

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

1 in 3 below the poverty line ....

## We Can't Afford The Rich

OVER the past few months various organisations have pointed to the existence of widespread poverty in Ireland. The ESRI report, the Combat Poverty Committee, the Catholic bishops and the Vincent de Paul have all pointed the finger.

But the statement that came nearest the truth was a letter from sixth year students at the Dungarvan Secondary School. The letter was published in the press under the title 'Scandal of Poverty'.

They wrote: "Our present two-tiered Irish society of haves and have nots is not an accident but the result of unjust economic and social policies which have failed to bring about a just and equal society."

One third of people in the South are living below the poverty line. The reason is that every government has been subservient to capitalism. It has had to guarantee laws, economic and social, that protect the god of profit.

At the moment, the Fianna Fail politicians are falling over themselves praising the 'success story' of the Irish economy. There are no extra jobs or a slow down in emigration. They mean only that PROFITS have risen. 'Confidence has returned to investors,' they tell us—but only because the rest of us are pushed nearer and beyond the poverty line.

Children are going to bed hungry in Ireland because their needs must take second place.

This government—and every other right wing coalition—will continue to

support policies to satisfy the bankers and the rich. These policies mean:

★240,000 on the dole in the South. At 19% of the work force that is the highest in Europe.

★1 in 3 Irish workers are on low wages.

★Emigration is running at 40,000 a year. One quarter of a million people have left since the beginning of the 1930s.

But the Irish rich are having a ball.

Six miles from the centre of Dublin City, on 560 acres of lush countryside, sits Luttrellstown Castle, Lucan. The Guinness dynasty sold it for £3 million to the Primvest Group. A weekend in this obscenity for the super-rich costs £12,750. A week costs £26,000.

Last year Michael Smurfit—the great Irish entrepreneur—spent over £20,000 on his wine bill. That would keep four single unemployed people on dole for a year.

They will not easily hand over their control of economies and their splendid life styles. *It will have to be taken from them.*

What government or major political party ever embarked on such a course of action? Fianna Fail? Fine Gael? The PDs? No chance! They are the political stooges of the rich and powerful.

Freedom from poverty will only be achieved through socialism.

One in two of the Dungarvan students will be forced to emigrate. One in four will never find a job in Ireland.

It is time to organise to end this scandal.





# DEFEND MITCHELL

THE campaign to re-instate the sacked General Secretary of the shop workers' union, IDATU, is growing. Three branches of the union have discussed motions defending Mitchell. Other branches are being canvassed to raise the issue. A public meeting in Dublin was addressed by the former Dunnes Stores striker, Karen Gearon.

John Mitchell was sacked for attacking the Northern trade unions to campaign against discrimination and repression. He had also vigorously criticised the ICTU National Plan in the South.

The IDATU executive has pulled out of organising in the North. The Derry branch of the union was disbanded and its members transferred to the Dublin branch.

Mitchell took over a union that was in decay six years ago. Membership had been declining. The finances were in disorder. The union had not seen a stand up fight with the bosses in years.

Since his sacking the union executive, led by Joe Donnelly, its president, have been harping back to the old days. Officials are now encouraging members to accept low pay increases and are tying the union to the terms of the National Plan. They have also attempted to discipline other militant officials.

The ICTU executive have also played a behind the scene role to oust Mitchell. Since his sacking, IDATU has been invited back onto a committee

involving the ICTU. Tragically, many other left wing officials throughout the unions have not lifted a finger in Mitchell's support. They have wrung their hands, pleading that while they might agree with his points, they did not like the 'style'. The Socialist Workers' Movement has differences with John Mitchell. We believe that his attempt to change the union from the top without building a rank and file base was futile. But this is

not the issue involved in his witchhunt.

Every socialist should stand full square with John Mitchell on the issue. There should be no fudging on his demand for re-instatement. The John Mitchell Support Group is organising to overturn his sacking at the IDATU conference in Killarney this Easter.

Send messages of support, order leaflets on the case from: 380 Nutgrove Avenue, Dublin 14.



Hey! Doctor Death. We Have the solution. SHOOT THE BASTARDS'

## Y.T.S.

Anyone who thinks that Fianna Fail are doing young people in the South a favour by setting up Youth Training schemes should take a look at the health and safety figures for the British YTS.

Nine young people were killed last year working on the Youth training scheme in Britain. More than 500 were seriously injured.

At least one in every thousand 16 and 17 year olds on the scheme can expect what the government calls a major injury. That could mean being blinded or breaking an arm or a leg.

British government figures now show that it is twice as dangerous to be a YTS trainee than to work in traditionally dangerous industries like chemicals or shipbuilding.



## TIME TO GO

1989 IS the 20th anniversary of the sending in of British troops into the North.

In an attempt to raise support for their withdrawal, a "Time To Go" campaign has been launched in Britain. The campaign aims to gather wider support than has greeted previous campaigns on the issue of

Ireland in Britain.

It has already had an impressive start. At its first National Conference in November there were 450 delegates, a third of them from trade union branches, including activists from NHS unions, Fords and civil service unions.

The campaign is being sponsored by the National Union of Students. At the NUS Conference 400 students turned up to hear Eamonn McCann of the SWM and Clare Short, the Labour MP, argue for support for the campaign. It is hoped to build local "Time To Go" groups, hold series of meetings and debates, and link the issues of what the Tory government in Britain is doing to civil liberties and the NHS to what successive British governments have done in Ireland.

It is to be hoped that the task of taking the issue of Britain's role in Ireland into British mainstream politics will now begin in earnest.

BRIAN HANLEY

## Radio F F

"A private radio station is a licence to print money". So said Lord Thompson, the British press magnate. The Fianna Fail government have borne this in mind when they handed out licences for the new private national radio station.

The new radio station will be run by Century Communications. This is a company headed by Oliver Barry, manager of those great pub republican, the Wolfe Tones.

Barry is also an active Fianna Fail member on first name terms with Communications Minister, Ray Burke. He has been involved in the organising committee for the Fianna Fail party Ard Fheis. As a reward for previous services to the party he was appointed to the RTE authority.

The big money for the new station is coming from Wexford businessman, Jim Stafford. He is one of the new breed of Irish speculators who made money on oil shares some years ago.

Closely associated with Tony O'Reilly's Atlantic Resources he made a fortune when its shares were hyped up in O'Reilly's Irish Independent.

The first broadcast of the new radio station will start with its anthem: Rise up and follow Charlie.

# V.H.I. SCANDAL

A NEW crisis has hit the Irish health service. The Voluntary Health Insurance, which covers one million people, has come close to bankruptcy. In the last two years it has made a loss of £24 million.

The immediate effect of the crisis is a cut back on the drug refund scheme. This enabled subscribers to recoup some of the astronomical costs of drugs.

People with long term illnesses will be among the hardest hit. Asthmatics who depend on inhalers and other drugs will be deprived of cover. Transplant patients who need regular drugs

are in a similar situation.

A number of factors underlie the VHI crisis.

The establishment of the luxury private hospitals in the Mater and Blackrock has brought a huge drain on funds. Subscribers who wanted a lower level of cover were subsidising the super rich who used these private hospitals.

These private hospitals were given the go ahead by Labour Party Euro Candidate Barry Desmond.

Huge fees have also been paid out to consultants. Last year 90 consultant pathologists earned £4.6 million between them. A number of consultants have been earning £150,000 a year.

But the most fundamental problem is the crisis of the health service generally. Last year membership of VHI rose by 4% as people terrified of not getting treated in public hospitals took out cover. The pay-out by the VHI rose by £141 million to cover the increased use of private beds.

The Health Boards are directly colluding in this practice of pushing ordinary people to private medicine. Hospitals whose funds have been cut by Fianna Fail are making a greater number of beds private to get money.

The VHI system has been called a unique "Irish blend of

public and private medicine". To believe Fianna Fail politicians, you would think the rest of the world is falling over the place with envy.

In reality, the VHI system stinks of snobbery and class privilege. There are different grades of treatment depending on the money you pay. The poorer VHI subscriber is classified as 'A' and gets looked after in a "semi-private" ward. The rich 'D' and 'E' and get private hospital treatment.

The state then subsidises this desire for private treatment. £50 million a year is foregone in tax revenue to subsidise the VHI membership fee. The richer VHI

## SPUC

IN A referendum held last month, NIHE students voted—by 68% to 23%—in favour of the Students' Union providing information on abortion as part of its counselling service for women. SPUC invaded NIHE in the days before the referendum. They removed

all the information which had been put out, supporting women's right to choose. They went on to insult students by bringing a video recorder into the canteen, uninvited, and screening their emotionalist anti-abortion videos at lunch time. In the end, they were thrown out by the college authorities.

