movement, employed and unemployed, will benefit.

Jobless gagged in INOU row

IN JUNE of this year the Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed, in conjunction with the Irish Trade Union Trust (ITUT), proposed to open a resource centre at its office which would be staffed by ten people on a Social Employment Scheme (SES).

This proposal was strongly opposed by the Portobello Unemployed Action Group. While the Portobello Group felt that a properly funded and staffed resource centre in Dublin's inner city would be useful in organising initiatives against unemployment, they felt that using the SES was not acceptable.

They circulated a

letter to all groups affiliated to the INOU pointing out that the ITUT, which is controlled by SIPTU, should be investing considerable resources in the fight against unemployment and calling for the abolition of the SES and its replacement by full-time jobs at trade union rates of pay.

APPROVED

Their letter went on to say: "A trade union which can afford to pay its joint presidents more than £50,000 each per year, should certainly be able to pay ten people trade union approved salaries for such an important project."

They called on affiliated groups to

protest to SIPTU, ITUT and the INOU. They also made their objections public through statements carried by some newspapers.

As a result of this a letter was sent to all affiliated groups by the INOU General Secretary Michael Allen which was savagely critical of the Portobello group and which amongst other things accused them of "doing nothing". This letter is said to have been sent at the request of the INOU Executive, though at least three members of the Executive only heard of it when they received the letter.

An emergency meeting of the INOU Executive was called to discuss disciplinary action against the Portobello group. One Executive member circulated a letter

calling for the "strongest possible action". A decision on the action to be taken against the Portobello group and on the institution of "binding rules" to cover such situations was deferred at this meeting until the next Executive meeting.

EFFORTS

These efforts to stifle debate within the INOU are totally unacceptable. The INOU is simply an umbrella group and contains within it organisations with widely differing views on how the issues of unemployment, poverty etc can be tackled.

It is obvious that the attack on the Portobello group has been instigated by SIPTU in an effort to save its bureaucrats from criticism. One of the things the Portobello group are accused of is "damaging the INOU relationship with the trade union movement".

Trade union

bureaucrats do not want a fighting, agitational organisation of unemployed workers. They are happy to support a tame, office-bound, reformist organisation which will do nothing to embarrass them or upset the status quo, but which can be displayed as evidence of their concern for the unemployed. The fact that the Portobello group have been prominent in the campaign against the PNR will not have been lost on the SIPTU bureaucrats.

Laos Unemployed Alliance have written to the INOU opposing any action against the Portobello group and saying "it is our view that the Portobello group and all affiliates have an absolute right to raise any issue both inside and outside the INOU".

All unemployed groups should join in this call for democracy and freedom of expression to be upheld within the INOU.

WILLIE PHELAN

US-Britain out of t

A war for control over oil

THE reason the US and the other great powers are preparing for war in the Gulf is control of oil.

The world's richest oilfields lie in the region—in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait and the tiny Gulf states.

Sixty percent of the West's oil supplies pass through the Gulf and these fields comprise over half of the world's known reserves outside the USSR.

And Middle East oil is got on the cheap. The cost of extracting one barrel of Middle Eastern oil is one twelfth that of US oil.

Oil is capitalism's most profitable industry, yet the mass of the inhabitants of the Middle East enjoy no share in the oil wealth.

Saddam Hussein's action in invading Kuwait threatens to endanger Western imperialist control of the region.

The boundaries of the Gulf countries was imposed by imperialist force to guarantee oil profits. Most of the oilfields are clustered around the coast and for decades the Gulf was effectively a British lake.

The boundaries of countries around the Gulf and the surround region were either drawn directly by Britain and France or guaranteed to one or another ruling clique by imperialist power.

When the centuries old Ottoman empire collapsed at the end of the first world war there was a scramble to cash in the recently discovered oil reserves. Oil was replacing coal as the motor of industry.

Under the auspices of the League of Nations—forerunner of today's United Nations—the Middle East was parcelled out between the main imperialists of the day, Britain and France.

Masses of Arabs rose up in an eruption of strikes and demonstrations demanding their freedom from outside domination. To impose their power France



A US SOLDIER in Saudi Arabia—part of the massive military build up

bombed Damascus and Britain carried out a massacre in Iraq.

France split Lebanon from Syria and put both under marshal law. Britain carved out a territory next to Palestine and well away from any oil reserves, called it Transjordan and presented it to the Hashemi dynasty, forerunners of today's King Hussein of Jordan. This was done to prevent the Hashemis ruling over the ancient kingdom of Hejaz, which included a large, oil-rich part of what is today Saudi Arabia.

And Saudi Arabia, whose independence and "legitimate" government is of such concern today, didn't even exist in the twenties. British troops intervened to prevent the tribe of al-Saud from over-running Kuwait. Only in 1932 did the al-Saud family win their long running fight with other ruling families and succeed in establishing Saudi Arabia. Its head immediately sold the oil concession to Standard oil for £50,000 in gold.

Britain also drew the boundaries of Iraq, Kuwait and the smaller Gulf states, making sure the crucial oil areas were under its control. In 1921, they placed into power in Iraq King Faisal as their puppet.

As the profits rolled in Britain, France and later the US repeated intervened throughout the region with troops to mount coups, instal puppets and put down rebellions.

For example in Iran alone, Churchill boasted, oil profits topped £40 million by 1923. Iran had been paid just £2 million.

To safeguard these profits, Britain established Reza Khan in power where he was declared Shah of Iran. But in 1941 after a quarrel, Britain invaded again, deposed Reza Khan and installed his son as Shah. In 1953 Britain and the US colluded in a coup to bring down Iran's prime minister Mussadeq after he nationalised the oilfields.

Over the next three years, the US—now the dominant power—poured \$250 million into the hated Shah's state. Until the 1979 revolution the Shah was the world's largest importer of arms and a loyal policeman for Western interests.

Saddam Hussein taps th

MODERN Iraq was carved out of the old Ottoman empire when it collapsed at the end of the first world war.

It was ruled by Britain until 1932 under a "mandate" of the League of Nations— forerunner of today's United Nations. The British then in-

stalled a puppet ruler King Faisal. The British set up rigged elections and laws favouring the rich landowners and repeatedly used RAF bombers to quell uprisings by the Kurds in the North of the country.

From the late twenties oil was extracted by what became British Petroleum (BP). However British

domination ended in 1958 when an Iraqi army General, Abdul Kassim, overthrew Faisal's corrupt monarchy. Backed by the Iraqi Communist Party, Kassim set up an Arab nationalist military dictatorship.

