

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism 35p

Inside:
The origins of nationalism
 Page 8
The rise of nazis in Europe
 Page 4
Bank workers dispute
 Page 11

Stop the SPUC backlash!

Stand up for women's rights

THE right wing bigots, SPUC, are trying to organise a backlash to stop Irish women winning their rights.

They have called on their friends in the establishment for help.

In the South, High Court Judge, Rory O'Hanlon, made a "personal statement" demanding a new referendum on abortion.

He wants to give a week old foetus the same rights as a 14-year-old child.

But when did you ever hear an Irish judge come out with a "personal statement"?

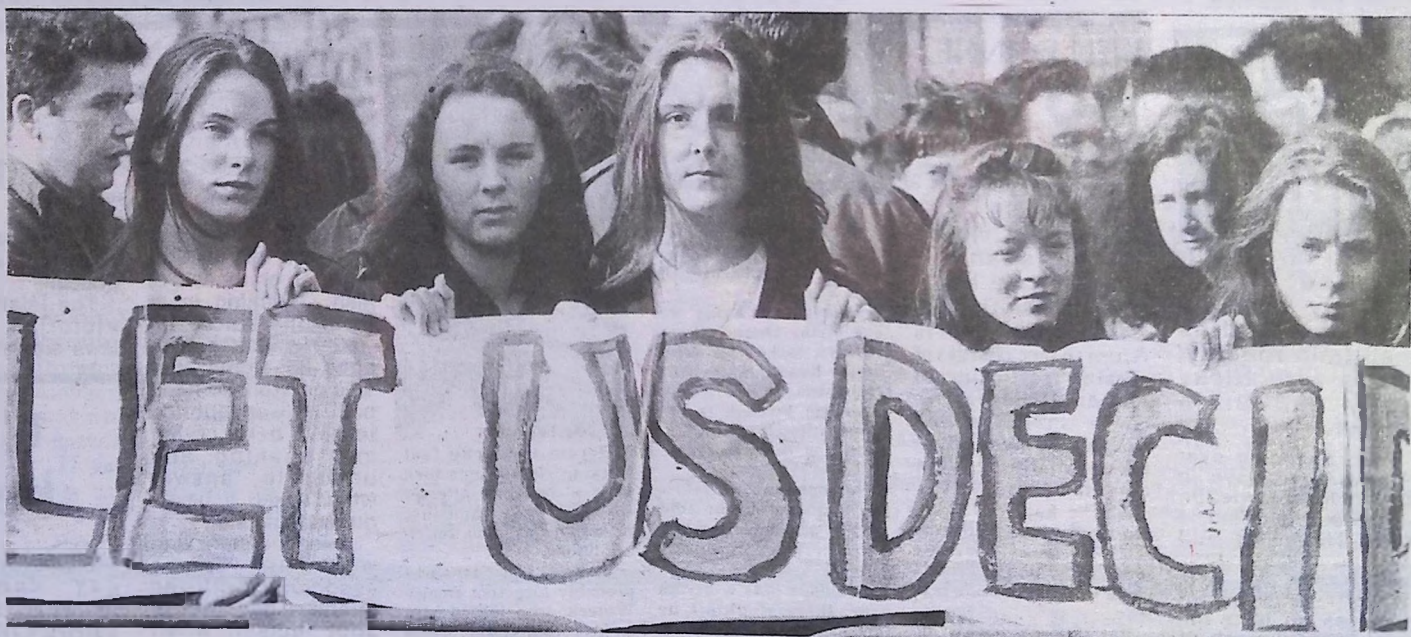
Normally, they pretend to neutral and above controversy. But now the chips are down and the bigots are coming out of the woodwork.

O'Hanlon is the chair of the Law Reform Commission. Another SPUC bigot on the Law Reform Commission is William Binchey.

These bigots are in charge of making proposals for re-writing Irish law.

SPUC are also targetting schools. They are using religion classes to show propaganda films.

And when propoganda fails they turn to violence. SPUC supporters recently broke up a meeting in Tallaght and assaulted Democratic



Left TD, Pat Rabbitte.

In the North, the bigots campaigned against the new Brook Centre.

They united the Paisleyites and the SDLP behind them to oppose Brook for giving sexual advice to young people.

This is the ugly face of religious fundamentalism.

These people want to roll back every gain that women have made in the last period.

Oppose

They oppose sex education in schools. They want condoms made illegal even though the country is

facing an AIDs crisis.

They want to drive Ireland back to the 1950s.

They have to be stopped. Irish women are not going to be driven back to the kitchen sink.

SPUC are still smarting from their defeat on the abortion issue in the South.

They are livid at their failure to

Action on the streets can beat SPUC

stop the Belfast Brook clinic from opening.

Now is the time to build a movement to make them as extinct as the dinosaurs that they resemble.

The fight for women's rights: pages 6&7

What they say

"The phones in the office are so busy that we've even had to bring wives to answer them". Senator Hanafin on activity in Leinster House.

"I am at peace in mind, in the firm conviction and in the belief that I have a good case that is based on the principle of being fair and just to all." De Klerk on the whites-only referendum to decide whether to continue negotiations with the black majority.

"A few slashes of the whip would be more effective for some criminals than a spell in prison, that's often like a first class hotel." Fianna Fail's Sean Barret on fighting crime, just before the recent spate of prison suicides.

"Studying for the priesthood is a very long... expensive process and if someone showed signs... of serious illness there would be a question mark about them." The Catholic Church answering accusations of refusing people entry to the priesthood on grounds of being HIV positive.

UMP, the second biggest meat packer in the country, is set to close with the loss of nine hundred jobs.

Albert Reynolds is clearly to blame. He was Fianna Fail Minister for Industry and Commerce in 1988.

The government ran an export credit insurance scheme to cover exporters for non-payment by customers. £100 million was available, for all exporters of all goods.

In 1988 UMP were refused insurance under this scheme.

Instead, 80 percent of cover available was given to their competitor, Goodman International.

Goodman blatantly abused the scheme—£40 million worth of the beef covered wasn't even from Ireland.

But Goodman got away with this fraud because he was a personal friend of Haughey.

Reynolds was the government Minister responsible for the scheme, but he went along with the rip-off.

UMP could never compete against this kind of favouritism. When one of their factories burned down earlier this year the management decided to pull the plug on nine hundred jobs.

A High Court examiner was sent in to see if the company could be saved. After four weeks he decided that it couldn't.

Now he's looking for £200,000 in fees and expenses.

Now that UMP is in liquidation the vultures are swooping. Buyers have suddenly materialised for

UMP WORKERS: Victims of Fianna Fail corruption



parts of the company.

Obviously they can smell cheap assets and high profits.

In the meantime, no-one gives a damn for the nine hundred workers whose jobs are on the line. Their union, SIPTU, has been inactive.

The only protests so far

have been organised by the local chambers of commerce.

These chambers represent publicans, shopkeepers and other businessmen, who fear the knock-on effects of 900 redundancies on their

profits.

The government should act to save the 900 jobs in UMP. After all, AIB and PMPA were bailed out when they were in trouble.

UMP workers should demand nationalisation of the company to save their jobs.

■ KIERAN GLENNON

Prison deaths on the rise

MORE prisoners than ever are committing suicide in Irish prisons.

In the space of one week recently two prisoners killed themselves in Mountjoy.

Timothy McGarry aged 28, was due out on parole from Mountjoy prison in May. He was found with serious knife injuries to his throat.

Derek Ward (19) of Ballymun, was found hanging in his cell in St Patrick's.

Since January there have been twenty attempted suicides in Mountjoy. The suicide rate for Irish prisons is double the rate in England.

The suicide rate in prison is five times higher than among the general population.

The Department of Justice has been forced to set up an internal investigation into the matter.

But last October, the Advisory Group on Prison Deaths published a report, listing 57 recommendations. None of them have been implemented.

The report said

overcrowding and bad sanitation led to more suicides.

This is not the first such report. The Whitaker Report of 1985 described St Patrick's Institution in the Mountjoy complex as an "outdated, gloomy, depressing environment for any juvenile, and grossly overcrowded".

Closing

St Patrick's is the main detention centre for male offenders under seventeen. The report said it had "no hesitation in recommending the closing of St Patrick's as an institution as soon as possible".

The Whitaker Report stated that "juveniles are locked up for 17 hours a day and allowed only one visit a week. The sense of isolation easily leads to psychological deterioration".

Last year a sixteen year old boy, John McGarvey, hanged himself in St Patrick's. He was the third suicide of that year.

■ ALAN KELLY

FRAME-UP FIGHT

IN April 1976 Osgur Breatnach was wrongly charged with the Sallins mail train robbery, along with Nicky Kelly and Brian McNally.

After spending over five hundred days in prison his conviction was finally quashed in 1980. There has still been no official inquiry into the case.

Osgur is seeking damages for false imprisonment, breach of constitutional rights, intimidation and malicious prosecution.

The legal campaign has cost Osgur over £60,000. Further costs are estimated at another £60,000.

The "Friends of Osgur Breatnach" are organising a fund raising event on Wednesday April 8th. It's on in the National Concert Hall in Dublin and its acts include Niall Toibin and Donal Lunny. Tickets are available at the NGH.

BEN DUNNE: No sympathy from workers

THE latest victim of the scandal-prone Irish boss class is Ben Dunne.

In June Dunne has to return to face charges of cocaine trafficking in Florida. His expensive lawyer is confident that he can get Dunne off on a lesser charge as a first time offender.

Dunne had \$9,738 on him at the time of the arrest. He claimed that this was not an "unusual sum" as he was on a week's holiday.