The college notice boards were concealed behind acres of slogans, such as "This teddy bear's owner was aborted". This

is all part of what one commentator described as "SPUC's self-appointed role in policing the Supreme Court decision". Students were harangued as they cast their votes, with SPUC bringing its supporters over from UCD to help browbeat young people into submission.

They did not succeed. SPUC's attempts to censor the Students' Union are becoming more and more futile, but it is vital not to underestimate the threat that that poses. SPUC are determined to take the offensive when they can. Middle class women will never

have difficulty in obtaining information on abortion, but such a facility for working class women would raise questions about the ideology of the family, the role of the mother, and other myths of capitalist society. The SWM will continue to target SPUC as the organiser of attacks on women's rights, as we did in the Defend the Clinics campaign. Only by confronting SPUC and attacking its filthy oppressive propaganda and tactics can the left hope to defend women's rights and fight for a socialist society.



Dr Death O Hanlon

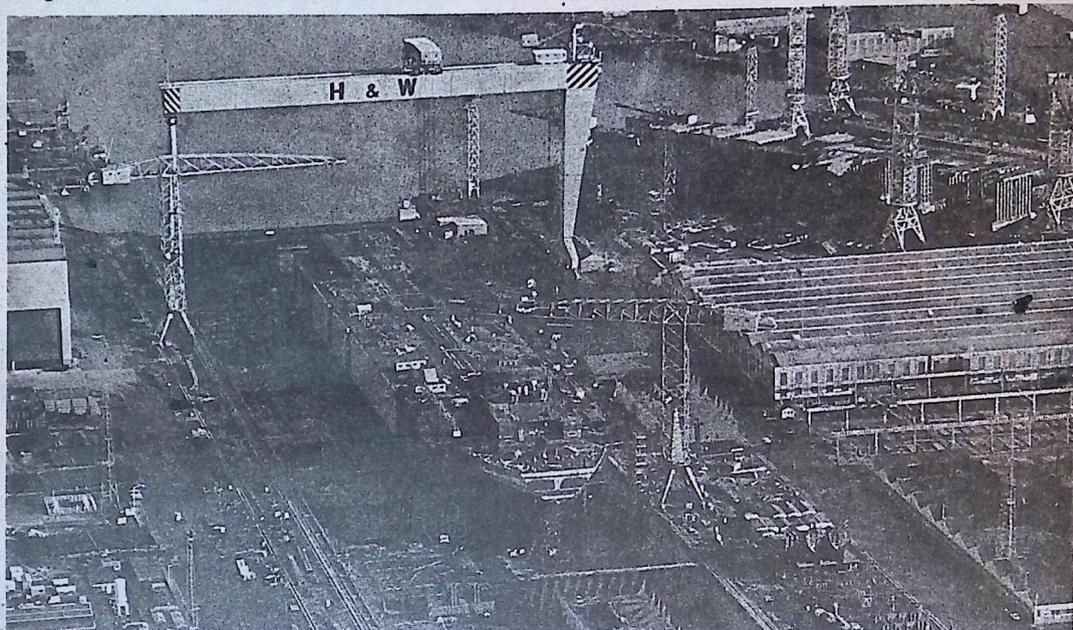
subscriber gets more tax benefit. Most disgusting of all, VHI subscribers are led to believe that they will get better treatment than the one million people who are on a medical card.

The class privileged system must be replaced by one where only medical need—not money—determines who is treated. That will only occur in a socialist Ireland where:

- The VHI is replaced by a fully comprehensive national health service
- where doctors and consultants are paid a wage and obliged to work for that service
- where branded drugs are dispensed by health centres where necessary. Last year Southern Ireland came top of a list of BEC countries for the most expensive drugs when £83 million was spent on them as well as £38 million to the pharmacists and doctors.

# Eamonn McCann

## CHASING RAINBOWS



"This is not an industrial issue, it's a community issue"

So said Joe Bowers of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions during the demonstration in Belfast on January 15th against privatisation of Shorts aircraft works and Harland and Wolff shipyard.

In keeping with this conception of the issue as "community" rather than an "industrial" (i.e. class) the Confed have invited onto its platform Paisley's sidekick Peter Robinson, official Unionists Ken Maginnis, Roy Beggs, and Cecil Walker and Orange Order leader Rev Martin Smyth. Apologies were read out from Alliance Party leader John Alderdice and Ian Paisley.

The Confed campaign has sought the support of the Northern Branch of the Confederation of British Industry, the Catholic and Protestant bishops of Down and Connor and other local worthies from all points of the political spectrum. On television, Bowers waxed lyrical about the tremendous show of "community" concern.

### COMMUNIST

What's most interesting about this is that Joe Bowers is a leading member of the Communist Party, a party dedicated in theory to putting separate and specific interests of the working class in the forefront of the struggle and repudiating the notion of all classes having a common interest.

Something similar has been happening in the South where Workers Party leader Phronias de Rossa stepped up his campaign for a "rainbow coalition" against poverty. On RTE radio he spelled out that this coalition would include the WP, the Labour party and the unions as well as a whole range of religious groups such as the Conference of Major Religious Superiors. His proposal has been given a warm welcome by Labour party leftists.

The justification for this "we're all in it together" approach is that it can generate more widespread support than putting the emphasis on mobilising the working class specifically. Don't Paisley, Martin Smyth etc have lots of

political clout in the North, as does the Catholic Church in the South, and doesn't it make much sense to use this clout in these particular campaigns?

This sounds plausible enough if you say it quickly, but in fact it's pure baloney.

The fight against the privatisation of Shorts, Harland (and Northern Ireland Electricity Service) is NOT strengthened by the presence on its platforms of establishment figures some of them steeped in far Right sectarian politics. On the contrary, in order to get and keep these element on side it is necessary for the campaign to rule out the only sort of action that might force Thatcher to back off.

On a whole range of issues in the UK -- the NHS, cuts and the poll tax being the most recent examples -- Thatcher's policies have been deeply unpopular. Even bishops, businessmen and bourgeois newspapers have opposed her. But this impressive coalition cut no ice at all.

What *did* temporarily stop Thatcher in her tracks was *strike action* by hospital workers, beginning unofficially with 38 nurses coming out in Manchester -- precisely the action union leaders had earlier rejected lest they alienate establishment support.

The power of workers in the North to defeat a British Government policy was demonstrated in 1974 when electricity workers pulled the plug on the "power sharing" executive. In that instance, working class muscle was used to further rotten reactionary ends. But there is no reason the same muscle couldn't be used to save workers' jobs.

Of course the bishops, the Unionists, Alliance etc would scamper off the platforms if it was announced that redundancies in any of the threatened industries would be met by an all out strike in all of them. But such an announcement, and rank and file organisation in place to deliver the action, would put a halt to Thatcher's gallop far more effectively than the pleadings of an all-class, all-party campaign.

Or to take an instance from the South. The hospital charges which have caused immense hardship to working class people could have been stopped if the unions instructed their members not to collect them and promised strike action if anyone was

sacked or suspended for refusing. Again, such a strategy would have alienated religious groups, the media, middle class "progressives" and so forth. *But it might well have worked.*

A similar tactic in relation to the water charges now being imposed by local authorities in the South would have far more chance of succeeding than all the "broad-based" campaigning and council manouvering of WP and Labour Party stalwarts.

More generally, the Haughey government would have had a much tougher time imposing the charges, cuts redundancies and downward pressure on wages which have characterised its economic strategy if there had been frontal resistance from the trade union movement. Instead, through the three year national agreement there has been direct union collaboration. The Workers party and the labour party have gone along with this: many of the union officials who negotiated the agreement are their members.

Thus the major groups on the Left against government policy chase after rainbow coalitions while turning their backs on the only force with a real potential to inflict defeat on the policy: the force of working class action.

The reason this happens has to do with the politics of the parties and individuals concerned. Essentially, they are reformist. They make, usually in private, talk about revolutionary politics becoming

realistic in the far distant future. But as for now, they say, in practice, revolutionary socialism is no on.

So as trade union officials they see their role not as leading the working class against the boss class and the bosses capitalist system, but as negotiating *between* the working class and the bosses. And if by delicate manouver and careful "moderation", they can get clerics and capitalist politicians to support them on a particular, single issue, all talk of *any* class struggle is ditched. Thus, Joe Bowers explicit statement that the fight to save thousands of working class jobs is not a class but a "community" issue.