The next year Saddam Hussein first came to prominence when he attempted to assassinate Kassim. Kassim was at that time hated by

The United Nations illusion

ALMOST all political parties in Ireland have supported United Nations sanctions against Iraq. The US airforce is allowed to re-fuel at Shannon because the Irish government says it supports the UN resolutions permitting a blockade against Iraq.

Workers Party leader, De Rossa said in the Dail that the solution lay in "diplomacy" under the auspices of the United Nations. The Labour T.D. Michael D Higgins also called for full support for UN sanctions.

The idea seems to be that the UN constitutes some higher moral authority standing above the warring nations, representing principles of international co-operation, peace and justice.

This, it has to be said, is a complete illusion. The decision-making body of the UN, the Security Council, embodies the supremacy of the major imperialist powers. The Permanent Members of the Security Council—USA, USSR, China, Britain and France—each have a veto which can prevent any resolution from being passed simply by the abstention of one of these powers.

To stop the war drive socialists cannot rely on the very people responsible for the massacre in Tienanmen Square, the people who blew up the *Rainbow Warrior*, the invaders of Panama, Afghanistan and the Falklands.

To expect the collected representatives of these exploiters and oppressors to act on the basis of international justice and fairness is about as sensible as expecting the FUE to promote workers rights or an international congress of the Mafia to stand for the rule of law. In reality the UN can play only two roles: either the major powers are divided, in which case it is completely paralysed, or the major powers are in agreement, in which case the UN lends a spurious legitimacy to their imperialist interventions.

The historical record of both the UN and its predecessor, the League of Nations, bears this out totally.

In all the conflicts signalling the approach of the war—the Nazi takeover of Austria, the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, the Spanish Civil War, the annexation of the Sudetenland—the

League of Nations was incapable of action.

It is similar with the United Nations. Not once since its foundation in 1945 has the UN acted to block or curb Western imperialism.

At neither Suez in 1956 nor the Bay of Pigs Invasion of Cuba nor France's war on Algeria nor the Vietnam War nor the invasions of Granada and Panama nor the US intervention on behalf of Iraq in the eight year Gulf War nor the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, nor any other occasion did it do so.

Equally the UN has been unable to protect any of the victims of Stalinist oppression and imperialism—Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Tibet.

Indeed the constitution of the UN with its great power veto on the Security Council is such that it cannot possibly act against the interests and wishes of the imperialist states.

Consequently the only occasions on which the UN has intervened seriously has been because the Russians, for one reason or another, have acquiesced in it being used by America.

Thus in the Korean War American forces were able to fight under the United Nations flag with General MacArthur as UN commander.

In the Congo in 1961 UN intervention resulted in the murder of the African nationalist Patrice Lumumba and his replacement by the pro-Western Mobutu, and now the UN is being used to lend "international" support to Western, essentially American, intervention to safeguard its control of Middle Eastern oil.

This is why the call for UN sanctions is so wrong. The USA has used the cover of the UN to station the biggest military contingent since Vietnam outside its own country. It has used the resolution on the blockade of Iraq to regain the right to police the waters of the Gulf.

Socialists would be saying that the US, Britain and France have no business there. By backing sanctions they only help build up an atmosphere that allows Bush and Thatcher beat the drums of war.



US BIG business knows what it is all about

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Of the Gulf

Plucky little Kuwait?

THE great powers are claiming that the war build up is to rescue Kuwait's independence and to save its population from Iraqi oppression. The facts tell a different story.

Kuwait was until recently little more than a city state with a population of just 75,000 in 1937. Its independence has always depended on paying tribute to the dominant imperialist power in the region.

The state's boundaries were drawn by Britain after the first world war. It has been plausibly claimed that a drunken Winston Churchill simply marked out its borders with a pair of dividers on a map. There exists two "Neutral Zones" extending for miles along the desert sands because nobody knows where the exact border is supposed to be.

Kuwait's oil boom began in the 1950s as Britain blockaded Iran's oilfields when they were nationalised. Britain installed the Emir al-Sabah and granted "independence" in 1961. But British

troops remained until 1971 and the Kuwaiti army remained effectively led by British officers.

Under the Emir 60 per cent of its adult population were not allowed to even own a home in one of the world's richest countries. They were "guest workers", denied all rights and any share in Kuwait's enormous oil wealth.

DEBARRED

They were Palestinians, Egyptians, Iraqis, Iranians, Omanis, Lebanese, Indians, Pakistanis and Sri Lankans. Living mostly in shanty towns on pay less than one third of lowest paid Kuwaitis, these workers were debarred from joining trade unions or organising politically. As many as 600 a month were deported.

Even among Kuwaiti "citizens" only a minority—families resident since 1922—had the vote, and no women. The powerless National

Assembly (parliament) was regularly dissolved by the al-Sabah family—the last time, in 1986, when Assembly members suggested the Emir might like to pay his ten year overdue electricity and phone bill.

Political parties were outlawed. No public meeting of more than 20 was allowed and newspapers were censored. Assembly elections were sporadic, fraudulent and gerrymandered.

Of the enormous wealth controlled by the wealthy Kuwaiti families, the great bulk of it was held abroad and directed from the Kuwaiti Investments Office in London. It is estimated that these assets amount to \$100 billion, 90 per cent of it controlled by eighteen families.

While Iraq was desperate to raise the low price of oil by limiting production in order to build up industry at home, the Kuwaiti multi-billionaires flooded the market from their 250 year supplies to simply increase their obscene wealth held abroad.

style the next year by publicly hanging 14 alleged spies. Saddam Hussein then set about murdering all possible rivals in the Ba'ath Party to emerge as the undisputed leader.

In 1974 Hussein launched a war against the Kurdish minority which continues to this day. In 1987, his use of chemical weapons to massacre whole villages went unremarked in the West.

After the Iranian revolution in 1979 threw out the hated shah, the US government of Jimmy Carter was thrown into panic. America's most powerful ally in the region had been toppled and a wave of Islamic fundamentalism and Arab nationalism threatened to overwhelm US interests in the Middle East.

SATELLITES

The US was quick to back Hussein when he invaded Iran in 1980. Western governments and the oil rich Gulf states—including Kuwait—armed him to the teeth. The same US intelligence satellites that are today spying on Iraq were used to provide intelligence on Iranian troop movements and this information was fed to Saddam Hussein.