But Dunne's weekly allowance for his cocaine spending spree is more than half of what many Dunnes workers earn in a year.

The media sympathised with Dunne because of his "openness" about the case. But workers in his supermarkets have little sympathy for him.

Margaret Noonan worked for Dunnes Stores in Mullingar. In 1988 the local manager, Mr Reidy, read a newspaper report about Margaret's involvement in a fracas outside a pub.

She was hauled out of a meeting and sacked for "breaking trust" with the company.

Catherine O'Reilly was one of the Dunnes Stores strikers, sacked for refusing to handle South African goods. In 1987, Catherine got through to Ben Dunne himself to look for a letter for the Department of Social Welfare.

Not only did he refuse her request but he told her: "I guarantee you will never work in this country again."

If Dunne was a heroin user, there wouldn't be much media sympathy for him. But cocaine is a playboy drug for the idle rich to snort in penthouses.



Heroin is a drug that working class people turn to in a desperate attempt to escape poor housing, unemployment and rotten conditions.

Dunne has already probably forgotten Denise Wojcek, who joined him on his cocaine spree. She is still living in a caravan and selling her body to make ends meet.

"DUNNE is so rich as a result of exploiting young workers that he can afford to leave the country when he is charged, pay lawyers to fight his case in that country while he stays at home in the comfort and luxury that he is accustomed to." Karen Gearon, former shop steward, Dunnes Stores, Henry Street, Dublin, sacked for boycotting South African goods.

ISLE OF MAN: Cops target gay men

POLICE recently arrested twentyone gay men on the Isle of Man resulting in at least one suicide.

Kevin McCauley, aged 35, committed suicide while out on bail. He was reported to have been crying and shaking and unable to answer when asked if he required legal aid.

A second man, who was said to be associated with the island's gay group, shot himself when police arrived at his home to question him.

The island's chief constable, a born-again christian, seems to be out to make an example of gay men. The police have been targetting and harassing gays in the lead up to a debate on gay law reform in the parliament.

The Manx Council for Civil Liberties said

It was concerned about "selective policing".

The island retains Victorian anti-gay laws similar to those

on the Irish statute books. These laws make it illegal to be an active gay man and a "fantasy" to be a lesbian!

Cork gays beat bigots

FOR the first time a gay contingent marched in the St Patrick's Day parade. The Cork Lesbian and Gay Collective took part as a direct response to events in the US.

A spokesman said: "We wanted to demonstrate that not everyone in Ireland agrees gay and lesbian groups should be banned".

New York ruled to exclude the Irish Gay and Lesbian Organisation (ILGO) from the 1992 parade. The action was taken by the Anci-

ent Order of Hibernians.

The AOH claimed that ILGO is turning the parade "into a showcase for sexual perversion".

In Boston a contingent of 25 was allowed to participate. The organisers had voted to ban them, fearing for public safety if the contingent tossed condoms to bystanders.

Tanks from Desert Storm, the Allied attack on Iraq, had no problem taking part. So much for public safety!

WE THINK

Build on the new mood

THE Irish establishment is worried. Everywhere they look they see a new mood of anger gripping Irish society.

Two years ago they could tell us off for 'begrudging' our entrepreneurs and betters. Now the captains of Irish industry are up to their necks in corruption and slime.

The names of Dunne, Smurfit and Goodman only provoke contempt in Irish workers.

Eight years ago they told us that we all had to return to 'traditional values'. They wanted to make Ireland's anti-abortion laws a shining example for the rest of Europe.

Now they are forced into making concession after concession.

Reynolds did not even dare raise the Abortion Information issue at the cabinet table. Instead the matter had to be sorted out quickly in the corridors of the Dail.

The right wing politicians egged on the banks to smash the IBOA. They wanted them to set an example on low wages and 'flexibility'.

Harder

But they have got a much harder response than they bargained for. At the end of march 4,000 workers turned up to an IBOA meeting in the Point Depot in Dublin.

Thousands more turned up to meetings around the country. The meetings were the largest trade union gatherings since the 1960s.



No to a bosses' Europe

The new mood is still fragile. But it can be built on. Instead of socialism being dead, the future has never been brighter.

As the world plunges further into crisis it is time to pose that socialist alternative.

What is needed now is a genuine socialist presence throughout the trade union movement, in the colleges and wherever the sparks of resistance glow.

If you agree, we invite you to join us in the Socialist Workers Movement.

IRELAND's right wing politicians have got themselves into a complete mess over the Maastricht treaty.

Last December, Charles Haughey, inserted a protocol into the treaty to copper fasten Ireland's rotten SPUC amendment which equated the life of a woman with the life of a foetus.

But now they have been forced to amend their own protocol to give women the right to travel and to information on abortion.

They are now appealing for an all party consensus to ram through the Treaty and are hoping that the ICTU and the Left will back them to get out

of the mess.

Socialists should not fall for the con. One of the main aims of the Single European Act is to form a 'fortress Europe' that will build up European industry to compete with the rival blocs in the US and Japan.

Dropped

In order to get this, they have dropped even the vague sounding Social Charter so that countries like Britain and Ireland can keep their low wage economy.

The Maastricht Treaty also paves the way for a common

defence policy.

One of the aims of Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and the Progressive Democrats is to get rid of Ireland's proclaimed neutrality. Then they can join the Western European Union which will act as an appendage of NATO.

They hope to eventually lay the basis for a European wide imperialist army.

Socialists should reject any moves to go down this road. But in doing so they should not pretend that a 'national sovereign' Ireland can be established.

Socialists should be saying loud and clear: *Yes, to abortion rights. No, to the bosses Europe.*

WATERFORD:

Fighting against evictions

ON 19 March in Waterford work started on a multi-million pound grant-aided dock-side development, including up-market flats for the rich.

A hundred yards away a young mother named Rosie Devereux was protesting with her friends

outside the Corporation housing office. At 6 pm that day she had to vacate the house she was renting.

The housing office had known this for weeks but refused to house her or help her in any other way. They effectively left her to sleep on the streets.

This is just one tragic example from the seven hundred names on the Waterford housing list. With

only sixteen houses built last year, this will not improve.

The councillors and TDs say there is no money for houses. Yet they hand out millions to yuppie building projects and golf courses for their friends.

Problem

The lack of maintenance staff adds to the housing problem.

Dozens of Cerpo main-

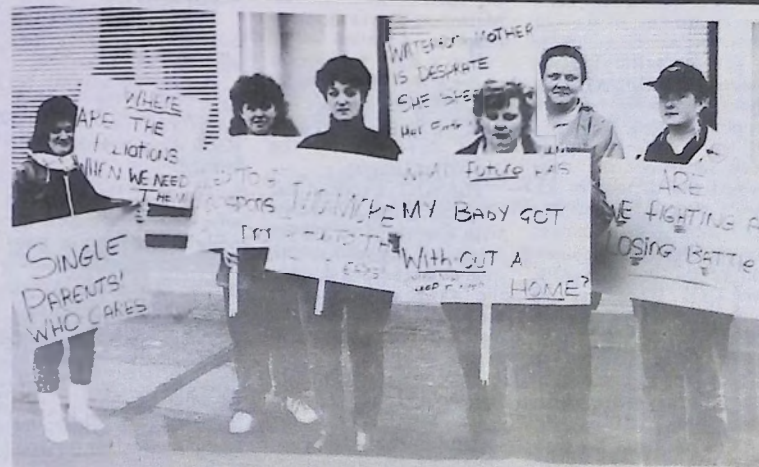
tenance workers have been sacked in the last few years.

Houses are boarded up because of lack of maintenance.

SWM's Jimmy Kelly and WP councillor Martin O'Reagan joined Rosie Devereux on a public meeting platform to launch a housing campaign.

Rosie told *Socialist Worker*: "I am prepared to fight the Corporation for a decent place to live."

MAIGAN DUNNE



FRANCE: Le Pen's thugs attack demo

FASCISM is threatening to become a major force in Europe for the first time in fifty years.

That is the terrifying message from France, where the National Front got 13.9 percent of the vote in last month's regional elections.

The NF beat the ruling Socialist Party to second place in the three largest regions. Its vote has increased from 9.8 percent in 1986.

At the same time the Socialist Party vote collapsed to just 18.3 percent, an all-time low.

Meanwhile the respectable mask of the National Front is slipping. Nazi thugs attacked an anti-Le Pen demonstration in Chartres with baseball bats. Four anti-fascists were seriously injured.

It has also been revealed that one of Le Pen's bodyguards, Paul Malagulte, was a Gestapo agent. In 1944, Malagulte took part in the execution of resistance fighters.

So why are these thugs gaining support in France? The answer lies in the failure of Francois Mitterrand's Socialist Party.

Euphoria

When the Socialists came to power in 1981 thousands of workers took to the streets. They were celebrating the end of years of right-wing government.

But the euphoria was short-lived. Mitterrand turned to Thatcher-style austerity measures in an attempt to solve the economic crisis.

The result was mass unemployment and bitter disillusionment for their working class supporters.

This explains the rejection of the Socialist Party at the polls. It also lies behind the rise of the fascists.

The Socialist Party's electoral politics made them incapable of confronting the fascists.

In a cynical attempt to stop their decline they raised the danger of Le Pen's National Front. But they used it as an excuse for alliances with conservative parties like RPR and UDF. Those parties have previously made alliances with the NF itself.

The Socialist Party also tried to stand celebrities and businessmen. In Marseilles, Mitterrand backed multi-millionaire

boss Bernard Tapie, who owns the Adidas sports company.