In the political arena this translates into electoralism, a strategy aimed at building up popular support within the system and not at challenging the system itself.

The result is emotional campaigns which essentially ask the middle class and even sections of the capitalist class itself to have pity on the poor workers, rather than providing leadership and organisation in a campaign to mobilise the working class to have no pity on the system that exploits and oppresses them.

Socialists and rank and file trade unionists who see the need for a fighting strategy NOW against the priorities of capitalism North and South should join with the SWM in building the revolutionary socialist alternative that is so desperately needed.

## Unemployed Conscripted

The latest changes in Social Security legislation proposed by the Tories will bring the American "Workfare" idea ever closer for unemployed people in the Six Counties. The new rules will require people claiming unem-

ployment benefit to prove that they are "actively seeking work".

This is already the case in the South. The unemployed now have to produce letters showing that they applied for jobs.

The new regulations are hypocritical. At the end of last year, there were 108,981 men and women unemployed in Northern Ireland. The number of job vacancies totalled only 4,159. Up to half of these were on government schemes such as YTS or ACE.

The Tories own figures show that there are at least 26 unemployed people for every vacant position. Many of those without jobs never receive any response to their applications, so that it can be difficult to prove that they sought work.

The right of an unemployed person to turn down work that doesn't pay enough or does not match their qualifications is being abolished. The Bill allows a 13 week "grace period" in which to find work that suits a person's qualifications. After that there is no reason why a mechanic should not be forced to take a job sweeping streets.

The new rules can be stopped. But this will depend on NIPSA, the Northern Ireland civil servants' union. They should refuse to implement the legislation and guarantee to defend any of their members who are victimised because of it.

## Trinity Cuts

Trinity college has decided to implement cut-backs of over £600,000. Students will be charged an extra £60 in fees next year. There will also be reduced spending on courses.

Trinity college, however, has got plenty of money for spending in other areas. A special film is being made for the 400th anniversary. £50,000 is being spent on new railings in Pearse St.

But the real problem is the Fianna Fail government. Their attacks on education, social welfare and health is beginning to strike home.

On budget day last January, the TCD students union organised a boycott of lectures. It was a good start to a fight that needs to be continued.

## INTERNATIONAL

## Nationalist Revolt in Russia

FROM the demonstrations and strikes in Armenia and Azerbaijan to the moves for autonomy in the Baltic states, growing nationalist unrest in the component republics and regions of the USSR has constituted the biggest problem yet for Gorbachev's reform programme.

This explosion of nationalist anger can only be explained by looking back over the history of repression of the non-Russian nationalities in the USSR since Stalin's time.

There are fifteen republics that make up the USSR and dozens more nationalities. One of the key slogans of the October 1917 Revolution was the right of self-determination for all the oppressed nations in the Tsarist empire. This included the right to secede—an option Finland finally chose.

Even under the difficult circumstances of the 1920s the Bolsheviks made serious efforts to ensure an end to the oppression of the nationalities by "Great Russian" chauvinism. Importantly, the national republics were then a means of combatting such chauvinism not, as happened later, of instituting it. They had a programme of "Korenizatsia" (taking root) which encouraged self-rule and promoted national cultures and local languages. This led to support for the revolutionary regime even from those who had been previously opposed to it.

All this was swept away when Stalin took power at the end of the twenties. The nationalities were once more subordinated to Russia. The teaching of Russian in all schools was made compulsory, local rulers were appointed by Moscow and entire nationalities were excluded from their homes and transferred to other parts of the country. This process of Russification of the non-Russian areas of the USSR was a conscious and deliberate policy, coinciding with the defeat of the revolution and the hammering down of the living standards of workers and peasants in order to launch the USSR on the road to capitalist competition with the rest of the world.

## DISCRIMINATION

But there was another dimension to the policy of chauvinism. Although the majority non-Russian population were discriminated against as compared with Russians, it in turn was allowed to discriminate against (for instance) Armenians in Azerbaijan, Poles in the Ukraine, and Azeris in Georgia. Thus in each republic there would be ethnic groups suffering from worse material conditions and discriminatory policies.

The disturbances last February in the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan were typical of the merging of economic and social protest into resentment at national oppression. While three quarters of the population there are Armenian, there are few Armenian language schools, papers or television stations. In addition, economic conditions are among the worst in the whole of Azerbaijan.

It was a combination of such grievances which enabled unofficial groups in the Karabakh and Armenia to lead mass

movements in February and September. The unrest at the time of last year's Party conference stimulated similar protests in the three Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. And more recently, arguments over the new constitution have produced an upsurge in Georgia.

These developments have caused special problems for Gorbachev because they have aggravated divisions within the ruling bureaucracy itself. On the one hand, sections of local bureaucracies have sought to advance their own situation by encouraging nationalist sentiment. (This was certainly true of the anti-Armenian agitation in Azerbaijan.) On the other hand, there have been examples in which local bureaucrats, presented with a movement independent of themselves, have attempted to get to the front of it so as to contain it. Thus in the Baltic states local CP leaders found that the only way to maintain their standing was to voice wider protests against national oppression.

Such manoeuvres by the local bureaucracies have complicated Gorbachev's task. While he cannot crush the national movements without giving encouragement to the conservative elements in the bureaucracy, neither can he give way to the agitation without risking a loss of the increased power he has gained. In his efforts to make the USSR's economy more competitive with Western states and multinationals, the last thing he wants is the fragmentation of giant, all-USSR enterprises into small, republic based firms.

## GORBACHEV

Therefore Gorbachev is compelled to try and placate nationalist unrest and to contain it, while playing off one nationalism against another. However this has not prevented nationalist ferment spreading from Armenia to the Baltic republics and now to Georgia. Furthermore, Gorbachev is by no means certain that he will be able to prevent an outbreak of nationalism among the 50 million Ukrainians, the largest of the oppressed nationalities.

Tsarist Russia was known as "a prison house of nationalities". Stalin rebuilt the prison. In the circumstances in which Gorbachev is now trying to reform the regime without freeing those inside, further explosions of discontent are inevitable.

Finally, what should be the attitude of socialists to the nationality question? Clearly, the only way to stop the explosions of nationalism creating growing hostility between the peoples who make up the USSR is by granting full national rights to all of them, including the right to self-determination. Of course, by its very nature, the Russian bureaucracy is incapable of granting such rights. Only the multinational Russian working class can do so. And that requires it to organise in its own interests in revolutionary opposition to all factions of the bureaucracy. Until it does, the danger remains that after 60 years of Stalinism, the bitterness will flow into nationalist channels, turning people not only against the Moscow bureaucracy, but against each other as well.

BRUCE MORTON



Demonstrators in Armenia protest against the Russian bureaucrats

## Left Rise in Brazil

PRESIDENT Sarney of Brazil recently warned the press that Brazil was in danger of a socialist revolution. That's probably an exaggeration. But the huge success of the Brazilian Workers' Party (the PT) in recent municipal elections is an indication that the forthcoming presidential elections scheduled for November 1989 will be no walkover for the crumbling right-wing populist parties.

The Jose Sarney regime has vacillated between half-hearted social reform and the more customary state repression. Foreign debt of 115 billion dollars along with a massive annual inflation rate means that faith in the Sarney administration is at an all-time low. In fact, his support in the populist PMDB, the Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement, is split in two over whether he should be restricted to four years in office.

The threat from the Left is so great that the presidential elections, which were due in 1988, were postponed for a year at the behest of the military which still has enormous power. The military overthrew the government of Jose Goulart in 1964 mainly because they feared that his successor would be the left-wing populist Leon Brizola. Since then they have adopted a policy of "controlled liberalisation" in an attempt to give a democratic veneer to the vicious repression meted out to all opposition.

The military set up trade unions loyal to the administration which were unopposed until 1967/68 when rank and file opposition emerged to the military's nominees. Militants placed emphasis on factory organisation, and set up factory committees. When a strike wave erupted in May that year, the slogans were "only strikes can defeat wage laws" and "organise from below through factory committees". Troops were sent into the factories and hundreds of workers were arrested, imprisoned and tortured. The huge defeat that followed for the working class sowed the seeds of the future move from economic to political

organisation.

In the engineering works of San Barnardo, where the traditional trade union bureaucracy was less well organised than elsewhere, a new type of unionism emerged. This was led by Luis de Silva (Lula) who went on to become leader of the newly founded PT, the Workers' Party. However, it was almost ten years before a new wave of struggle began. While many of the union were still under the thumb of the administration's bureaucrats, some small pockets of independent organisation had been built up by the steady work of the Metalworkers' Opposition (MC) in Sao Paulo.