"We see no fundamental incompatibility of interests between the US and Iraq" was how President Carter's national security advisor Zbigniew Brezinski reacted to the invasion.

The US business paper the *Wall Street Journal* reported: "Washington would welcome any role the Iraqis might play in stabilising the Persian Gulf."

The imperialist powers hoped Iraq would beat back the Iranian revolution, prevent its spread and put a more compliant government into power in Tehran.

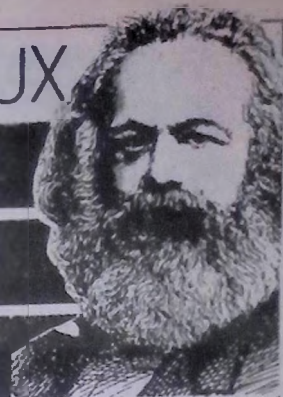
In 1987 when Iraq's invasion was suffering reversals the US navy entered the Gulf to back up Iraqi armed forces. US planes destroyed Iranian oil installations and shot down a civilian airliner killing over 400 Iranian passengers.

If today Hussein is a tyrant with an army of one million and five times as many tanks as the British army it is because he is a creation of the West.

JOHN MOLYNEUX



Teach yourself Marxism



THE ACUTE crisis in the Gulf is a sharp corrective to those who believed that the world was entering an era of peace and harmony.

On the contrary, the "end of the cold war" has encouraged the West, and in particular the Americans, to believe they can intervene militarily with relative impunity. This makes the world a very dangerous place indeed.

The crisis also reminds us that one of the most important reasons for struggling for the abolition of capitalism is to put an end to the horrifying phenomenon of war.

Capitalism, with its insatiable thirst for profits, its imperialist rivalries, its exploitation and oppression of less developed countries and its class contradictions, is inseparable from war and the threat of war.

Only international socialist revolution can unite humanity and put a final end to state organised mass slaughter.

However, socialists cannot confine themselves to such general condemnation of war and capitalism.

We are not pacifists. We recognise the right and the necessity for the oppressed to use violence to liberate themselves from the violence of their oppressors.

And while many wars have been utterly reactionary on the part of both or all sides concerned there have also been wars with a progressive content in that they helped to overthrow or weaken oppressive and reactionary structures such as slavery, feudalism and imperialism.

Thus there have been wars such as the First World War in which it was crucial that socialists opposed both sides equally. But in other wars such as the American Civil War, the Spanish Civil War and the Vietnam War, socialists had a duty to support the victory of one side.

How then do Marxists decide their attitude to particular wars?

This is too large a question to be dealt with comprehensively in the space of this column, but a few guidelines can be indicated.

In the first place it is necessary to make an independent Marxist, that is historical materialist, analysis of the war concerned from the standpoint of internationalist principles.

This involves freeing oneself completely from all the vile jingoistic propaganda designed to whip up hatred for "the enemy" while promoting loyalty and subservience to one's own ruling class.

Through this analysis it is necessary to determine the fundamental historical character of the war. This does not depend on who fires first or who first crossed whose borders or



Socialism and war

similar legalistic criteria.

In the preparation and launching of wars it is the habit of states to devote considerable energy to establishing "legal" cover, to painting the enemy as the aggressor and to building up a smokescreen of "democratic" and "moral" self justification.

It is the job of Marxists to penetrate this camouflage and search out the essence of the war, that is its real political and economic content.

This depends primarily on the class character and level of economic development of the contending forces viewed in their relationship to one another and, most importantly, in relationship to the world economy and world historical process as a whole.

In general therefore Marxists supported the wars of the rising bourgeoisie against feudal despotism and absolute monarchy—Parliament against Charles I, the American War of Independence and the French revolutionary wars. These wars were essentially progressive and liberating.

Equally Marxists support the wars arising from the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie such as the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Russian Civil War of 1918-21.

Victory

By contrast we oppose wars of capitalist and imperialist plunder, wars in which one imperialist power contends with another for the right to dominate and exploit lesser nations. Such, in essence, were the First and Second World Wars.

However, there are wars between capitalist states (where the ruling classes of both nations are capitalist) where Marxists do take sides.

This is because the capitalist world economy is not at all made up of a series of roughly equal competitors. On the contrary it is hierarchically structured with a minority of "great" imperialist powers at the top—US, USSR, Japan, Germany, Britain etc—which systematically exploit and oppress the rest.

In wars between these im-

perialist powers and the countries they subjugate, socialists stand for the defeat of the imperialists and the victory of the oppressed nation. As Lenin put it in his pamphlet *Socialism and War*:

"If tomorrow Morocco were to declare war on France, India on England, Persia or China on [Tsarist] Russia and so forth... every socialist would sympathise with the victory of the oppressed, dependent, unequal states against the oppressing, slave-owning, predatory 'great' powers."

This is not because we support the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation. We are for their overthrow by their own working class.

What we are supporting is the right of the peoples of these nations not to be oppressed, bullied and exploited by imperialism.

The imperialist powers are not only the oppressors of weaker nations but also our oppressors and exploiters and the principle bastions of the whole world capitalist system.

Consequently a defeat for imperialism weakens capitalism as a whole and assists the struggle of the working class for socialism internationally.

Naturally these are only guidelines and there are sometimes difficult cases, as for example when what appears to be a national liberation struggle is in reality simply the pawn of a rival imperialism.

Nevertheless, if these guidelines are applied to the current conflict in the Gulf the position is clear. The essence of the conflict is not about Kuwaiti self determination or resistance to aggression (still less Saddam Hussein's record on human rights).

It is about the "right" of Western, principally American, imperialism to control the affairs of the oil rich Middle East and, by implication, to intervene wherever it chooses around the world in support of its interests. Therefore socialists are opposed to the American war drive.

We call for the withdrawal of Western forces from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. And if war breaks out nonetheless we are for the defeat of America and the victory of Iraq.

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Western governments. His Arab nationalist regime threatened to upset the West's domination of the Middle East. In 1963 Hussein's Ba'ath Party spearheaded the overthrow of Kassim and led a massacre of 30,000 Communists whose names were supplied by the CIA.

When the Ba'ath Party finally took power in 1968 it established a secret police network which set its



PRO-IRAQ demonstrator burns US flag in Jordan

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REVIEWS

The soviet in Limerick

"Forgotten Revolution—Limerick Soviet 1919" by Liam Cahill O'Brien Press, £14.95.