However, there has been resistance to Le Pen. Throughout the election campaign thousands protested against the National Front wherever they went.

Five thousand marched in Nice (Le Pen's stronghold), six thousand in Brest, three thousand in Lyon, eight thousand in Nancy, four thousand in Dijon and many more in countless other towns.

Hundreds of demonstrators occupied the airport at Limoges, and prevented Bruno Megret, Le Pen's deputy, from landing.

At first the Socialist Party and the Communist Party backed some of these demonstrations. But as the protests grew they changed tack.

Alarmed by the clashes around the country, Socialist Party leaders have defended the Nazis' right to meet and attacked those confronting Le Pen.

Nevertheless these mobilisations show that the fascists can be stopped. To do so, however, requires: ■ A massive propaganda campaign to expose the National Front for what they are—a Nazi front.

Many of those who vote for Le Pen support some of his aims but would shy away if he was shown to be a Nazi.

■ Mobilising huge numbers to confront the fascists wherever they go.

It is only by confronting them that the NF's mask of respectability can be stripped away. It would begin to split the hard core fascists from the softer electoral support, at the same time demoralising that hard core.

Failures

Genuine socialists in France must also lead resistance to the government's attacks on workers' living standards. A fighting socialist alternative to Mitterrand's failures is desperately needed.

For a short time at the end of the 70s, fascists threatened to build a mass base in Britain. But they were defeated by the Anti-Nazi League.

The ANL exposed the National Front as fascists with the slogan "Never Again". They also mobilised the Nazis marching or meeting. As a result the National Front was completely smashed.

This is a lesson that French socialists need to learn. The fascist threat can and must be stopped.

FASCISM ON THE RISE IN EUROPE... THE MASK OF RESPECTABILITY SLIPS...

Around 15,000 remembered Henrik Christensen, murdered by Nazis in March, pictured (inset) with his son Alexander.



Danish Socialist murdered

HENRIK Christensen, a Danish socialist and anti-racist, was murdered by fascists in Copenhagen last month.

He died in a vicious bomb attack on the offices of Internationale Socialister, the SWM's sister organisation in Denmark.

Henrik, who was only 29, had been an active socialist and trade unionist for many years.

Active

He was particularly active in the anti-Nazi movement. That movement has inflicted major setbacks on the fascists, with large counter-demonstrations.

Some 15,000 people marched through Copenhagen on Saturday 21st March to

protest at the murder. It was the biggest march in Denmark for years.

Sixty three organisations, including over 50 trade unions, marched with their banners.

Condolences and messages of solidarity came from many countries. Messages came from the Greek TUC and French anti-fascists, among others.

The IS produced a special issue of their paper, to show that the Nazis will not stop them organising.

As IS member Charlie Lywood put it, "We have to make clear that we won't be intimidated by the bastards who did this."

■ Condolences and solidarity to Internationale Socialister, Ryesgade 8,3; 8000 Aarhus C; Denmark.

SOUTH AFRICA:

'Reforms' a sick joke

IN South Africa, the ruling Nationalist Party's road to "peaceful change" has been a sick joke for the black majority.

Since the release of Nelson Mandela 2,700 blacks have been killed. Never in four decades of apartheid rule have blacks endured more repression and terror.

The recent referendum excluded the black majority and solved nothing.

Despite the seventy per cent vote for a post-apartheid society, De Klerk is not promising real change.

■ The army and police who have suppressed the population remain generally untouched.

■ The new South Africa will be a free market one, which means the white bosses will continue to own and control most of the factories.

■ Blacks will be given the



vote, but the whites will have a veto to prevent a "black dictatorship".

Unchanged

This means that the black workers' situation remains virtually unchanged.

In order to appease De Klerk and the white minority the ANC have been jettisoning most of their socialist rhetoric.

Nelson Mandela has said that the nationalisation of industry will have to be re-examined at their conference in May.

He has also assured white voters that any ANC

government land redistribution programme would be less radical than in Zimbabwe. That country's rulers have hardly touched the best white land.

This policy of respectability is the last thing the black majority needs. The "reforms" proposed by De Klerk have not been

inspired by a newly-discovered humanitarianism, but by pragmatism.

The economy is in a mess. Sanctions are starving the bosses of markets for their goods and of access to technology and capital investment from the West.

This is why big business is supporting De Klerk. They can live with universal suffrage as long as their profits are safe.

For black workers there can only be one solution. They have in the past taken on and beaten the racist government.

They have built trade unions which have the strength to bring the government to its knees.

The "reform programme" will only make the working class a minor beneficiary of change in South Africa.

Black workers have the power not only to smash apartheid but to lay the basis for a socialist society.

■ BRENDAN O'DONOGHUE

'Democratic Left' or shift to the Right?

Stagg blows whistle on coalition moves

ABOUT 500 members attended the founding conference of the Democratic Left in Dublin at the end of March. Most were former members of the Workers Party.

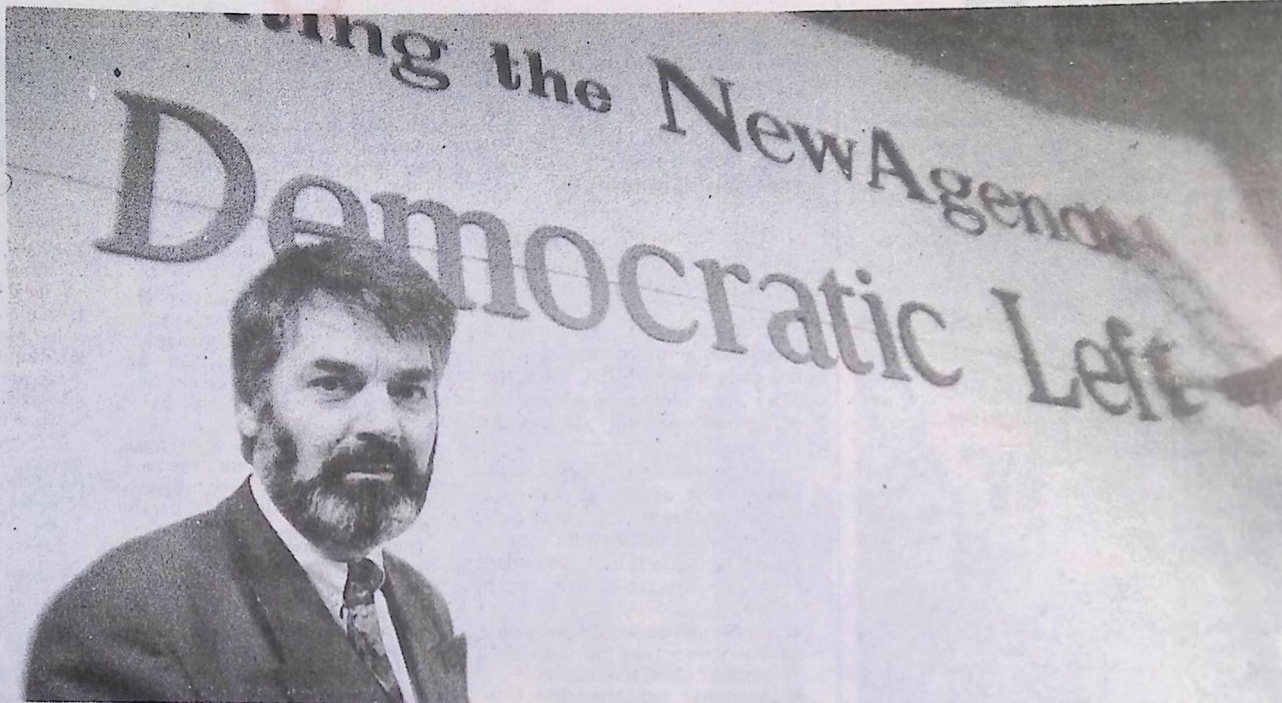
Proinsias de Rossa said that the new party "rejected the failed entity of Social Democracy and the failed entity of Communism".

Delegates were anxious to break with some Workers Party practices of the past. One delegate said that "we have to get rid of the baggage of Eastern Europe. It was a milestone around our necks".

Others said that there was a need to get rid of any association with the Official IRA.

But despite these sentiments it was clear that the new party represented a shift to the right and that in future it would most probably emerge as a Labour Party, mark 2.

The new party is dominated by the parliamentary group. Under the new constitution of the party, the Dail group



is only obliged to give reports to the Executive Board.

There is no provision for either branches or the party as a whole to instruct the parliamentary representatives. The TDs have a free hand.

This focus on parliament came through in the conference as a whole. The bank strike was not mentioned at the conference.

Involved

There was no discussion on how the party would be involved in fighting the SPUC backlash on abortion beyond a confused reference to the Maastricht referendum from de Rossa.

Instead, despite talk of "empowering" people, the focus was on the

goings on in the Dail.

Pat Rabbitte gave a critical welcome to FF's proposed jobs forum claiming that "it would only increase public cynicism if the parties in Dail Eirinn were seen to abandon the unemployed".

Rabbitte's support for the Jobs Forum was in line with the general shift right on the economy. Reeling from the shock of Eastern Europe, the new party has now embraced the market more fully.

The party's first policy document set itself "the goal of an enterprising and competitive economy in Ireland".

While the market was rejected for "essential public services", "the party still called for the "harnessing of market forces on behalf of the people".

CLASS PLAYED DOWN

ONE area that was entirely played down was the issue of class. The party instead called for the building of "a social consensus" around a high wage competitive economy.

How Ireland's weak capitalism could provide both full employment and high wages was not explained.