In the period following the strikes of 1978/79, the PT was founded, and was able to consolidate its influence among workers. It was not until July 1983 that the first political strike showed the qualitative change in workers' struggle: economic demands were translated into political ones. Thus the PT was the main political force behind the formation of the independent CUT, which represented a new unionism in opposition to the regime.

In a country that has the eighth largest economy in the world, alongside incredible poverty, the emergence of an independent party of the working class is to be welcomed by socialists everywhere.

The failure of the orthodox parties to resolve the land question means that thousands of people end up in the shanty towns on the outskirts of the big cities, having been thrown off the land. This creates a destabilising effect—a whole layer of society which is not integrated. About a quarter of a million Brazilian children die before the age of one, while a recent Catholic report indicates that over seven million have been abandoned in the last six years.

The past year has seen an increase in economic and political struggle, with 42,000 oil workers striking at the country's largest plant, Petrobras. Schools, hospitals and other services closed for weeks before the municipal elections, in protest against the new "social pact" introduced by Sarney, which aims to keep wages

down. There was strong support for the strike from white and blue collar workers.

The PT was successful in the elections, most notably in Sao Paulo, which contains 55% of the country's industry, where PT's Luiza Erundina was elected Mayor. There is an obvious connection between the electoral success and economic struggle.

All of these events must be good news for socialists everywhere. However, there is also within the PT the beginnings of a "parliamentary" tendency around some of the union leaders. These may be prepared in the future to subordinate workers' struggles to

"the parliamentary road to socialism".

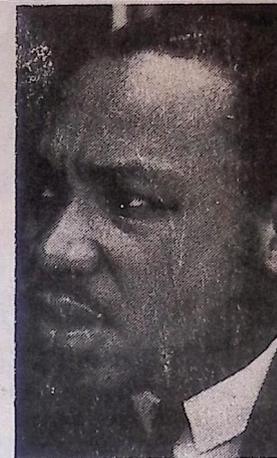
Opponents of reformism within the PT and outside of it will, at some stage in the future, have to set about building an independent revolutionary workers' party that can work alongside the many thousands of workers who created the PT and are confused about the way to power, without succumbing to those confusions. Such a task is essential if the gains of the past decade are not to evaporate at some point in the future when the ruling class decides enough is enough, as they did in Chile in 1973.



THE POVERTY of the ghettos

*THE Civil Rights Movement which twenty years ago set the North of Ireland alight drew much of its inspiration from the movement for civil rights for blacks in America. The Burntollet march, for example, was modelled on the Selma—Montgomery march of 1965. Martin Luther King was the figure who most personified the Black Civil Rights Movement. Here, Eve Morrison looks at the life of the Black leader and discovers that he wasn't quite the conservative clergyman that he's painted today.*

# THE END OF THE DREAM



Martin Luther King

MARTIN Luther King Jr., foremost leader of the black Civil Rights Movement in America, remains today, 21 years after his death, probably the most powerful symbol of "peaceful", non-violent resistance in black American history.

His more patriotic speeches, the "I have a dream" speech from the march on Washington in 1963 and indeed much of the early Civil Rights Movement, have become part of America's political mythology.

While Martin Luther King could not be classed as a revolutionary, he became far more militant than most of those who today claim his legacy.

In order to understand King's shift to the left one must look at the history of the Civil Rights Movement.

## ALABAMA

In 1955, in Montgomery Alabama, Rosa Parkes, tired from her day's work as a seamstress, refused to give up her seat in the segregated section of the bus to a white man. She was arrested, and the event sparked off a city-wide bus boycott against segregation by the black community. After almost 12 months, the action of 40,000 blacks ended in victory.

The events in Montgomery ignited an explosion of black struggle for civil rights that rocked the American South for the next 15 years.

Southern blacks had suffered under the Jim Crow laws of formal segregation that denied them even the most basic rights—the right to vote and equal treatment—since the 1870s. Blacks in the Northern cities, while not subject to formal segregation, suffered from institutionalised racism that left them hardly any better off than their Southern counterparts.

The social and economic factors underpinning the movement lay in the massive migration of blacks after the Second World War into the cities. In 1910 ninety per cent of blacks lived in scattered rural communities across the South. But after World War One migration to the cities began and gathered momentum after the second World War. Between 1940 and 1960 the black population in Southern cities grew by 90% in Birmingham, Alabama; 40% in Montgom-

ery; 453% in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and 145% in Tallahassee, Florida. In the North, the black populations of cities like Los Angeles, Detroit, Chicago and New York grew massively.

Racism grew apace with urbanisation. In the South, Jim Crowe ensured that blacks were given only the most menial jobs—janitors, porters and labourers with 50% of black women employed as domestic servants.

Housing for blacks was confined to the most impoverished and overcrowded sections of the towns and cities.

In the Northern cities, blacks were hounded into ghettos by what were effectively segregationist housing schemes and rarely found work in anything but manual or semi-skilled labour.

With urbanisation though, blacks felt and could act on their frustrations collectively. So any fight against the system would no longer be plagued with the isolation of rural existence that had weakened previous attempts at challenging segregation.

Once the Montgomery bus boycott was under way similar movements against segregation started in 1956—in Tallahassee, Florida and then in Birmingham, Alabama. A co-ordinating committee was soon set up by a key section of the black middle class—the ministers of the black churches—the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). A young Baptist minister, Martin Luther King Jr., was elected head of the committee.

## MIDDLE CLASS

To point out that the leadership of the movement was made up almost entirely from the black middle classes is not to belittle the movement. King and some of his fellow ministers were good fighters. They put themselves in grave danger by leading marches that would inevitably lead to a white racist reaction whose violence was often specifically aimed at the leaders.

But King's religious inspiration soon imposed its own limitation on the movement—the strategy of non-violence.

The strategy of the SCLC was basically that non-violent demonstrations, pickets and consumer boycotts would provoke the racist local

governments to violence, creating a political crisis that would force the federal government to intervene and disband segregation.

White racist violence reached new heights in St. Augustine, Florida and Selma, Alabama, prompting President Lyndon Johnson to push through the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Jim Crowe was now officially dead.

For a while it seemed to work. A Supreme Court ruling supported the Montgomery boycott. John F. Kennedy introduced civil rights legislation after racist police in Birmingham repeatedly attacked SCLC marches.

But there were limits to how far the federal government would go. Northern capital, whose interests dominated the government, could, when faced with a political crisis, afford to let go of the Jim Crowe laws. It was an antiquated system of enforced labour that no longer suited the needs of Northern or, increasingly, Southern capitalism.

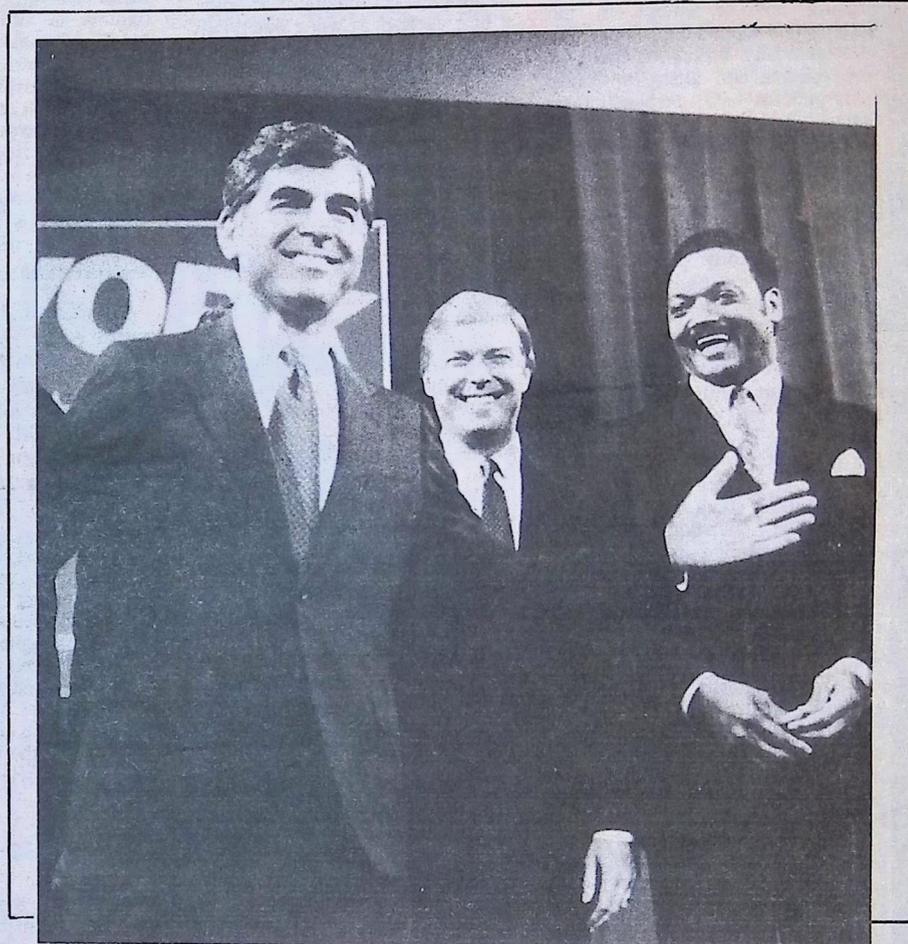
## KENNEDY

Even so, Kennedy and Johnson only granted civil rights to stave off more militant black rebellion. They had no wish to lose the support of the racist "dixiecrat" senators who were an important section of traditional support for the Democrats. Thus, while formally abolishing segregation, Kennedy continued to appoint openly racist judges in the South.