MOST people associate the years 1919—1921 with the war of independence—very few know that it was also a period of unparalleled militancy among the Irish working class.

Between 1916 and 1921 the ITGWU, which had suffered serious defeat after the 1913 lockout, grew from 16,000 members to 120,000.

Between 1917 and 1921 there were eighteen local general strikes. Small towns like Dungarvan were closed by mass pickets. The ITGWU organised 60,000 farm labourers in a recruiting drive which involved the barricading of roads, and dockers went on strike to prevent the exportation of scab farm produce. There were anti-conscription and munition workers' strikes against British imperialism.

A new book by RTE journalist Liam Cahill tells of one of the major struggles of the period—the Limerick general strike of 1919. The Limerick region had been engulfed by labour agitation since 1917. That year members of Limerick Trades Council had begun circulation of *The Bottom Dog*, a weekly working class newspaper which claimed to represent the interests of the "bottom dog" in society—those oppressed by nation, sex or class.

A wave of farm labourers' strikes had built the ITGWU in Limerick County, while the union claimed 3,000 members in Limerick City. In 1918 fifteen thousand workers marched to celebrate Labour Day, and at an assembly passed a resolution which read: "That we, the workers of Limerick and district, in mass meeting assembled, extend fraternal greetings to the workers of all countries, paying particular tribute to our Russian comrades who have waged such a magnificent struggle for their social and political emancipation."

MILITANCY

It was against this background of labour militancy and the republican struggle against British rule that the general strike occurred. The spark was the death in custody of IRA activist and Trades Council delegate Robert Byrne.

Byrne had embarked on a hunger strike and an attempt by the IRA to rescue him ended with him and an RIC man being shot. In response to the death of the policeman, the Limerick City area was declared under martial law and occupied by the military. All those passing in and out of the city had to produce special military passes. As most workplaces lay outside the military cordon, workers

had to obtain a pass to go to work and produce it when going home for lunch or in the evenings.

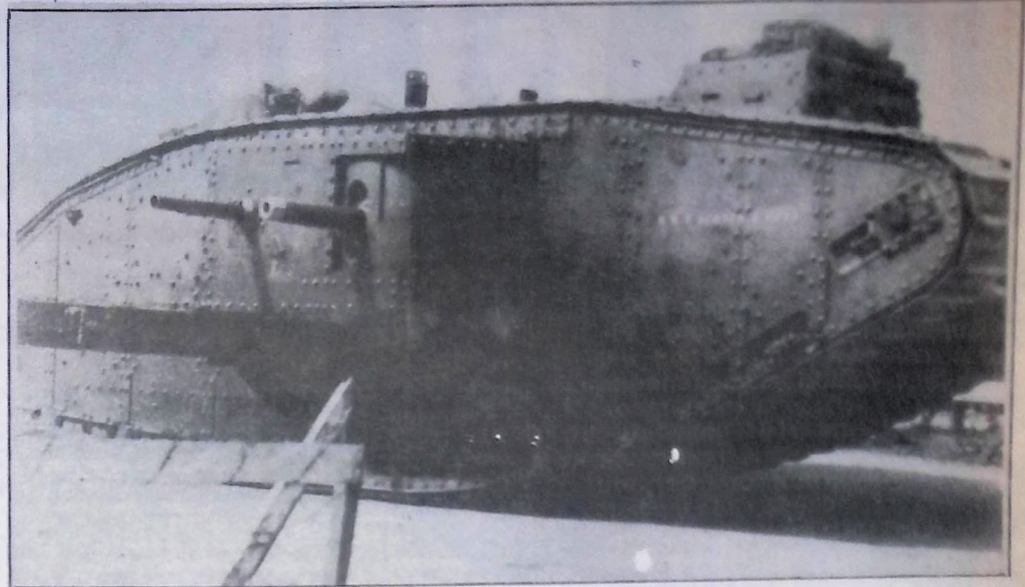
The Trades Council called a general strike in protest at the martial law declaration. Within two hours the city's walls were covered by a strike proclamation produced by sympathetic print workers.

On Monday 14 April the *Irish Independent* reported: "Limerick City is on strike. Shops,

warehouses and factories are closed. No work is being done and no business transacted." The *Irish Times* poked fun at the strike by calling it "Limerick's Soviet" in a sarcastic manner, but the name was accepted with honour.

The strike committee quickly moved to organise food supplies for Limerick's 38,000 inhabitants. Shop opening times were regulated and food prices subsidised. Only transport authorised by the Trades Council was allowed to move. Eventually a daily strike bulletin was produced and the Trades Council began circulating its own money in denominations of one, five and ten shillings.

Propaganda aimed at the British soldiers who manned the barricades which lay on all roads into the city called on them to desert their "imperialist capitalist government". There were cases of soldiers allowing workers to pass



Army tank on a Limerick bridge during the Limerick Soviet. Writing on the tank says, 'His Majesty's tank scotch and soda'

the barricades without passes and the strike committee claimed that an entire Scottish regiment was sent home for refusing to obey orders.

STALEMATE

The strike showed a marvellous level of organisation and ingenuity, but the stalemate couldn't last forever. Either the strike had to spread, crucially through a railway stoppage, or it would go down to defeat. Here

other forces became crucial.

The church condemned the British army, but warned workers to steer clear of "bolshhevism". The strike leadership had no clear political strategy apart from syndicalist and republican influences.

The Republicans were happy to see the British military forces disrupted, but had no wish for an escalation of the strike which would have posed a question of who was to rule Ireland.

The main blame for

defeat, however, must lie with the Irish trade union leadership, in particular Thomas Johnson and William O'Brien. Both preached militant socialist rhetoric but, as the author notes, Johnson in particular "was adept at citing radical reasons for conservative decisions". At first he proposed evacuating the city, arguing that the strikers couldn't expect to beat the British army. Then he argued that perhaps revolution was possible, but that Limerick was not the

occasion. Thus they abdicated responsibility for leading an escalation which could have developed into a real struggle for power. After the Treaty union leaders like Johnson and O'Brien were to settle down to becoming the loyal labour opposition.

Faced with complete isolation, the strike leadership was forced to retreat. The strikers returned to work on Monday 28 April undefeated but without real victory.

■ BRIAN HANLEY

Environment in crisis

HARDLY a week passes without a report on some environmental disaster in the press—another leak from Sellafield, a river polluted or a food poisoning scare. This has led to a growth of interest in Green politics.