The founding policy document also took up the fashionable notion of the "two thirds"

society.

This idea was originated by priests like Fr Peter McVerry argues that class conflict has been displaced by a conflict between "marginal groups" and classes who have a stake in the system.

The working class is deemed to be part of the latter.

In the absence of the working class, the force that will bring change in Irish society is a "principled alliance" of women, environmental, and poverty lobbies.

This shift away from the working class is in line with other ex-Stalinist parties in Eastern Europe such as the former communist Party in Italy.

Because these parties see no possibility of revolutionary change, they tend to call on op-

"I'VE resigned as Party Whip because of the leadership's stand on coalition," Emmet Stagg told *Socialist Worker*. Stagg's concerns about coalition were

justified when Spring gave a recent interview at the launch of the Labour 2000 campaign.

When asked about coalition, Spring claimed that "one does not rule things in or rule things out. Things aren't black and white in that respect".

All of this is a departure from Labour's pledge in 1987 to stay out of coalition for ten to fifteen years.

Mick O'Reilly, a member of the Labour Party's Administrative Council also spoke to *Socialist Worker*: "I'm certain there are sections of the party that intend to go into coalition."

At the present time there's a perception that the party is doing very well. They don't want to throw this influence away."

Alerted

Stagg's resignation has alerted many to a new drift back to coalition. Asked about the possibility of stopping another coalition, Stagg told *Socialist Worker*: "It has been reduced by my actions."

"The debate about coalition has opened, a debate that has been previously stifled."

After much urging from Labour Left, Stagg has now decided to stay in the Labour Party even though he has resigned the parliamentary whip.

It is doubtful, however, if the left can stop the drift to coalition. The Labour Party has never refused the opportunity to join a right wing coalition when presented with a hung parliament.

pressed groupings to moderate their demands.

Already the Democratic Left has dropped a demand for a "secular" Ireland from its stated objectives.

The party has little to say to the most active oppressed minority in Ireland: the victims of the sectarian Northern State.

Democratic Left calls for both "civil support for the Gardai" and "community support for the RUC".

Its section on Civil Liberties makes no mention of Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act, which censors the airwaves, or the system of juryless courts.

Despite its rhetoric about new agendas, the Democratic Left combines the worst of both the Workers Party and the Labour Party.



Pat Rabbitte

Will Kinnock make a difference?



WORKERS in Britain are sick of the Tories.

After thirteen years of welfare cuts and job losses it is time for a change.

Since 1979 prescription charges have risen from 20p to £3.75. Almost a million people are on hospital waiting lists.

Unemployment has soared over three million for the second time in just over a decade.

But not everybody has suffered. While the income of the poorest one per cent fell by 22 per cent, the richest one per cent were 72 per cent

better off.

No wonder that 92 per cent of Britain's bosses prefer the Tories. Labour, on the other hand, gets most of its support from workers.

A Labour victory is therefore a welcome defeat for the bosses.

But how much difference will a labour government really make?

Slated

Labour's tax plans have been slated in the Tory press.

But the new 50p rate for those earning over £40,000 is moderate indeed. The Tories

themselves used higher rates until 1987.

The proposal to recruit seven thousand extra nurses is a welcome change. However, this represents less than four nurses per NHS hospital.

Labour has abandoned plans to renationalise water, gas, electricity and British Telecom.

They refuse to reverse the Tories' vicious anti-union laws.

Local Labour councils have jailed poll tax non-payers and sacked thousands of workers to meet Tory spending cuts.

Kinnock's Labour Party have accepted the same priorities as the Tories. The market, they

say, is the only system that can work.

And it must be made to work before the poor and unemployed can expect any improvement in their lives.

So as ordinary workers tighten their belts, Labour leaders tour the City of London "prawn cocktail circuit", trying to reassure big business.

Recession

But the new government faces a recession that shows no sign of ending. They will be forced to continue the Tory's attacks on workers' living standards.

There is an urgent need for a real socialist alternative to Kinnock's party

and the decaying system it supports.

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We Think

Keep the bigots on the run

THE Supreme Court judgement legalising abortion in certain circumstances was a slap in the face for SPUC and Family Solidarity.

The Government's decision to include the right to information in the Maastricht protocol has sent these bigots into a state of shock.

Since 1983, SPUC and Family Solidarity have hounded student unions and women's health centres who dared to give advice on abortion to pregnant women.

They forced them to pay thousands in legal fees and then gloated when they won case after case.

Now the bigots are in full scale retreat. The liberal media has begun to praise the "progressive nature of the Supreme Court."

But the victory that was won over SPUC was not fashioned in the judges chambers but forged on the streets.

The Supreme Court is made up of judges like Hugh O'Flaherty who represented SPUC in the past. Most of them, like O'Flaherty are former Fianna Fail activists. In the past they gave out judgements banning even information on abortion.

Change only came when 10,000 people took to the streets to demand it. The judges knew that if the 14-year-old rape victim was not let go to Britain, there would have been riots on the streets of Dublin. Their hand was forced.

Mass action, not quiet lobbying, brought the first major defeat for the bishops and the bigots since the foundation of this state.

It is important to remember this because some feminists and left wingers now argue that we should leave matters to politicians. They believe that change



must come quietly and gradually.

The Repeal the Eighth Amendment campaign has had great difficulty getting prominent individuals to sponsor a campaign to scrap SPUC's amendment altogether.

The chairperson of the Council for the Status of Women has come out in praise of the "progressive lead" given by Albert Reynolds.

Reforms

This approach is wrong for a number of reasons. First, the limited reforms FF are offering will be distorted by the sectarian structures the Southern state has built up over decades.

Abortion may be legalised in Ireland—but what hospital controlled by an ethics committee run by a local bishop is going to permit operations to be carried out?

Second, why should women have to be deemed "suicidal" before they can get an abortion? If an abortion on the foetus of a suicidal woman is no longer murder, then why is it still murder when the woman has no suicidal tendencies?

Working class

women should not have to humiliate themselves and pay expensive psychiatrists in order to get an abortion. Abortion should be free, safe and legal.

Those who want to fight for women's rights in Ireland should not now hand the Initiative back to SPUC.

SPUC has started to organise in the schools again with full permission from the local parish priests. They have begun a series of public meetings up and down the country.

Instead of trusting Reynolds and FF to deal with these bigots who have plenty of supporters inside the right wing parties, socialists have to argue for confronting the SPUC backlash.

The teachers' unions should be opposing SPUC's entry to the schools. Socialists should leaflet schools where the bigots have been given a free propaganda class.

SPUC meetings should be picketed so that everyone knows that these were the bigots who brought untold suffering on a 14-year-old rape victim.

It is only by organising like this that we can keep the bigots on the run.

IN February the horrific attempts to prevent a pregnant, 14-year-old rape victim from having an abortion angered tens of thousands of people.

But it was only one example of the awful reality for many Irish women.

Attacks on women's rights have become more vicious since the early 1980s. SPUC used the 1983 Amendment to go on the offensive against all sexual freedoms.

Their president Mary Lucey summed it up by saying the battle was against "this pernicious new thinking that tries to justify to women this so-called right to control their own fertility".

■ In 1986 they closed the pregnancy advisory services of the Well Woman and Open Line clinics.

■ Innocuous magazines like *Cosmopolitan* and *Company* are censored here.

■ Five months ago two women's health books were banned from Dublin libraries because they "contained references to abortion", according to City Manager, Frank Feeley.

Fianna Fail backed down on the condom Bill last year under pressure from the Church.

Women's health is a very low priority. Cervical cancer is one of the greatest threats to women's lives, yet women can no longer avail of free smear tests.

Fifty-five percent of women over 15 years have never had the test.

Funding of services for women is insultingly low. Rape Crisis Centres, women's refuges and family planning clinics have to beg for paltry grants from the Department of Health or the National Lottery.

SPUC members on the Health Boards oppose funding for Rape Crisis Centres.

There is no comprehensive sex education in schools. One survey found that 56 percent of unmarried mothers had "no instruction on contraception and 28 percent had nothing explained to them about their periods".

With ninety percent of primary schools and sixty percent of second level schools owned and managed by the Catholic Church this is hardly surprising.

They are more concerned with allowing SPUC to feed lies to school children and scare them with lurid pictures of foetuses.

Because women are denied this basic information it has become more difficult, more expensive, more frightening and ultimately more dangerous for women to have abortions.

Because women are denied control of their fertility, they can have no real control over whole areas of their lives.

Church

The influence of the Catholic Church stands behind the sexual repression of women and affects all aspects of their health.

The majority of hospitals are run

by religious orders, even though they get most of their funding from the state.

The Director of the Board of the National Maternity Hospital in Holles Street, Dublin, is Archbishop O'Connell. His latest contribution to medical science is to equate abortion with "the worst excesses of nazism".

Ethics committees, usually with the local bishop as chairman, exist to ensure that the Catholic ethos prevails. Most hospitals don't perform sterilisations.

At present there is no form of non-medical contraception available to women on the medical card.

The chairman of Family Solidarity believes that "family planning for people who are not forming a family is merely a licence to fornicate... They have no right to sexual indulgence".

Facilities

With such an abhorrence of abortion and contraception, you would think that facilities for women with children would be of a high quality. The opposite is the case.

Maternity leave is one of the shortest in Europe at fourteen weeks.

Women in the North and the UK are entitled to 26 weeks leave after the birth. Irish women get only eighty percent of their wages during this time.

Women get no state support to bring up children. Less than two percent of children under six years of age are in state-funded nurseries.