Formal equality for blacks in the South would leave intact the social and economic inequalities suffered by Northern blacks.

It was in 1965—66, when Martin Luther King and SCLC turned their attention to the plight of blacks in the North, that the limitations of the civil rights movement came to light.

By 1965, King was beginning to lose his credibility in the South. The SCLC strategy did nothing to build organisation in the cities where protests were called. King would fly down, lead a couple of marches and leave the local black population to face the consequences without a proper leadership. This strategy came under extreme criticism by the much more radical SNCC (Students Non-violent Co-ordinating Committee) who were trying to build up an



Today Jessie Jackson refuses to break with the Democratic party

independent leadership for southern blacks.

Black nationalists like Malcolm X scoffed at King's idea of a "civil rights revolution" and rightly criticised the non-violence as needlessly leaving blacks open to racist attacks.

King didn't openly condemn the black nationalist slogan of "Black Power" as "racist" like other SCLC leaders, but said it was divisive and alienated white support.

He was trying to breach an ever-widening gap between the black militants, who saw King as an "Uncle Tom", and the liberal establishment who saw his refusal to openly condemn "Black Power" as an endorsement of black nationalist politics.

The situation only got worse when SCLC shifted its emphasis to Northern cities like Chicago. Segregation in housing and jobs was just as bad in the North as the South though without the Jim Crowe laws.

King was outmanoeuvred by racist Mayor Daley when he promised to stop marches

through white neighbourhoods in exchange for purely token action on Daley's part to improve housing conditions. Black militants denounced King and led the marches anyway.

King himself was becoming increasingly aware that only fundamental social and economic restructuring could achieve real equality for blacks. He began to advocate "democratic socialism". In 1967 he came out strongly against the Vietnam war. He also began to organise for a "poor people's march" on Washington.

President Johnson and the liberal-Democratic establishment were outraged at King's tance on US involvement in Vietnam and the Poor People's March. FBI harassment of King was increased.

King became increasingly isolated in the months leading up to his assassination in April 1968. Already rejected by black nationalists, whose support in the Northern ghettos grew greater every day, and slandered by the Democratic Party, King faced

hostility within the SCLC as well.

The Poor People's March clashed with the SCLC's Operation Breadbasket. Headed by Jesse Jackson, the campaign sought to promote "black capitalist" interests.

Attacked from all sides, King became more depressed and disillusioned. His leftward shift, though confused, continued when he travelled to Memphis to support a strike of black sanitation workers. He was assassinated there on April 9th, 1968.

His death brought to a close the first phase of the continuing battle for equality of American blacks. The struggle was taken up by the much more militant, openly revolutionary, politics of groups like the Black Panthers.

Martin Luther King was no revolutionary, but neither was he the harmless saint he is portrayed by the American establishment. His break with the Democratic Party over Vietnam and that Party's refusal to fight racism was a step few black Democrats of today would be willing to take.

# Chemical Pollution

PEOPLE living around Cork Harbour are increasingly concerned by the potential danger posed by the fact that the area has the largest concentration of chemical plants in the 26 counties.

A series of accidents in the chemical factories culminating in an explosion at Irish Fertiliser Industries just before Christmas has fuelled these fears. Air pollution causing noxious smells in the harbour and reports from local GPs of statistically high incidences of rare cancers and allergies among their patients have deepened their unease. People are not convinced that proper safety procedures are being followed in the chemical industry, which is now the single greatest source of employment in the area.

An opportunity for concerned groups to voice their fears arose last December during An Bord Pleanála's hearing of objections to the proposed Merrell-Dow plant at Killeagh. Merrell-Dow propose to build a pharmaceutical plant for the production of an anti-histamine drug. At the hearing opinions from the contending parties, each with their own 'experts', fell into the now familiar antagonisms of jobs versus the environment, health versus safety and public unease versus assurances from the chemical company.

Concern over the environment is one of the major issues of our time and the Merrell-Dow affair raises matters which concern us all. An examination of the pharmaceutical industry shows in stark relief the distortions caused by capitalism to an industry which should be an unqualified boon to the human race.

An improved diet, better housing conditions, improved hygiene, public sanitation and access to a health service are the main reasons why life expectancy has increased so dramatically during the 20th century. These developments have been powerfully enhanced by advances in pharmaceutical research.

The impact of modern drugs on human health is simply demonstrated by imagining a world suddenly deprived of them. For epileptics, diabetics, sufferers from cardio-vascular and respiratory diseases and a great many others it would be an unimaginable catastrophe. Millions who depend on modern medicine to enable them to lead a full life would endure ex-

traordinary suffering. The pharmaceutical industry then should be an unmixed blessing to humanity.

But what is the reality under capitalism? Appalling waste. The World Health Organisation's list of essential drugs contains approximately 300 items. Over 17,000 competing pharmaceutical products are available in Ireland and the UK. Many of these are identical drugs with different brand names. Many are illogical combinations of drugs, at best useless, at worst potentially dangerous. Enormous sums of money are spent on packaging and advertising products and lobbying doctors to prescribe particular brands. The rush to get new drugs on to the market may lead to inadequate testing and subsequent human suffering or death. Drugs which are banned or carefully controlled in Europe and the USA are indiscriminately dumped in the Third World. All this is done in the sacred name of profit.

In the manufacture of drugs, safety procedures are neglected to speed up production. Workers in chemical plants and the neighbouring communities are exposed to risk. If the authorities in the USA insist on the use of low waste/no waste technology and less hazardous but more expensive methods of toxic waste disposal, companies simply move plants to a country with less stringent regulations. This is one of the reasons for the proliferation of chemical plants in Ireland in recent times.

The attitude of capitalism towards the environment is neatly summed up by a spokesman for the Marchon Chemical Works in Whitehaven: "If we increase our environmental standards more than other countries, we will have a cleaner environment but we won't be able to sell our products because other countries will sell their goods more cheaply."

It is becoming ever more obvious that the environment has suffered horribly from the relentless pursuit of profit which characterises capitalist industrialisation. It is probable that the environment has the capacity to recover if the appropriate steps are taken soon. Those steps will only be taken in a society which places genuine human need before profit; in a society where workers, who have no interest in exposing themselves, their families and communities or their environment to danger, are in control.

KIERAN BURKE



The environment is under continued attack by a profit hungry system.

The Greenhouse effect threatens massive changes in the climate of the planet. Rising levels of waste gases such as carbon dioxide is causing the earth's atmosphere to heat up. The possibility of some melting at the North and South pole could mean huge flooding in the next century.

Chemicals such as CFC's are eating away at the earth's ozone layer. This will mean more ex-

posure to ultra violet rays and more skin cancers.

Hundreds of thousands of tons of radioactive waste are dumped in the seas. The Irish Sea - one of the most radioactive in the world - contain fish with abnormal doses of radiation.

In Dublin, smog levels have reached seven times the EEC safety limit. In 1982, Dr. Clancy, from St. James' Hospital, claimed that 82 deaths could be attributed to the smog.

All over the world the merchants of death are building nuclear arms silos and chemical weapon plants. The largest producer of these weapons is still the U.S.A.

Here *Socialist Worker* produces a special feature on the major arguments on how we save the environment. KIERAN BURKE looks at what socialists say on the Chemical Industry and work.

JOSH CLARKE argues that the politics of the Reds are superior to the Greens.