Now even Haughey and Thatcher claim to be concerned about protecting the environment. Supermarkets, realising that there is money in it, carry extensive ranges of alleged green products.

But what causes these disasters? The pamphlet argues that it is socialist, not green, politics that provide the answers.

The Green movement generally blames two factors, industrialisation and overpopulation. It is true that factories have contributed significantly to the growth in pollution.

GRINDING

But to argue simply against industrialisation is to ignore the fact that life for most people in pre-industrial society was a grinding round of work with little opportunity for leisure, education or culture. The relatively easy access that we have to books and music, and the time we have to enjoy them,

would not have been possible without the massive growth of industry.

Those who argue that overpopulation is the problem believe that the resources of the world are not sufficient to sustain the existing and the future expansion of the world's population. But when you consider that world production of fruit, vegetables and grain is 2.3 kg per person per day and consumption of these in the UK is 1.7 kg per person per day—you realise that the problem is not one of production but of distribution.

As this pamphlet points out, the problems of environmental destruction are not new.

Environment in Crisis—The Socialist Answer
Duncan Blackie, SWP.
£2.00 inc. postage.

Over a hundred years ago Engels wrote extensively on the subject. He wrote: "What cared the Spanish planters in Cuba, who burned down forests on the slopes of the mountains and obtained from the ashes sufficient fertiliser for one generation of very highly profitable coffee trees—what cared they that the heavy tropical rainfall afterwards washed away the unprotected upper stratum of the soil, leaving behind only rock?"

"In relation to nature, as to society, the present mode of production is

predominantly concerned only with the immediate, the most tangible result; and then surprise is expressed that the more remote effects of actions directed to this end turn out to be quite different."

There is a view that the protection of the environment is not a class issue because everyone, regardless of class, is affected. This pamphlet clearly shows that it is class rule itself—capitalism—which is the cause of the destruction. The introduction to the pamphlet concludes: "Socialism is not about taking over society as it stands now, leaving intact its inequalities and wrong priorities. It is about building a different, better world."

■ WILLIE CUMMING



RAVE ON!

1990 HAS been the year of the Manchester shockwave—the marketing of the city's once-underground subculture on a huge scale.

Bands like the Stone Roses, Happy Mondays and the Inspiral Carpets have made Manchester the new cultural capital of pop.

But despite the predictable hype surrounding any "youth culture", local traditions of guitar-based innovation fused with American house music and drug-induced northern soul dancing have combined to create a subculture unlike any other.

Manchester's "anti-fashion" fashion is the product of comparatively inexpensive styles—flared jeans, hooded tops and loose t-shirts—made by local Asian manufacturers, Joe Bloggs.

IDENTITY

Although this identity is reminiscent of the 60s, the scene isn't so much about nostalgia as giving two fingers to the neat, middle class culture of what is widely seen as the yuppie south.

Some observers have focused on the use of drugs in the Manchester

scene. Certainly, the sound of bands like the Happy Mondays was developed under the influence and their reputation as former dealers has produced scores of Mondays jokes ("What's the difference between Bez and the Three Degrees? There's only six Es in the Three Degrees").

But whereas drugs in the 60s were about experimentation, in the 90s they're about escapism—the Happy Mondays started taking drugs "out of boredom".

Other things, however, haven't changed. Despite the working class origins of the bands and the progressive, anti-Tory mood of the scene, most are no more political than their heavy metal counterparts.

Essentially, Manchester pop culture both opposes and reflects the prejudices of the society which has created it. A working class audience coexists with ex-student capitalists and local merchandisers. The media "discovery" of the scene has led to intense marketing. As Manchester has gone global, the look has ceased to be the property of an underground subculture.

Same as it ever was...
■ BRUCE MORTON

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Marx and Democracy

James Connolly and the 1916 Rebellion

The Politics of the Workers Party

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The Upheavals in Eastern Europe

Will the market be always with us?

Genetic Engineering

George Orwell

Arab nationalism and the crisis in the Gulf.

Tickets for MARXISM IN IRELAND cost £6 when booked in advance. Creche facilities are available during meetings. To order tickets or further details on the programme write to:

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LIMERICK: Thursday 27 September, Mechanic's Institute 8pm
DUBLIN: Wednesday 3 October, Kinley House, Lord Edward St 8pm
BRAY: Thursday 4 October (Check posters for venue)
BELFAST: Monday 15 October, Central Hall, Rosemary St 8pm

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.

Join us!

If you would like to join the SWM or want more details, complete and send to:

SWM PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

Please send me more details of SWM

I want to join the SWM

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

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Say No to the PNR

ON SEPTEMBER 27 the ICTU meets to decide whether to enter a new central agreement with the government and the employers. The Programme for National Recovery (PNR) which lasted for three years is due to expire at the end of the year.

THE PNR limited wage increases to 2.5% a year. But the Programme was about a lot more than pay. The union leaders saw themselves, the employers and the government pulling together for the sake of "the country".

In order to deal with the national debt, for example, the union leaders agreed to a reduction in the number of public sector employees'. Today there are 25,000 fewer people employed in the public sector as the

union took to advertising the terms of the voluntary redundancy deals on offer.

Des Derwin, a shop steward at the Unidare factory in Finglas and the chairperson of Trade Unionists and Unemployed against the Programme, is in little doubt about the disastrous effects of the PNR.

"The main thing about the Programme" says Des "was that it is a pact with Fianna Fail to bring about cost cutting. And the people who made sacrifices were not the likes of Larry Goodman, who was supposed to lead the job creating drive in the beef industry, but the working class."

Over 250 trade union activists have sponsored a declaration against the PNR. They include shop stewards in Aer Lingus, Packard Electric, Penn Chemicals, Waterford Glass, and B'I.

Trade Unionists and Unemployed against the Programme have also organised meetings of shop stewards in Dundalk, Cork, Waterford, Clonmel and Dublin against the programme.

"There is strong feeling against going into a new PNR," says Des "but we need to avoid any feeling of

complacency among industrial shop stewards. We have to get the message across to workers in the health service, in the public service."