The state saves enormous expense

The fight for w

The Church, the State



THE fight for women's rights in Ireland is part and parcel of a wider battle against Church control in the South of Ireland.

The Irish Free state was born in a period of instability and revolution.

One Sinn Fein commentator in 1919 wrote that "Never was Ireland more devoutly Catholic than to-day ... yet nowhere was the Bolshevik revolution more sympathetically saluted".

In order to crack down on subversion both Fine Gael and Fianna Fail turned to the Catholic bishops for support.

In return the bishops demanded their pound of flesh and imposed their morality on the population.

In 1925, the bishops succeeded in closing a small loophole that allowed divorce. The Archbishop of Dublin sent a memo to the government saying that:

"As the sole exponent of Divine Law the Church claims for herself the sole and exclusive right to deal with all questions concerning Christian marriage".

In 1928, the bishops had the Censorship of Publications Act

Women's rights

Why women have the right to choose

by GORETTI HORGAN

THE plight of the 14-year-old rape victim led a lot of Irish people in Ireland to realise that they are not totally against abortion.

Most people thought "Of course she should be allowed to have an abortion". In thinking this, they were agreeing that the rights of the young woman should come before those of the foetus.

This is the central argument in the abortion debate.

Do you think that the rights of the woman, her life, her hopes, her job, her mental health—perhaps her ability to cope with her other children—should be paramount?

Or do you think, like SPUC do, that even a six-week-old foetus, still invisible to the naked eye, should have rights which over-ride those of the woman?

Should the woman be forced to sacrifice her future, perhaps even her life in order to bring the foetus to full term?

Pregnant women with cancer have had their chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatment stopped in case it would damage the foetus.

The danger to the woman's life is ignored. Often, the hospital doesn't even explain the situation to the woman until it's too late.

It is clear that women today expect an awful lot more than did their mothers and grandmothers.

They expect a life outside the home, even after they have children. They expect a satisfying sex life and a decent relationship with their partner.

They expect to be able to enjoy that sex life without the constant worry of pregnancy.

It is because women want a life outside the home that the birth rate is falling in Ireland, North and South. More and more women are using some method of contraception.

In the South, contraceptives are both difficult to obtain and expensive. If the government genuinely wanted to stop women going to England for abortions it could reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies very quickly.

It could make contraception available free on the Health Service as it is in the North.

Anti-abortionists say that if abortion was legalised women would use it as an alternative form of contraception. That is nonsense.

Women have more sense. They know that it is far easier, physically and emotionally, to avoid pregnancy than to terminate a pregnancy.

For many women the decision to have an abortion is a difficult one. But rather

than bearing an unwanted child, thousands of Irish women every year do choose abortion.

Every woman considering an abortion knows that the foetus she is carrying is a potential human being. But she also knows that it is totally dependent on her, and only her, body.

It can only continue to live if she lives, will not be nourished if she does not eat, will not receive oxygen if she does not breathe, will die if she dies.

No-one except the pregnant woman can turn the foetus into an actual human being, able to breathe and take nourishment for itself.

Therefore, no one except that woman should have the right to decide whether or not to continue the pregnancy. It is her body, her life. It must be her right to decide.

But the woman is not allowed to make the decision. Instead, it is made by politicians, doctors, lawyers and clergy within the framework of laws and constitutional amendments.

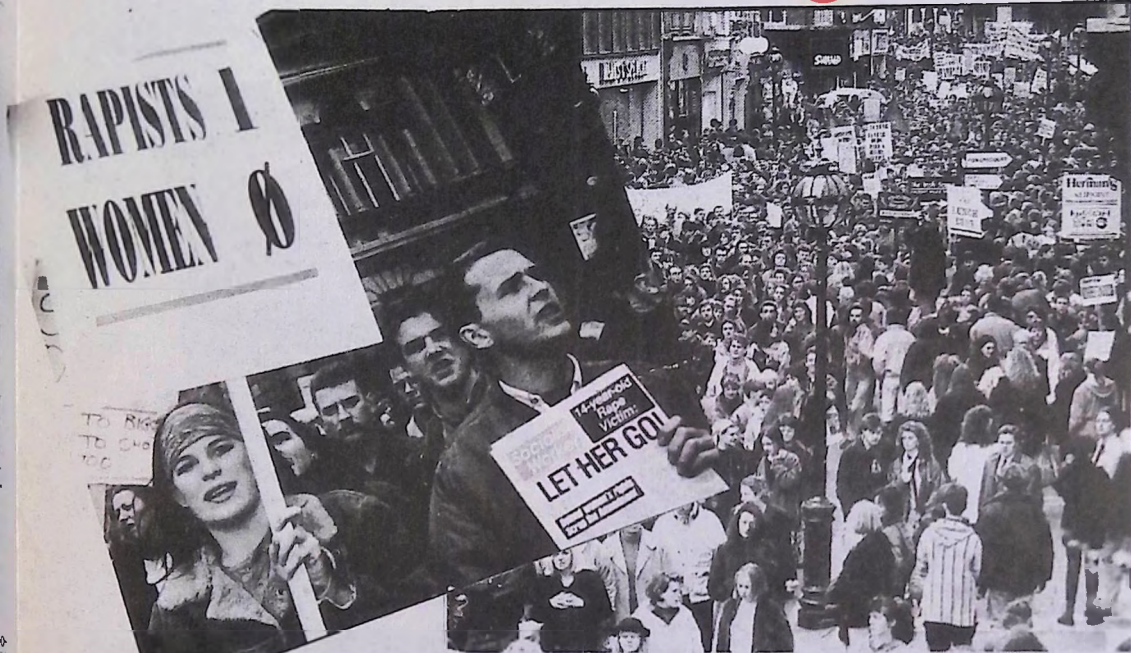
They keep on telling us that abortion is a moral issue. Everything we have seen and heard in recent months makes it quite plain that it is a very political issue.

For socialists, abortion is a class issue. It has always been the case that rich women could afford to terminate pregnancies in safety. If limited abortion is legalised in the South, the chances are it will be available only to the wealthy in private clinics.

Female sterilisation and vasectomies are perfectly legal in the South.

But bishops' control over the hospitals means that these simple operations are virtually impossible to get unless you can go private.

Abortion is also a class issue because it gives women at least a little control over one area of their lives. And socialism is all about people taking control of their own lives.



Anger on the streets

by forcing women to care for children and the elderly.

Sixty-six thousand elderly people are cared for in their homes, three and a half times the number in state care. Over seventy percent of the carers are women.

The ban on divorce leaves tens of thousands of couples trapped in miserable relationships. Women are usually the main victims of violence and poverty in these situations.

An unmarried woman with children can suffer even more degradation.

She is interrogated about her personal life if she applies for social welfare.

If she sleeps with a man it is presumed that he should maintain her financially.

The right wing want to push women into financial dependence on their partners. They want women to bear the burden of childcare in society.

Ireland has one of the worst records in the "advanced countries" when it comes to women's rights.

But it's the worst of a very bad lot.

American writer, Susan Faludi recently wrote a book called *Backlash* showing that women in the US are still treated like second-class citizens.

Right across the world, capitalist governments deny women basic rights. It is part and parcel of their system.

The fight for women's rights in Ireland is not only against SPUC and the bishops. It is also a fight against Irish capitalism.

State and Irish women

established. They used it to ban information on birth control until the early 1970s.

The bishops denounced contraception as "a foul and filthy way of denaturalising the Divine Command to fill the earth".

They opposed women even enjoying late night dancing. The bishop of Galway in 1925 advised fathers:

"If your girls do not obey you, if they are not in at the hours appointed, lay the lash on their backs. That was the good old system and that should be the system today."

In 1951, the bishops stopped moves towards a free health service. They lined up with the consultants to denounce free medical care for mothers and young infants.

They said Noel Browne's Mother and Child Scheme was an attack on the family.

All of this helped to create a society where women's rights were denied. Working class women suffered most.

Two key institutions were handed over to Church control. Religious orders took over the running of many hospitals and imposed their morality on the health service.

The state funded 90 per cent of the costs of schools in the Republic of Ireland. Yet control of these schools was handed over to the Church.

Today 88 per cent of secondary schools are owned and managed by Catholic religious communities. These schools regularly give SPUC a platform to spew out their filth.

Traditions

One of the reasons why the Church got away with all this was that its power was never opposed by the two main traditions in the Irish labour movement: republicanism and labourism.

As late as the 1980s, Sinn Fein refused to take up an official position on the abortion and divorce referenda.

The Labour Party refused to support the 1951 Mother and Child Scheme. In its most radical period in the 1960s the party was led by Brendan Corish who was a member of the Knights of Columbanus.

Corish said that he "was a Catholic first, and a socialist second".

The Labour Party also refused to campaign against the SPUC amendment in 1983.

The recent defeat inflicted on the bishops now opens up the whole question of their control over parts of Irish society.

Control

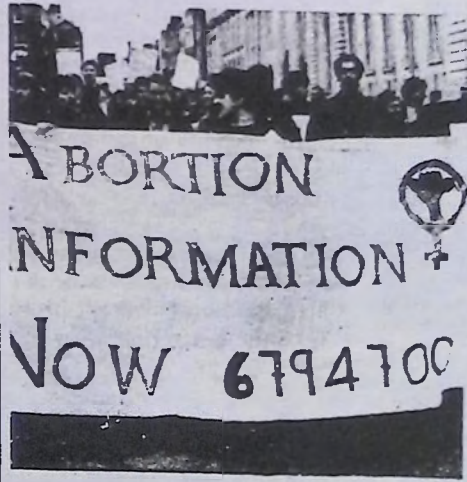
Socialists must stand full square for the separation of Church and State. We are for nationalising the health service and removing religious control.