SOCIALISTS can only admire the Greens for bringing to the fore questions that had traditionally been ignored, as much on the Left as the Right. They have had an important part to play in highlighting issues such as the greenhouse effect, acid rain etc.

Unlike most established political groups, green politics does have a large element of direct action. Socialists have to cheer when green activists frustrate or embarrass companies and governments that dump, cull, and pollute. The French government considered them enough of a threat to warrant blowing up the Greenpeace vessel Rainbow Warrior, killing one crew member.

## GREEN

However, recognising the importance of environmental issues is not the same as endorsing Green ideology. From a socialist standpoint, the Greens have asked some pertinent questions, but they haven't provided adequate answers.

Greens, like many other people who come to political activity through opposition to just one aspect of the crazy system we live under, haven't gone beyond seeing the problem in isolation from the whole of the system that has caused it. Instead of pinning the blame firmly on capitalist production, they attack any large scale production and muse in an abstract way about the relation between

"man and nature".

Greens believe that environmental problems stem from human interference with the natural order, especially in the form of modern large-scale industrialisation. If only humans would realise that we live on a finite planet with a carefully tuned natural balance, and left well enough alone, then everything would be all right.

## NATURAL ORDER

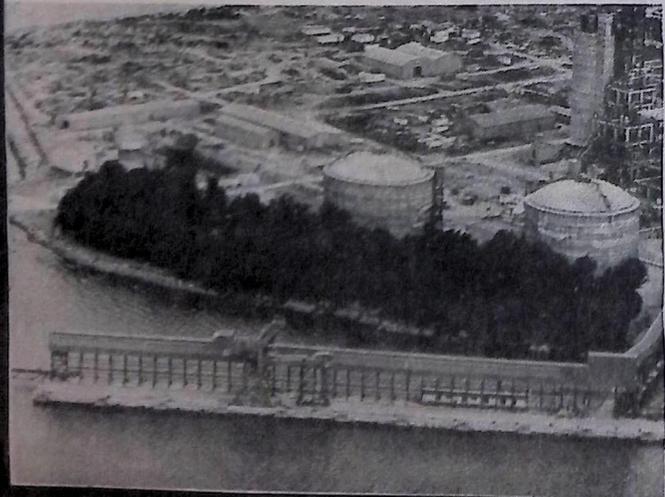
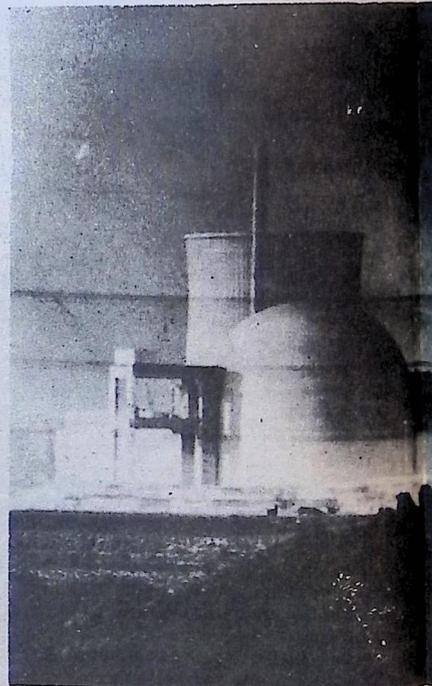
The problem is that, even without human intervention, the "natural order" is full of disorder and constant change. The evolution of the species involved the extinction of many species along the way and the existence of life on this planet at all was a chance event that would never have happened had the earth's orbit been slightly shorter or longer. The naive green faith in "Mother Nature" who cares for her children is as absurd as the right's belief in the market. There is no benign invisible hand, either in the market or in nature.

It's the highly developed ability of human labour to "interfere" in the world which made it possible for humans to have a history, i.e. for human societies to develop to the stage where we already have all the material requisites for a classless society.

To demand, in that context, that we turn back the clock and reject the advances made by human inventiveness and technology is anti-human in the highest degree, and, taken to its logical conclusion,

would result in the sort of society created by Pol Pot, which was also a return to year zero.

From this biocentric, anti-humanist view, as the Greens call it, comes the argument that human population levels should be re-



# ENVIRONMENT

# RED or GREEN

# Socialist Answer

turned to a 'natural' level, which the planet would find sustainable. But how can that level be judged? Is it the level made possible by production in the 17th, 13th or 5th centuries, or perhaps right back before humans began cultivating at all?

This Malthusian rubbish overlooks the fact that humans aren't just animals infesting the planet, roaming around eating everything in sight, but rather conscious beings with the capacity to work upon the land and "artificially" produce more than is naturally available.

The population argument has dangerous political connotations as well, as some of the more leftwing Greens will admit. Because it allows part of the blame for the

poverty of people in places like Africa to be shifted from the real culprits, international banking and capital, to the poor themselves.

The year-zero variety of Greens, so-called Deep Ecologists, are rare. Most Greens do recognise the need for some sort of technology. How do they decide where to draw the line? The West German Greens idealise market gardening and handicraft type operations. In other words, small scale is identified with small scale capitalist production.

This is the Green ideal for the future. But it is utopian. There are only some 100,000 people in West Germany involved in these small-scale environmentally sound projects and even their continued existence is only possible because

they depend on the larger industrial infrastructure of the country.

The Green economic ideal is also irrelevant to the lives of working class people. At a time when the capitalist system is in crisis and workers' jobs, health services, education, etc. are under attack, the Greens criticise the "inflated material needs" of human beings in industrial society. Their solution to unemployment is the granting of a citizen's dividend that would allow us all to become self-employed, and would 'break the dependence of the poor on the state'. In other words, their solution to a crisis caused by capitalism is to take popular capitalism even more seriously than Thatcher would dream of.

WHEREAS Greens blame the problems of the world on "industrialism", socialists point to capitalism as the real culprit, in the ecological as well as social and economic sphere. A system based on production for profit and not for need is bound to put the competitive edge before the environmental consequences.

The capitalist system has its own logic, one of competition and accumulation. This logic rules out the possibility of capitalists everywhere getting together to make a gentlemen's agreement not to use environmentally damaging production techniques. It is therefore utopian to believe in the possibility of a Green revolution that does not smash the power of capital first.

Many Greens pay lip service to the role of capitalism in the environmental equation but, for one reason or another, reject the marxist solution of a working class revolution as unthinkable.

The more sophisticated Greens argue that marxism was an ideology perfectly suited to the state of things during the initial stages of the industrial revolution, but that now production has changed so much that Marx's dream of the industrial proletariat using its immense power to change society is being shattered by the reality of part-time, white collar and service industry work.

## MARX

The fact is that Marx and Engels' genius lay in their ability to see the outlines of a vibrant working class although it was still only an embryo. The overwhelming mass of the world's population in their day were peasants. So Marx's picture is truer now than it was then. Today, there are more workers in South Korea alone than there were in the whole of the world when Marx was writing. For the first time, as the growth of working class politics in Brazil demonstrates, there are more workers on this planet than peasants.

Many of the Greens' criticisms of the Left do indeed have some force, but only against the reformist

and Stalinist Left.

For example, Greens accuse the Left of surrendering the environment in favour of job creation.

They call this approach "productivism". Sections of the reformist Left are undoubtedly guilty of it. It couldn't be otherwise.

Reformists want to get into office, not so they can abolish capitalism, but in order to manage it more efficiently. Once in office they hope to help working people by encouraging job creation and improving social services. But, as long as they leave capitalism essentially intact job creation takes place on capitalism's terms. The type of production allowed will be that which makes capitalists most money or makes them more efficient in their fight with competitors abroad.

## DAMAGE

In that context, attempts by reformist governments to include considerations of environmental damage will be ruled out of order. In other words, there is a contradiction between the growing affection of much of the Left for the market and their genuine concern about the state of the environment.

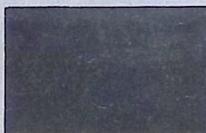
Revolutionary socialists look to the creation of a society where choices between jobs and the environment do not have to be made, because production under socialism would be collectively and democratically run and could be directed in whichever way was environmentally sound and not whichever made the quickest short-term gain.

Democratic control of production would make possible the meeting of more long-term environmental needs as well as more immediate economic ones.

That's a long way from private capitalist production which surrenders everything to immediate profit, or for that matter, the type of forced industrialisation of Stalin's Russia which surrendered environment, peasants and workers all to build up the Russian state.