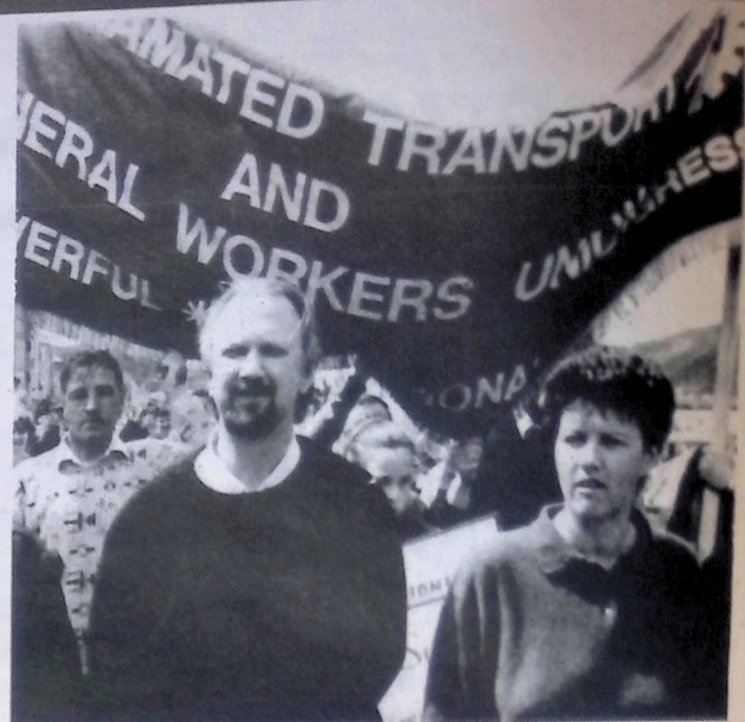
Des Derwin believes that there is a particular reason why shop stewards have been active in the campaign. "The PNR", he says takes away the power to negotiate and participate from members and puts it in the hands of union leaders, who, on their own record, have produced terrible deals"

The union leaders claim that the PNR is the only way that the low paid can make gains. Des Derwin is scathing about this argument.

"It is absolute nonsense. There is simply no mechanism whereby sacrifices by higher paid workers gets passed on to the lower paid. They simply go into the bosses' back pocket"

"The lower paid get it in the teeth under PNR. Remember it's a 2.5% increase across the board. You can work out what 2.5% of £55 a week amounts to"

"There are 200,000 people in this country living below the poverty line. The PNR has done nothing for them."



Trade Unionists and Unemployed against the Programme Conference against the Programme for National Recovery September 15th. St Andrews Resource Centre, Pearse St, Dublin at 11 a.m.

INDUSTRIAL NOTEBOOK

"NEW TIMES demand new methods and measures. The Congress believes the trade unions will attain, in the State, a newer and greater power and status of very first importance. They must be prepared to assume greater responsibilities within the community and prepare themselves to live up to these responsibilities."

Sounds like suave young Peter Cassells, ICTU General Secretary, communicating the very latest in trendy left thinking? Or the thinking man's union leader, Billy Attley revealing all to *The Irish Times*?

Actually, no. The above little missive comes from a declaration of the Congress of Irish Unions in 1945 entitled *New Machines for New Times*. (Isn't it amazing how the dulllest of bureaucrats always want to proclaim the NEW TIMES)

LINKING

The Congress of Irish Unions were an openly right wing, Catholic nationalist, Fianna Fail—loving outfit who split from the Irish Trade Union Congress because they thought it was too Red. Two of its leaders, William McMullen and Michael Colgan, became Fianna Fail Senators.

The Congress of Irish Unions made no bones about it. The 'New Times' meant linking up with Fianna Fail, getting a voice in the corridors of power and assuming 'greater responsibility.'

I was reminded of the old CIU when I picked up the latest SIPTU publication

New times, old times

Shaping Our Future: An Agenda for Progress. It's nothing more than a propaganda plug for the PNR.

The SIPTU leadership have got themselves into a bit of a panic. The first union conference of the new super-union takes place on September 21 and 22. It will discuss the union's stance on the PNR. What with all the organisational messing about that has gone on, they are not fully sure that the affair is, as they say in the trade, 'sewn up'. So now they are calling special meetings of all shop stewards in every branch of SIPTU to carry the line on the PNR. "Shaping Our Future" is to be the basis for discussion.

"Shaping Our Future" is all for new things. It tells us that 'PNR Mark 2 is completely out of the question.' The new deal -- sorry, 'agenda for progress' will be completely different.

POLICY

The remarkable thing, however, about this very boring document is its format. Little panels lay out the union's objectives on Pay, Jobs, Taxation, Working Time and Holidays, Poverty, Health, Education and the Public

Interest. I was waiting for the section on Defence or Foreign Affairs—but that is obviously going too far into the *New Times*.

The SIPTU leaders like the old CIU have decided that the days of bargaining on just wages and conditions are over. They have a 'far wider agenda'. They want a say in government policy.

Most union leaders in most countries want nothing less. New realism is on the rise. It is an alternative to militant struggle; it guarantees a certain stability; and, not insignificantly, it means union funds are not expended on old fashioned strikes.

Now there are three ways of getting this say in government policy. First, there is the old CIU method of linking up directly with FF and indeed calling, as the ITGWU did in 1948, for a vote for FF. FF's wage slashing budget of 1952 and the misery of the unemployed in the 1950s taught them that too close an affair with FF was not on the cards.

Second, the union leaders can sponsor a Labour Party which either achieves government office itself or enters Coalition. In the eyes of many workers,

that has been completely discredited with the sight of Barry Desmond starting the health cuts.

The third method is the chosen route today. It involves an industrial coalition between FF and the union leaders. During the last PNR, the ICTU effectively endorsed the FF election manifesto in return for regular consultations with Haughey and Ahern.