We want an end to the management of schools by parish priests and religious orders. We are for democratically elected management committees.

One year ago even the idea of demanding abortion in Ireland seemed an impossible dream.

Many of those who suffered the defeats of that Ireland was doomed to be always a conservative society.

But within nine years of SPUC's famous victory the situation has been turned around. It is time to go on the offensive and confront the issue of Church control over our schools and hospitals.



The right to choose

Kieran Allen reviews a new book on... The Origins of Nationalism

ACROSS the world nationalism is on the rise. The former USSR is breaking up into smaller nations.

Yugoslavia is still immersed in a civil war to break up the old state. Scottish national independence has now become a real possibility in the near future.

But where do nationalist ideas come from? Nationalists argue that they arise from a natural feeling of ethnic identity.

They claim that there first exists a shared national culture which eventually gives rise to the nation state.

Eric Hobsbawm's new book, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* challenges these ideas.

He argues powerfully that prior to the two great revolutions of the 18th century, the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, there existed little of what we might now call a national consciousness.

The emergence of nations did not depend on the existence of a shared national culture or even a shared national language. When Italy was unified, for example, it is estimated that only 3 per cent of the population spoke Italian.

As late as 1884, the Dictionary of the Spanish Academy defined the word "nation" to mean either the inhabitants of a "province, a country or a kingdom". Strangely enough it could also mean a "foreigner".

There were a number of reasons why a national consciousness could not have existed. For one thing, before the rise of capitalism, most people's lives were entirely localised.

It is estimated that in France, before the Revolution, nine out of 10 people never left their department (county) in their lifetime.

The great wars between states passed by the vast majority of people. The Prussian king, Frederick the Great commented that the average citizen at the time would hardly know that a war was taking place.

People owed their allegiance to a particular lord and through him, possibly, to a particular royal dynasty. This allegiance was won by brute force.

But these royal dynasties were not identified with nations. The Spanish Bourbons, for example, supplied the parasites for many of the thrones of Europe ranging from what is now Belgium to today's Austria.

Capitalism changed all that. Early capitalism set in motion a number of processes that gave rise to the first stirrings of national consciousness.

The early merchant classes



Celebrating "Irishness", St Patrick's Day, New York. But has "national identity always existed?"

co-operated with attempts by absolute monarchs to cut back on the power of local barons and lords. They aimed to establish a more stable state administration that gathered taxes and imposed its rules.

The emergence of the printing presses had a dramatic effect in shaping future national languages. Prior to printing, various dialects and idioms could co-exist easily beside each other.

But with mass printing one had to pick out a particular dialect and make it the standard or official language.

Shaping

But the physical revolt of the French bourgeoisie also played a decisive role in shaping the model of the nation state. The French bourgeoisie had a direct interest in uniting the country and establishing a nation state.

They needed to abolish petty feudal rules which obstructed trade and commerce by forcing payment of taxes to local lords.

They wanted a nation state to exercise a monopoly over currency and control of public finances.

To achieve all this they rallied the mass of the French population behind them. At times they had to be pushed from below by the Paris mob as they became terrified of the effects of their

own revolt.

At first ethnic differences were not important in creating nations. The English Revolutionary, Tom Paine, for example, was elected to the French National Convention without any difficulty.

But once control of the state machine passed to this new class, the process of artificially creating what one Marxist, Benedict Anderson, called the "imagined community" began.

Far from the French nation springing out of a common culture or ethnic identity, it was the new state which set about shaping a common culture.

One of the new regime's first decrees was to ban the language of the region of the South of France, the Languedoc, to help foster a national culture.

This model of nation building became decisive for capitalists and aspiring capitalists throughout the world. None more so than the Irish.

Those who seek to explain the emergence of a nation from a distinct national culture that stretches back to the mists of time have, ironically enough, a major difficulty with the Irish case.

Daniel Corkery, in his book *The Hidden Ireland* argued the classic right wing nationalist case.

He claims that over the 700

years of British conquest there existed a "hidden Ireland" that linked the old Celtic lord with the peasant in his cabin to resist British rule.

However, the plain fact is that after the defeat of the Celtic clans in the mid 17th century the only revolts that occurred were entirely localised. These were led by groups like the Whiteboys who took up particular peasant grievances.

The first Irish national revolt arose from an entirely different class of people who had little connection with an Irish ethnic or cultural identity.

Contempt

Wolfe Tone and the leadership of the United Irishmen were drawn from the bourgeoisie of the settler community in the North East of Ireland. They did not speak Irish and had a barely disguised contempt for "Catholic superstition".

They began as supporters of the British Whigs. But under the impact of the French revolution they realised that their interests as a bourgeoisie, in the "preservation of liberty and the extension of commerce", lay in creating a new nation.

Hobsbawm's book is important in exposing the mystifications of nationalism that are once more becoming popular.

In Northern Ireland, for example, both Loyalist and Nationalist leaders talk of defending national culture and "ethnic identity".

Socialists oppose privileges for any particular national culture. We are for the right of those who speak or wish to learn the Irish language to have access to the airwaves, North or South.

We are against the hypocritical FF attitude which talks of restoring the Irish language—but condemns the people of the Gaeltacht to a life of poverty, unemployment and emigration.

But while supporting democratic rights and opposing the suppression of particular cultures, we do not identify with any dominant national culture. The Russian revolutionary, Lenin, put it like this:

"The elements of democratic and socialist culture are present, if only in rudimentary form, in every national culture, since in every nation there are toiling and exploited masses, whose conditions of life inevitably give rise to the ideology of democracy and socialism".

Socialists want to build on those elements.

Nations and Nationality since 1780 by Eric Hobsbawm

Price £6.50 inc. post

From: SW Books, PO Box 1648, James's Street, Dublin 8

Building the SWM

RIGHT across the country, the Socialist Workers Movement has been involved in a wave of activity over the last month.

In Naas, County Kildare an SWM member organised a public meeting to call for the Repeal of the Eight Amendment.

SPUC supporters complained to the local Gardai that information on abortion was being given out.

A Garda sergeant arrived to break up the meeting. He confiscated all leaflets claiming that they contained "illegal information".

He also threatened to have a file sent to the Director of Public Prosecution to have the SWM member charged.

In response to this intimidation, the SWM organised a bus-load of 40 people to do a mass leafleting of the town. The leaflets included the abortion information telephone number.

Hundreds signed a petition denouncing the activity of the local garda. Ten *Socialist Workers* were sold.

Despite a very visible presence, the local garda backed off this time.

In Derry, the initiative to hold a march on International Women's Day was taken at an SWM meeting.

Over 80 people turned up to demand the opening of the Brook Centre and the

extension of the British abortion act to Northern Ireland.

Speakers from the students union and the SWM addressed the gathering.

The march was the first pro-choice demonstration to be held in Derry.

In Waterford, SWM members joined Rosie Devereaux and her friends on a picket to protest at the lack of housing in the town.

Rosie came along to the local SWM branch meeting and explained her case. It was agreed to start a housing campaign in the town.

Organise

SWM and the local Workers Party branches worked together to organise a lively public meeting which got the campaign off to a fine start.

In Belfast, SWM members in Queen's proposed to a student assembly that the Students March for Peace had to focus on state violence.

After an debate argument they won the argument. They



also gave out leaflets at the march to explain their position. SWM held a lively public meeting afterwards on The Fight against

sectarianism.

In Dublin and elsewhere, SWM members have been busy visiting the picket lines of the bank workers. We

brought out a special *Socialist Worker Bank Worker* bulletin to carry the argument for defending the IBOA and escalating the dispute.

Why we joined

IN order to take advantage of the new openings for the left, SWM has embarked on a major recruitment campaign.

In the next period it is vital that a sizeable revolutionary socialist organisation is built in Ireland.

Without political organisation the mood of anger that has been shown in recent struggles can easily disappear or even turn to cynicism.

Some of those who joined recently, spoke to *Socialist Worker*:

SIOBHAN GALVIN is a SIPTU activist in the hos-

pitals. She said that "being an activist in the trade unions, I identified more with other socialists by seeing the problems in this society".

The SWM seemed to be the only party that was fighting back. So I wanted to be right up there with them"

EOIN MCCAREY told us that "I got fed up boring my friends and crying into my beer about the Irish political situation and world politics in general. I had to do something feeling

totally isolated as an individual.

Being anti-capitalist and anti-nationalist, the SWM with its emphasis on international workers struggle seemed not only attractive but positively sexy!"

AUDREY is an active member of the CPSU. She told *Socialist Worker* that "I joined the SWM because I was totally disillusioned with the government and the conduct of the trade union movement.

As I see it the SWM is the only organ-

isation trying to really change the system".

The SWM is not an organisation for time servers or fanatics.

It is an organisation made up of people who are committed to arguing with their fellow workers and students that Irish society can be changed.

Over the next period, the SWM wants to grow as quickly as possible. If you want to join or get more information on our politics fill in the coupon on this page.