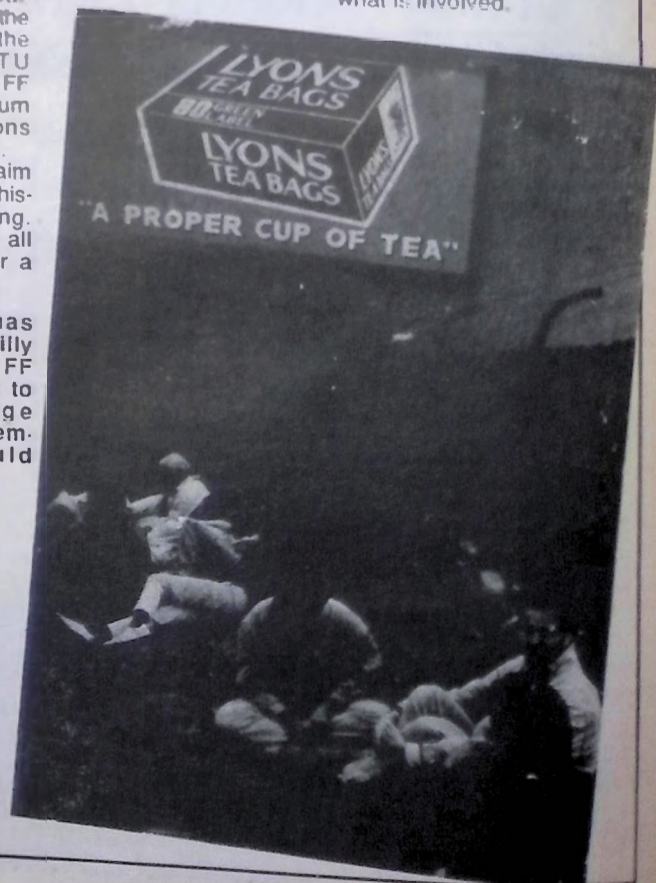
The union leaders claim that this is a more sophisticated way of operating. Broader agendas and all that. There is however a little problem.

What on earth has Peter Cassells and Billy Attley got to offer FF other than their ability to control the wage demands of their members? Why should

anyone want to take their ideas on industrial development seriously—if they are not offering to keep wages down in return?

All contracts with the government are therefore about wage restraint. They are about getting union leaders to control their members. Those sections of the Left who play along with the ICTU leaders and talk about a different type of PNR miss this simple point.

The old CIU leaders knew this and so went out to witchhunt and harrass militants and socialists. The new trendy leaders pretend otherwise but show by their total silence on strikes such as Gateaux that they know what is involved.



Solidarity not concessions to Fianna Fail is the way forward

INDUSTRIAL

GATEAUX STRIKE:

Solidarity is the key

AS *Socialist Worker* goes to press, workers in Gateaux have fought a valiant 14-week battle to save 230 full-time and 270 part-time jobs at the Finglas plant. The fight began in May when management sacked five bakers and demanded further compulsory redundancies, cuts in differential payments and speed-ups in productivity.

Although management refused to negotiate the sacking of the five bakers and obtained injunctions to try and stop workers from picketing the Finglas plant, a solid strike forced them to moderate their stance.

Management proposed the reinstatement of the sacked bakers and the continuation of differential payments, but demanded 25 voluntary redundancies straight off, with a further 12 to follow.

Gateaux workers voted two to one to reject the company proposals, in a week in which a magnificent £3,000 was collected from working class people during a day of action in Dublin by striking workers and supporters. Gateaux strikers were showing themselves determined to stand up to the bullying of management.

By this time, however, bosses had begun to tell workers that the plant would close. The strikers' response was to mount a picket on the associated Lyons Tea plant in Inchicore. In this they attempted to carry a simple argument to their co-workers in Lyons: namely, that it would be in the interests of Lyons workers to fight alongside Gateaux workers against the same bosses—the multinational Allied Lyons Group. Such action culminated in a mass picket at the Lyons plant on 28 August, with over 60 strikers and supporters present.

Given action like this, following a march through Dublin city on Saturday 25 August of over 600 people in support of the Gateaux workers, it seemed clear that we could afford to be hopeful that the plant would stay open.

In 1989 the present company, Allied Lyons

wasn't much help during the dispute. Shanley, leader of the Bakers' Union, tried to divert attention from the real issues at stake by pointing to what he termed the "interference" of Militant in the strike.

As a member of Labour's Administrative Council, Shanley helped Spring witch-hunt Militant supporters from the party. No wonder, then, that he was also prepared to sacrifice jobs and conditions in return for a guarantee from Gateaux bosses to continue to recognise his union.

ADVICE

production methods introduced by management led to massive wastage. One national newspaper reported that during last December the factory racks were so full of reject cakes that there was no room for the good product.

With conditions like this, it is no wonder that Gateaux workers struck to prevent what they rightly perceived as an attempt to break the Bakers' Union in the plant and return to sweatshop conditions.

Unfortunately for the workers, their union

The attitude of the Workers' Party has been little better. Proinsias de Rossa's only advice to strikers was that they could not possibly hope to take on a multinational! He then went on to propose his solution: that an "area task force" be set up in

Finglas, with representation from all the political parties, the IDA and the local Chamber of Commerce!

Gateaux workers know that de Rossa has nothing to offer them. But surely they must be asking themselves the question, "Could it have been different?"

Yes. Workers all over Ireland are dissatisfied with the conditions under which they are employed. There is a sizeable campaign of opposition to a new "Programme for National Recovery" under way. Workers' struggles must tap into this mood if they are to be successful.

The key however to winning today is solidarity. And this is what has been missing from the Gateaux struggle. Two unions could play a central role in gaining victory for the Gateaux workers.

First, SIPTU organises the Lyons plant in Inchicore. But the SIPTU officials have opposed all

calls for solidarity strikes with Gateaux.

Second, the Gateaux workers have appealed to the shop workers union IDATU not to handle Lyons products. The Dublin Distributive Branch of the union has supported the call—but there are signs that the executive of the union is extremely reluctant to support the call.

FUTURE

However, the success of struggles in the future will depend on the support of a layer of rank and file activists within the labour and trade union movement. Reformists like Spring and De Rossa don't agree with this. For them, the defence of workers' conditions and support for them in their battles against the bosses is not a priority. Instead, they would rather workers stood by while they call on the government to set up "task forces", hoping thereby to increase their chances of getting more votes at the next election.

The struggle of the Gateaux workers has shown the way forward, but the movement which will afford such future struggles the support they need has yet to be built. We must rise to that task, or see many more fights go down to defeat and redundancy.



Gardaí rough-up picketers

A GREAT comradeship was built up between all the workers during the strike at Waterford Glass. It was the first major struggle in the history of the plant.

The strike showed people with little or no experience how the working class can organise and take on some of the biggest capitalists, in not only our own country, but also abroad.

It also showed us how our local politicians, Chamber of Commerce and various other organisations stay in the background when there is a major dispute on in the area.

When they do come out it is not on the side of the people in struggle, but on

the side of the capitalist system whose main brief is to keep the working class oppressed.

The mood today is of great resentment towards management and the scab supervisors, some of whom, it has to be said, were active trade unionists (shop stewards, branch reps) before they

turned into management puppets.

What these scabs have tried to enforce since we went back is a type of military discipline code, whereby if a worker is not approached at least twice a day he is wondering what is wrong. Before going to the medical centre, to the wage office, or even the toilet your scab has to be notified first. One minute late returning from lunch breaks or tea breaks and there is the threat of a 15-minute reduction in wages.

Another example of the regime which we are working in now is the

hours of work in the blowing area, which are 8 a.m.—4 p.m. In order for a blower to start work at 8 o'clock it means he has to be in the workplace at 7.30 a.m. to get his tools ready. Blowers are not doing this at the moment, so what in effect happens is that the piece rate worker loses 15 minutes piece rate per day and the others who are on an average system are deducted 15 minutes per day from their average.

So when people ask what is the mood of the workforce when faced with a regime like this, it

has to be said that it is one of defiance. Comrades know it is going to be a long, hard struggle, but it is one which we will win no matter how long it takes. Already we have had a work stoppage by some of our comrades who disagreed with the regime's interpretation of a clause in the agreement

which has now been put into the lap of a conciliation conference.

So, Comrades, the mood of the workers in Waterford Glass is good. They are not going to allow themselves to be oppressed, they are prepared to fight against this capitalist regime until they win.

AUGUST 6th saw the return to work of the majority of the Waterford Glass strikers after being out for 18 weeks, 15 of them in dispute. A skeleton staff of furnace/maintenance workers had returned immediately at the end of the strike to prepare the factory for the August 6th start-up.

During this three-week period these workers came face to face with the scabs who were attempting to implement management's interpretation of the comprehensive agreement. With so few of the strikers back in the plant and the scabs travelling in packs of three, it gave them a false courage in bullying the workers with a "this is the book and nothing matters but the book" attitude.

These stories were related to the other workers. No doubt it was the intention of the bosses to stamp down hard with jackboot management.

However, workers who go through a long dispute like ours do not cower before scabs and daily they are confronting management on even the smallest issue. For example, prior to the strike the blowing supervisors (who became scabs) covered for workers taking toilet breaks. But since the return to work some blowers refuse to work with

them because they do not have union cards.

This defiance is certainly taking its toll of the scabs. Management have had to engage the services of a psychologist to counsel their beleaguered troops and help them cope with the silence and the name-calling when they turn their backs.

One thing the workers in Waterford Glass realise is that although the strike is over the battle with the employers goes on, they cannot be complacent and they must always be on their guard against the capitalists.

Waterford Glass workers are back at work. But the struggle goes on. Management has given orders to supervisors to enforce a strict regime. Two Glass workers give their impressions of the aftermath of the strike.



Waterford Labour TD Brian O'Shea (second from left) didn't lift a finger to help the Glass strikers but he seems to have plenty of time sip champagne with Chief Executive Paddy Galvin (to his left) and other worthies at a recent reception at Waterford Crystal.

PROFIT

Irish Holdings, made a profit of over £6 million. The bulk of this profit came from Lyons Tea. Gateaux is also a profitable concern, but it's obvious to workers by now that Gateaux bosses have no desire to protect jobs in the area and are prepared to let the plant close.

The strike was fought over conditions. New

Socialist Worker

For a Workers' Republic and International Socialism

GOODMAN SCANDAL REVEALS

The ugly face of Irish capitalism

FIANNA Fail have come to the rescue of their own favourite millionaire, Larry Goodman.

At the end of August they called a special meeting of the Dail to pass a new law that would save Goodman from bankruptcy.

Goodman had run up debts of £460 million to the banks. This company lost £100 million in his investments in Britain when his shares in companies such as Unigate and Berisford lost their value. On top of that the Iraq crisis caused him to lose export markets.

Just like the Allied Irish Banks before him, who lost out in insurance speculation in Britain, Goodman came running back to the Irish state for help. The great "entrepreneurs" of Irish capitalism—who praise "the free market" to the hilt and attack "dole spongers"—know where to go with their begging bowls.

Fianna Fail's connections with Goodman go deep. He has made big donations to the party's funds and has attended Fianna Fail Ard Fheiseanna. In return for his donations, Fianna Fail has served Larry Goodman well.

The Fianna Fail TD Liam Lawlor sits on the Board of Directors of Food Industries Ltd.—a Goodman company—as a non-executive director.

When Fianna Fail returned

to power in 1987 they re-introduced the Export Credit Insurance Scheme. The main beneficiary was Larry Goodman. The scheme guaranteed that the Irish state would pay Goodman if any of the importers of meat in the Middle East defaulted. Almost immediately a scandal broke out. The Insurance Credit Scheme was found to be covering beef sales of £120 million—even though only £82 million of Irish beef was sold to the Middle East.

PROMISE

In June 1987 Haughey personally appeared at a press conference held by Goodman to launch a five-year expansion scheme in the beef industry. In return for a promise to create 1,100 jobs, Goodman was to get £23 million from the IDA and £70 million in tax relief from the Revenue Commissioners.

Haughey proclaimed that "having Goodman is bringing us into a new era in marketing Irish beef".

Goodman did not create a single job—but instead switched over to his misadventures in British investments.

The reaction of Labour and the Workers' Party to the debacle has been pathetic.

Dick Spring won praise from the media for a Dail speech lamenting that the affair would "damage Ireland's standing in international financial circles".

In other words, he was

worried about the effect on Irish capitalism.

The WP, through Pat Rabbitte, said the affair demonstrated the need for a "new strategy" for the Irish beef industry based on ready-cut exports to the EC rather than whole carcasses to the Middle East.

Neither "Left" party took the opportunity to argue that Irish workers should oppose the system Larry Goodman personifies.

They are so intent on showing how "responsible" they are that they have entirely lost contact with the idea of struggle.

Larry Goodman could get the Irish parliament recalled to save his millions. But 250 workers at Gateaux in Finglas, Dublin, face a worse predicament. Their jobs have gone and many of the older workers are being condemned to the misery of the dole for the rest of their lives.

Fianna Fail have not called a special meeting of parliament to discuss their plight. Instead they have sent the Irish gardai in to break their pickets. No wonder. The prominent Fianna Fail back-room boy and ex-Senator, Eoin Ryan, sits on the board of Allied Irish Lyons, the parent company of Gateaux. Like his fellow directors, he wants to see Gateaux workers beaten off the streets.

Next time Fianna Fail tell you they are "the party of the plain people of Ireland" remember their services for Larry Goodman!