Socialist Worker Branch Meetings

Waterford meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in: ATGWU Hall, Keyzer St

Cork meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in: Anchor Inn, Georges Quay

Derry meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in: Badgers Pub, Orchard St

Belfast meets every Monday at 8.00pm in: Castle Mews, Bank St

Bray meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in: Hibernian Inn

Dublin meets every Wednesday at 8.00pm in: Bachelor Inn, Bachelors Walk, by O'Connell Bridge

To contact SWM in DUNDALK, GALWAY, NAVAN, KILKENNY write to SWM, PO Box 1648, James's Street, Dublin 8

Waterford SWM May Day Social

Friday 1st May, 8 pm till late Gerry's Lounge, Barrack Street, Waterford Music by Miss Brown To You Admission: £1, all welcome

Socialist Worker Public Meetings "The Fight for Women's Rights in Ireland"

- Dun Laoghaire: 28th April, Kingston Hotel, 8.00pm
- Derry: 14th April, Badgers pub, Orchard St, 8.00pm
- Cork: 14th April: See posters for details
- Waterford: 6th April, ATGWU Hall, Keyzer St, 8.00pm



Sex, Class and Socialism, by Lindsey German price £5.95 post free from SW Books, PO Box 1648, James St, Dublin 8

CONOR McGRANE

MEMBERS of the SWM in Dublin were shocked and saddened to hear of the death, in tragic circumstances, of Conor McGrane.

Conor joined the SWM last August. A school student in Blanchardstown, he was involved in raising socialist politics in his school, most recently on the issue of abortion.

His death at the age of seventeen is a tragic loss.

Our condolences to his family and friends.

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, capitalist production is geared to profit, not to human need. Among its inevitable features are poverty, war, race and sexism. Capitalism cannot be destroyed and the 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 true democratic society in which workers hold power directly through delegates elected from workplaces and are and are 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. workers' revolution is needed in these countries too. We are against NATO and the Warsaw Pact and all weapons of mass destruction. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO PARTITION

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

Catholic workers in the North are systematically discriminated against by the state, but Protestant workers derive no benefit from this. 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.....



Niggers With Attitude:



Should they be banned?

THE removal from sale of the Niggers With Attitude album, "Niggers for Life", has put censorship back in the news.

It all started when a parent phoned the Gay Byrne Show to complain about the lyrics on the LP. The outcry was mainly over NWA's use of obscene language and supposed incitement to violence.

While Rightwingers like Ray Burke have censored the LP, many on the Left have also supported the ban because of NWA's sexist lyrics.

Attempt

This is not the first attempt to censor NWA. The Los Angeles Police Department objected to their first LP "Straight Outta Compton" because one track, "Fuck Da Police", said that if the police try to shoot you, you should shoot back.

Police seized the current album on its release in Britain, egged on by busy-bodies like Mary Whitehouse.

The attack on NWA cannot be separated from the general attack on rap music in the US over the last seven years.

A group of fundamentalists, led by right-wing politicians, formed the "Parents' Music Resource Centre" to monitor and censor "obscene" lyrics.

They aimed their propaganda at alleged incitement to violence, but the first group they prosecuted were The Dead Kennedys—a left-wing punk band.

They attack rap, not because it promotes violence, but because many young blacks see it as a form of resistance to racism.

NWA come from Compton, a massive deprived ghetto in Los Angeles. The things they sing about—gang wars, drugs, murders—happen there. NWA's music doesn't cause these things to happen, it simply reflects the society they come from.

Then what about the sexism? There is no doubt that the LP is full of sexist rubbish. But does censoring NWA on this basis make things better for women?

The Irish state has just put a fourteen-year-old girl through hell because she wanted an abortion. For years they have banned books and films because of alleged obscenity.

The only people to

have gained from this are right-wingers like SPUC, who want to stamp their morality on us all.

Rap, like all music, reflects the society it comes from. That is why much of it is macho, sexist bullshit.

Would censoring NWA rid us of this society? Of course not.

Produced

When rap musician ICE-T, who produced very sexist lyrics in the past, was argued forcefully with by black women, he made amends.

Public Enemy, the most popular rap group in the world, were outrageously sexist on their early records, producing tracks like "Sophisticated Bitch". Again, because of arguments, they now sing about their "revolutionary sister".

Their lyrics are still not perfect by any means, but they changed their minds through argument, not censorship.

Socialists have no truck with NWA's sexism, but censorship only strengthens those in Irish society who want to enforce their rule on us all.

■BRIAN HANLEY

FILM:

Fear and Morality

CAPE Fear is Martin Scorsese's latest offering. It is a remake of a 1962 film of the same name.

The basic theme of both is the threat posed to a safe middle class lawyer's family by a disgruntled and monstrous ex-con. The ex-con, played by Robert De Niro, blames the lawyer (Nick Nolte) for his predicament.

For Scorsese the film continues his usual obsession with redemption and guilt.

The tension in Cape Fear comes from the contrast between the controlled—and repressed—environment of the family and the violently uncontrolled "poor white trash" character played by De Niro.

His character is at once exciting and frightening. Nick Nolte's character is both comfortable and dull.

Scorsese's is a more

complex film than the original, which had a simple clash between an innocent family and a Robert Mitchum character who was simply evil incarnate.

In this one the family has a grimy underside of infidelity, hypocrisy and submerged violence. De Niro also plays a much more sympathetic anti-hero.

Monster

There is a wonderful section where De Niro passes himself off to the daughter as her drama teacher because of, and not despite, the fact that he is a monster, totally outside of her "normal" experience.

De Niro's character is everything disgusting, but also everything alive and self-affirming.

This seems to be Scorsese's message—that you can rise above

the narrowly repressive horizons of capitalist society, but only by unleashing terrible elemental forces.

The same dilemma is to be found in his Last Temptation of Christ.

You can either live a "sinful" but liberated and gratifying life or knuckle under and accept your "cross".

Scorsese's films speak for a liberal lapsed-Catholic middle class. This class is frightened by an uncertain world but can't quite bring itself to accept the conformist straightjacket.

This makes Cape Fear very different from the original, and it undoubtedly reflects a changed social world.

The moral certainties of the original reflect the desire of McCarthyite America to defend itself against all outsiders. Today those certainties are gone.

The US is no longer a boom society that

can lull people to sleep with freezers and television sets. Attitudes to the family and sexual politics have undergone a sea change.

Culture

We live in a culture where the family that people most readily identify with are the Simpsons. Even the royals seem to be subject to the same problems we all face.

Ultimately Scorsese sides with the status quo—witness the close-up on the wedding ring during the one love scene.

In the process, though, he explores some of the contradictions of bourgeois morality.

He also makes a pretty good horror/thriller movie. Cape Fear is unsettling, terrifying and well worth seeing. ■JOSH CLARKE

BOOK:

Rescuing Gramsci

"Antonio Gramsci: Life of a Revolutionary" by Giuseppe Fiori. Published by Verso £9.50 plus post



Italian workers occupy factories

THE ideas of the Italian marxist Antonio Gramsci have always been distorted.

Immediately after his death the leaders of the Communist Party censored his writings to portray him as a loyal Stalinist. In recent years academics have tried to use his writings to argue for a strategy of peaceful reform.

Fiori rescues Gramsci from these distortions. He traces Gramsci from his birth in Sardinia in 1891 to the last ten years of his life, which he spent in a fascist prison in the 1930s.

Power

Fiori shows that the key thing for Gramsci was the power of the working class. In 1919 Gramsci wrote that "capitalist concentration produces a corresponding concentration of working human masses. This fact underlies all the revolutionary theories of marxism".

Gramsci was heavily involved in the factory occupations in Italy in the 1920s. These began after union-management negotiations on the engineering national wage broke down. Six hundred

thousand workers took over their factories. A Red Guard was formed and workers undertook military training.

Gramsci and his associates on the paper Ordere Nuovo supported the military defence of the occupation and called for the setting up of workers' councils to link up the occupations.

From the occupations Gramsci drew a number of lessons. He saw that class consciousness grew from the practical experience of struggle. He emphasised the role of a revolutionary paper in generalising ideas and coordinating action.

He saw that building the revolutionary party does not mean indoctrinating the workers with abstract propaganda. Nor does it mean waiting until workers act, stirred on by economic crisis. It is a question of relating to every partial struggle and trying to generalise from it.

The present day distortions

of Gramsci present the view that the ruling class holds power due to its ideological control.

This is exercised through a network of voluntary institutions, known as "civil society"—the political parties, trade unions, churches and the media.

Struggle

It follows that the key struggle is for ideological dominance, what Gramsci calls "hegemony".

This is supposed to be won after a long drawn out process of winning over intellectuals who control ideology, in the meantime we must sacrifice any short term economic interest.

Academics justify this position by using Gramsci's analogy of two types of war—the war of manoeuvre, which is a rapid movement of two armies as they try to out-

flank each other; and the war of position, which is a long drawn out struggle in which neither side moves forward. The argument is that we are clearly in the second phase.

The first thing to be noted is that Gramsci is talking about a war, not class collaboration and rotten compromises. It is also obvious that most of the time revolutionaries are involved in ideological struggle, using partial fights to win leadership away from the reformists.

Nonetheless, there are periodic moments of violent confrontation when one side attempts to break through by frontal assault. As Gramsci pointed out, "armed insurrection remains the decisive moment of history".

He was trying to smash the idea that a few hundred revolutionaries could take state power without the majority of the working class with them. Due to the his prison conditions Gramsci's later writings are open to distortion.

Gramsci was forced to use abstract language in his work. More importantly he was prevented from developing a concrete economic analysis to which to relate his theories. This leaves some ambiguities and an air of idealism.

Fiori's book shows in great detail Gramsci's life as a fighting revolutionary, operating under some of the worst conditions. Though the book is occasionally short on analysis, it firmly places Gramsci in the revolutionary tradition to which he belongs.

■SIMON BASKETTER

Health Board Workers bullied

EASTERN Health Board workers have been getting something extra in their pay packets recently.

Not more money, but a copy of a "Code of Conduct" drawn up by EHB management.

Union officials contacted by worried EHB workers have been uninterested. But the document has dangerous implications for workers.

One clause deals with membership of organisations, "whether economic, social, cultural or political", which could come into conflict with the EHB.

This obviously includes trade unions or political groups. Workers are to "avoid" membership of such groups.

Another clause prohibits disclosing information, even to "colleagues in professional/staff associations".

This means that workers are not allowed to inform their union, or the media, about lack of staff or reduced hospital services.

Despite union leaders' lack of concern, EHB workers fear that this scurrilous document could be used against them in disputes or in the Labour Court.

Socialist Worker spoke to some hospital workers who want to oppose the Code immediately.

All EHB workers should raise the issue in their unions, calling for the Code to be scrapped.

BANKS:

Time to step up the fight

BANK workers have been in dispute since January.

They demanded a six-and-a-half per cent pay rise.

This became the opening shot in a bitter struggle between the big four banks and the 13,000 workers they employ.

The banks are out to destroy the strength of the union, the IBOA, and are demanding longer opening hours.

AIB workers struck after being suspended. In the other banks workers have had their pay reduced for refusing to process charges.

Socialist Worker spoke to two junior bank officials who work for the AIB.

SW: For some time now, people on the left as well as on the right, have argued that trade union militancy and strikes, particularly among white collar workers, is a thing of the past.

Were you surprised when the IBOA got the go-ahead from the members for strike action?

Louise: I was delighted. In my section eight people joined the union so they could vote for strike action.

They wanted to fight. When the bank enforced the first suspensions on March 3rd, they were raring to go.

Young ones who had

been timid and used to minding their p's and q's with managers, were now being really stropky.

And they were just aching for the union to call them out.

Jane: I'm a rep in my section.

I'm probably more in touch than most of the members with what's happening in other branches and departments.

The main departments: Donnybrook House, the Ballsbridge Centre and the International Centre near the Custom House, are much more militant than a lot of the branches realise.

There is real support there, very solid, and much of it among people that many of us thought of as "yuppies".

In my section, we've always made a point of recruitment.

Everyone new to the job was encouraged to join the union and even the part-timers—some of whom take home as little as £50 for a 25-hour week—were wanting to have a go.

Ballot

SW: The Labour Court's recommendation has been a "disappointment" to say the least.

Do you see the members rejecting this offer in the forthcoming ballot?

Louise: Let's get something straight.

What this offer amounts to is 3 per cent that we're getting anyway under the PESP, plus 3 per cent that the banks have only agreed to because we fought.

One payment of £750—before tax—is supposed to compensate for what would be eleven hours



extra per week. One extra day's leave means nothing.

We went into this dispute for a pay claim only.

The banks have used the opportunity to bring in the question of longer opening hours.

They want to break union organisation so they'll have a free hand with hours, pay, conditions, the lot.

Jane: I agree. And that's why it's not only frustrating—it's dangerous, the way the union is running this dispute.

I can see demoralisation creeping in.

We were told by our union officials at the start of the dispute: "We know you want to come out, just be patient, we have them

on the run."

But while we're still in the job, management hold the upper hand. They choose when and who to suspend, and they intimidate in all sorts of subtle and not-so-subtle ways, while we remain at work.

It also leaves the most militant people, whom the union refuses to call out, wide open to victimisation.

Initiative

The union should reclaim the initiative and go on the offensive, seriously.

One out, all out is a principle that was never in greater need of holding high.

Louise: That's right. We

could cripple the operation tomorrow.

The "nerve-centres" like Ballsbridge and Donnybrook should be called out and picketed to prevent scabbing.

Token pickets on branches here and there, some of which are rumoured for closure anywhere, is not going to win.

And who ever heard of a union sitting still while the company withholds 20 per cent of our pay?

That's what happening in the other banks.

We have to get as serious as the banks are in fighting this dispute. There's 13,000 of us.

With fighting tactics and a real lead we could walk all over the fat cats at AIB and the rest.

UNION FIGHT IN CAFE

THE day workers in Bewleys of George's Street, Dublin, have given their manager a nasty surprise by joining SIPTU.

The manager, Michael Neary, routinely abused, insulted and dismissed his staff at the famous cafe.

In the past Neary has:

- Refused to pay staff overtime for working on bank holidays;
- Expected staff to stay behind and clean up on their own time;
- Publicly abused and shouted at staff;
- Threatened to dismiss people on the slightest pretext.

Both full-time and part-time workers have joined the union, the majority are women.

Bewleys workers have shown that workers in hostile, non-union work places will unite and stand up for themselves.

Dock jobs on the line

DUBLIN Cargo Handling has given 200 dockers an ultimatum.

Either they accept fifty to seventy redundancies, or Dublin Port and Docks Board will liquidate DCH.

The bosses' threat is part of an overall plan which includes—

- "rationalising" away over a quarter of the jobs;
- reducing the numbers remaining through "natural human wastage";
- confining DCH work to the South Quays and the container terminal;
- privatised stevedoring for the rest of the port.

Shifts

Management also want to vary the number of shifts at will, including temporary and night shifts.

They want complete acceptance of new technology—which invariably means job losses.

Dockers on probation will have no guarantee of getting their old jobs back.

Dockers are resisting this onslaught. They have ignored the bosses' acceptance deadline of 6th April.

Their unions, SIPTU and MPGWU, have deferred the ballot while seeking further negotiations.

New fight in Dublin Bus

MEMBERS of the National Bus and Rail Workers' Union (NBRU) have voted massively in favour of strike action.

They are trying to stop Dublin Bus from recruiting low-paid minibus drivers.

Almost a thousand workers voted by eight to one to stop plans to replace "unprofitable" bus routes with a minibus service.

This would be worked by a new grade of drivers. Management have already trained 25 drivers. Their average take home pay would be less than £130 per week.

They would receive no overtime bonus—but would still be obliged to work overtime.

Sunday work would be paid as normal time, as would bank holidays.

In a glossy supplement

to the Irish Times Bob Montgomery, manager of Dublin Bus, unveiled plans to "utilise" part-time workers.

Montgomery claims he wishes to provide a better, cheaper, more efficient transport system.

But his plans mean converging routes, using less buses and attacking wages and conditions.

The NBRU vote gives the union a strong mandate to stop Montgomery.

As head of South Yorkshire Transport he used the same plans to break up long standing wages and conditions.

The union needs to mobilise its members instead of looking to third party arbitration.

The recent Labour Court finding against the IBOA shows the failure of arbitration.

SWM members polled over 2,800 votes in student elections in UCD and TCD.

The huge vote for revolutionary socialists reflects the new mood in the colleges.

In TCD, SWM member Orla Costello was elected President of the Students' Union.

Orla polled 1,406 votes to beat John White, a moderate who denounced "militant fundamentalism".

Orla stood on a socialist platform. She argued for occupations to win better conditions in the college.

She openly supported giving out abortion information.

Orla promised to



work towards making TCD a "centre of solidarity" with workers in struggle and to campaign against anti-traveller racism.

In UCD, SWM member Paul Murphy came second in the election for Student's Union President winning 1,400 votes.

Like Orla, Paul stood with the slogan "For a

Fighting Student Union". He called for greater student democracy in a college which has no student assembly.

Both elections mark a complete shift from last year, when right-wing presidents were returned in both colleges.

Orla said this reflected a change in mood

Socialists gain in student polls

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism 35p

The fight for women's rights
Pages 6&7

The rise of nazis in Europe
Page 4

Bank workers dispute
Page 11

400,000 unemployed in Ireland

Stop the jobs massacre!

MORE than 400,000 are out of work in Ireland. But still the jobs massacre continues.

In the North, Shorts want to "phase out" another 300 jobs. Federal Express are also sacking 300.

In Derry, half the workforce of Ben Sherman have been sacked. Telecom and the BBC also want to slash hundreds of jobs.

In the South, 1,000 jobs will be lost at United Meat Packers and Dublin Docks. Over a hundred jobs will go at Lullymore Peat Briquette Plant.

Skilled workers at Camac Cask owned by Guinness are being made redundant but have decided to fight back.

The world is in its longest recession since the 1930s. All the talk of a short end to this recession has turned out to be a complete illusion.

The situation can only get worse. In the South, Finance Minister Bertie Ahern has admitted that the numbers out of work could rise to 300,000.

Despite offering millions in grants and tax breaks to the bosses, they cannot create the jobs. Between 1981 and 1990, they only created 7,000 net jobs in the South—despite handing out half a million pounds for every job created.

The only solution that the right wing politicians of the North and South offer is more emigration.

As soon as the recession lifts



Dole queues now stretch to over 400,000

they hope that the old safety valves will allow them to export the unemployed. The Southern training agency, FAS, has opened offices in Paris to prepare for this.

The Labour Party and the Democratic Left in the South are putting their hopes in the setting up of an all-party Jobs Forum.

But at best it could only be a talking shop. At worst it helps to foster the illusion that we are all part of the problem.

The real alternative lies in fighting the system that breeds unemployment. Every redundancy should be resisted. The bosses should be told that it is their slump

and that they should bear the cost of it.

Companies which want to slash jobs should be taken over. Many of them have already benefited from millions in hand-outs.

The working week should also be cut to create jobs. Thousands of workers are being forced to work

long hours of overtime because their wages are so small. A 35 hour working week would create thousands of jobs.

But above all we need to fight for a socialist Ireland where there is no chance that the greed of the few can make life a misery for thousands.