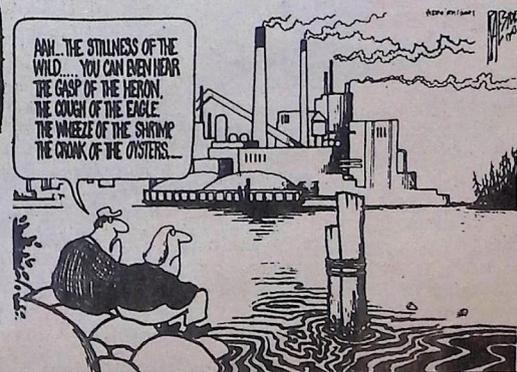
Far from production being too centred on humans, as the Greens claim, we need more concentration on human need instead of profit and not less.

Nuclear annihilation threatens us all



## How can we save the

# ENVIRONMENT?



## ANALYSIS

# NIGHTMARES OF THE MARKET

Whether it is the provision of health care, the needs of the elderly or the safety of airplanes, the chances are that we will be told we must let the free operation of market forces

decide what should happen. MIKE SCULLY looks at what the "free market" means in practice and poses the socialist alternative.

Over two hundred years ago, Adam Smith first described the workings of the market in his book *The Wealth of Nations*. Smith explained that the market system was perfect. Supply is determined by demand. People want certain goods and are willing to pay for them, so firms produce what the consumer wants and everyone is happy.

The prices which people are prepared to pay for goods act as signals which tell the firms what will sell. If too many of any particular product are being turned out, the prices will fall and firms switch to producing something else. If too few, prices will rise and so will the numbers produced.

The reality of the free market if, of course, very different. Basic human needs are not met. There is, for example, a very real demand for food. There are also huge food mountains. But the market does not allow the starving millions to eat the food which is burnt or fed to animals in order to keep prices up.

What's more, production is a process taking place in time. The "price signals" so important to ensure that supply meets demand do not tell firms what will be wanted when production is finished, but what was wanted before it began.

Socialists have long argued that there is a much better alternative. Instead of the anarchy of the market where needs and resources are balanced after production takes place, the most logical thing is to plan the economy in a democratic and centralised fashion. This would involve the producers themselves coming together, at various levels and in different areas of production, assessing what goods are needed, the resources available and planning production accordingly.

What planning means is balancing needs and resources before instigating production. Marxists claim no magical powers for the planning process. It does not necessarily mean that resources would be perfectly allocated nor that they would be more humanely allocated. The outcome of planning depends on the decisions made. And decisions can be good or bad. But to say that the market is superior to planning is to claim that the product of unconscious human activity is superior to that of conscious human activity.

Of course, the socialist planning we're talking about here bears no relationship to the planning undertaken in the state capitalist countries like Russia. Socialist planning is of its nature democratic

as well as centralised. It is not concerned with increasing the economic power of the state, but with an effective and rational distribution of resources by and on behalf of the producers themselves.

There is a long tradition of argument against the socialist view. Classic liberals like Von Mises, Hayek and Milton Friedman reject planning *in toto*.

There are also the "market socialists" whose position is given most coherent expression by Alec Nove in his book *The Economics of Feasible Socialism* (London 1983). Nove sees the market playing a permanent role in a socialist economy, not only in the transition period after a revolution, but always. Some of the main arguments against planning are common both to avowed right wingers like Friedman and to supposed socialists like Nove.

The first such common argument is the idea that planning is a form of tyranny over both producer and consumer. In a free market, this argument goes, everyone is free to do as they will. The market is therefore democratic. On examination, however, we find that since all classical economic theory is based on the notion of scarcity, not all individual needs can be catered for. Not providing some individual needs is actually one of the bases of the system.

The resulting 'tyranny' over the producer/consumer is, therefore, far truer of a market economy than of a socialist one.

Neither, of course, do democracy and the market go hand in hand. Chile, for example, has a free market but few would consider it democratic. The market operated in Spain side by side with fascism for decades.

Perhaps the seemingly strongest argument used by the "market socialists" is that the economy is too complex an entity to be planned successfully. Because very many goods are produced, they argue, too many decisions are required for effective planning to be possible.

No marxist would argue that socialist planning will be easy and will not face challenges of its own. But that is not what is in question. The issue is whether a workers' democracy would be capable of operating the economy more efficiently than does the market.

No one would suggest that producers (workers) getting together would be able to foresee all needs and all links in the production process. But they would be quite capable of working out what their

## EAST

A Queue for food in Moscow



## WEST

Homeless queue for food and shelter in Chicago



main needs are likely to be. Many goods today are produced not in response to market signals but according to what patterns of consumption show was needed in the past.

Anyway, the number of decisions to be made need not really be all that great. Many goods are components, spare parts or goods which have little contact with the consumer. Decisions on the production of such goods could be delegated to the workers in the relevant industry. Supply could be made to correspond at least roughly to demand without rival firms causing overproduction and crisis, as in the so-called "free market". And this in turn would do away with the wild fluctuations in in-

vestment and output which makes pre-planning so difficult under capitalism.

Other objections to planning do not stand up to scrutiny either. We are told that planning is incompatible with economic progress. Yet the experience of state capitalist countries like Russia and the Newly Industrialising Countries like Korea prove that economic growth is not only possible but often improved in a planned economy.

Similarly the idea that initiative and motivation only thrive in the framework of a "free market" does not hold water. Many of the great innovations took place completely outside the market—the discovery of fire, vaccination and antibiotics

to name but a few. In fact, there would certainly be greater scientific and technological advances if researchers co-operated together instead of competing with each other.

It's generally acknowledged that a cure for AIDS would be a lot nearer if there were more co-operation.

Socialist planning is not a formula for utopia. Marx never claimed it would be. He saw the transition to full socialism as a long process. But by workers using their power to eliminate some of the waste and anarchy of capitalism, they could at least ensure that everyone—whether in Ethiopia or Dublin—had enough to eat and a decent place to live. And that would be a good start.

# Find out more about socialism . . .

The Socialist Workers Movement is a growing organisation. The attacks by Fianna Fail on Southern Workers and the continued repression of the Thatcher regime means that a minority are drawing socialist conclusions. S.W.M.'s hard hitting message is winning new recruits.

Each week there are branch meetings occurring around the country. These always begin with

a lively political discussion and then go on to discuss what the branch are doing in their area.

If you agree with what you read in the Paper, then why not get involved by joining S.W.M. Below we print some of the details of our ongoing activities.

For more details on S.W.M. politics write now to: S.W.M., P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8.

## S.W.M. BRANCH MEETINGS

### Dublin Branch

Meets 8p.m. Wed., Bachelor Inn pub, Bachelors Walk.

Feb. 1st: 'The World Recession'  
Speaker: Paul O'Brien

Feb 8th: 'What happened after the Russian Revolution?'  
Speaker: Cathy Bergin

Feb 15th: 'Revolutionaries in the 80's'  
Speaker: Ger Francis

Feb 22nd: See notice for PUBLIC MEETING

March 1st: 'The French Revolution'  
Speaker: Josh Clarke

### Dundalk Branch

Meets 8p.m. A.T.G.W.U., Francis St.

Tuesday 7th Feb:  
'Lenin and the Russian Revolution'  
Thurs. 23rd Feb. PUBLIC MEETING  
'Destruction of the Environment: Who is to blame?'

Tues. 7th March:  
'Trotsky: what he stood for'

### Bray Branch

Meets Tuesday 8.p.m., Hibernian Inn, Marine Terrace.

Feb. 7th: 'Socialists and the Family'  
Feb 21st: 'The Politics of the S.W.M.'

For details of regular branch meetings in KILKENNY, GALWAY, DUNGARVAN, and PORTLAOISE contact: S.W.M., P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8.

### Belfast Branch

(for details of venue contact paper sellers or National Office)

Monday 6th Feb:  
'Socialists and Gay Liberation'  
Monday 13th Feb:  
'The Roots of Reformism'

Monday 20th Feb:  
(see Public Meeting Notice)

Monday 27th Feb:  
'The Revolutionary Paper'

### Cork Branch

Meets every Tuesday, 8p.m. Anchor Inn, George's Quay.

7th Feb: 'Revolutionary Socialism Today'

14th Feb: 'Connolly: Republican or Socialist?'

21st Feb: 'Class Struggle in Rural Ireland'

28th Feb: 'The relevance of Karl Marx today'

7th Mar.: 'Where is Sinn Fein Going?'

### DERRY BRANCH

Meets every Monday Dungloe Bar Waterloo St, 8pm

Monday 6th February:  
Trotsky and Permanent Revolution

Monday 13th February  
Ireland's Moral Majority

Tuesday 21st February  
Public Meeting in Union Hall  
Can the environment be saved. ?

## SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT

### National Speaking Tour

ISREAL AND THE PALESTINIANS  
Speaker: Seth Harman

Belfast - Monday 20th Feb.  
Conway Mill, Falls Road.  
8p.m.

Galway - Tuesday 21st Feb.  
(venue to be announced)

Dublin - Wednesday 22nd Feb  
Belvedere Hotel,  
Gt. Denmark St.  
8p.m.

Waterford - Thursday 23rd Feb.  
(venue to be announced)

Cork - Friday 24th Feb.  
Moore's Hotel,  
Morrison Island.  
8.p.m.

## SOCIALIST STUDENT

A one day event of political discussion  
Trinity College, Arts Block, Room 3051

Saturday 18th February.

Sessions on:-

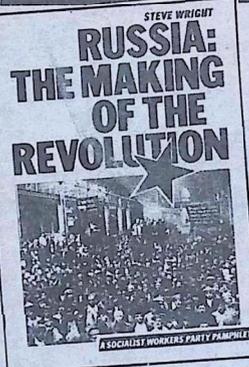
10.00a.m to 11.15a.m.  
'Theories of Patriarchy'  
Speaker: Marnie Holborrow

11.30a.m. to 12.45p.m.  
'Gorbachev's Russia'  
Speaker: Seth Harman

2.00p.m. to 3.15p.m.  
'The Changing Working Class'  
Speaker: Paul O'Brien

3.30p.m. to 4.45p.m.  
'Nationalism and the Left  
in Ireland'  
Speaker: Kieran Allen

## BOOKS



### RUSSIA: THE MAKING OF THE REVOLUTION

by Steve Wright  
Looks at the years 1905-1917, when workers' struggles and the building of the Bolshevik Party brought the world closer to the achievement of socialism than ever before, or since.

£1.20



### ROSA LUXEMBURG

by Tony Cliff  
Sixty years after she was murdered, the ideas of the Polish/German revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg are still the subject of passionate debate. Tony Cliff's book, first published in 1959, remains the best short introduction to those ideas.

£2.75

### SOCIALISM FROM BELOW

by David McNally  
There are two currents in the socialist tradition. One is 'socialism from above', that of the 'leave it to us' reformers of the West and the anti-democratic bureaucracies of the East. The other is 'socialism from below', the living tradition of workers' struggle.

£1.20

For full list write to S.W.M. P.O. Box 1648 Dublin 8

## What we stand for

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

### FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

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

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

### NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

This kind of socialism does not exist anywhere today. Workers do not have control in Russia, China, Cuba etc. Instead, power is held by a state-capitalist class. A workers' revolution is needed in these countries too.

We are against NATO and the Warsaw Pact and all weapons of mass destruction. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

### FOR AN END TO PARTITION

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

The marginal privileges given to Protestant workers are just that: marginal. It is in the immediate interest of Protestant as well as Catholic workers to fight against their exploitation. It is in the interest of all Northern workers to unite against the state and aim at socialism in Ireland.

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

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

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

### FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

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

### FOR A FIGHT IN THE UNIONS

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

### FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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

# Join us!

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## REVIEWS

DOMINIC CARROLL

THINGS have reached something of an impasse in South Africa. Although Botha's 'reform' programme has failed and his regime is still in trouble, the sheer scale of repression has kept the state intact. On the other hand, enormous gains have been made by blacks struggling against apartheid, particularly since the townships exploded in '84, but the State of Emergency and exhaustion have forced the movement onto the defensive.

A process of reassessment is now underway. This is reflected in the discussions within the unions on how best to consolidate organisation and to what degree and direction politicisation is possible. Within the ANC taking stock has resulted in a rightwards revision of the Freedom Charter, never a socialist document in the first place.

Alex Callinicos contributes to the debate in "South Africa between Reform and Revolution". The book consists of five essays written over a ten year period, culminating in an outline of four possible scenarios facing South Africa during the next few years.

The least likely prospect, even though it's most favoured by western governments, is a gradual negotiated transition to black majority rule. But the contradictions inherent in the situation reveal themselves every time Botha makes a move. The tri-cameral parliament and township councils, intended as reforms, merely provided a focus for organising resistance. Legalising the unions so as to incorporate them actually served to strengthen them.

More fundamentally, the depth of opposition to black rule amongst the white population, reflected in the growth of the far right, means that any attempt at a settlement is likely to precipitate the disintegration of the state. Faced with this possibility, Callinicos argues that "even the most liberal sections of big capital are likely to prefer a somewhat reformed version of the status quo to an ANC government".

The likelihood of an ANC military victory or of a successful war of attrition forcing the government to the negotiating table is similarly discounted by Callinicos. A demographic analysis reveals highly unfavourable conditions for a classic rural guerrilla campaign. At least 66% of the black population are urbanised and possibly 80% can be classed as proletarian. A 'peasant sea' for guerrillas to 'swim' in simply doesn't exist and urban warfare, conducted by a small underground elite, has so far made little impact and has no chance of defeating a million strong defence force.

The third scenario considered by Callinicos, and given more credence, is a drift towards barbarism where "South Africa would

# SOUTH AFRICA Reform or Revolution

disintegrate into a larger version of the Lebanon, with rival warlords fighting over its mutilated corpse amidst economic collapse and mass emigration by capital and the middle classes". The 'warlords' might be the regime, hanging on in the highly industrialised triangle around Pretoria; Buthelezi's Inkatha could take Natal province; Ciskei and the other 'independent' homelands would probably hold on; the ANC could carve out its own patch of territory and even the fascist AWB might create its own state.

This outcome would be conditioned by various factors. The ability of the regime to control the liberation movement ultimately depends on the loyalty of the defence forces, but given that half the police force and a third of the army are black, the possibility of mutiny is always present. Unfortunately, divisions among blacks, illustrated by the continued fighting around Buthelezi's stronghold in Natal and the struggle in the Crossroads squatter camp, are a terrible reminder that black unity is neither automatic nor guaranteed.

An alternative perspective for socialist transformation of South Africa is cogently argued for by Callinicos. That the objective conditions exist for this is indisputable. The

system is in terminal crisis; the ruling class is ridden with divisions and the labour movement has not only achieved unprecedented organisational growth, but has also displayed its durability in the most adverse circumstances.

Unfortunately, confusion reigns among union militants about their role in overthrowing apartheid. The predominant view of populism

sees the labour movement as simply one more component in an alliance led by the ANC and including a range of forces from the South African Communist Party (SACP) to white 'progressive' liberals such as Gavin Reilly of the giant Anglo-American Corporation, a man who last year crushed the miners' strike.

Populism amounts to a conscious limiting of workers' struggles to comply with the

ANC's objective of a national democratic revolution in which apartheid but not capitalism will be dismantled. At best, it echoes the SACP's stagism where socialism will be won "through discussion, not on the streets, in a post-apartheid, mixed economy pluralist South Africa".

Opponents of populism in the unions, known as the workerists, have mistakenly veered too far the opposite

SOUTH AFRICA  
BETWEEN REFORM AND  
REVOLUTION—Alex  
Callinicos—Bookmarks 1988

direction. Their healthy reaction against the politics of the ANC has resulted in a narrow syndicalism, in which workers' struggles and politics are essentially seen as separate. But this limited approach will not withstand the realities of the situation in South Africa and this realisation, combined with disillusionment with the ANC's all-class alliances, will offer favourable opportunities to those socialists who recognise the necessity for the working class to lead the struggle for national liberation and socialism.



● South African troops in full combat uniform above the African township of Soweto, on the outskirts of Johannesburg.

MARXIST CLASSICS

## The Origins of the Family

WRITTEN in 1884, Engel's *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* remains essential reading in order to understand the historical development of class struggle and its relationship to the sexual division of labour.

It is based on a book published in 1877 by the anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan entitled *Ancient Society*. In this work, which comes mainly from his study of North American Indian marriage systems, Morgan, as Engels wrote, "...discovered afresh in America the materialistic concept of history discovered by Marx 40 years (before)". Engels' task was to extend Morgan's theories to encompass the emergence of class and state.

In his reworking of Morgan's anthropological survey, Engels provides a detailed analysis of the complex developments from savagery (subsistence through hunting and gathering) to barbarism (subsistence through production) to civilisation (commodity production, art, exploitation of labour and the emergence of class struggle). Relating these developments to changes in marriage forms and systems of kinship, Engels shows that the family as the primary economic unit of society was a major cause

and effect of political change.

More specifically, the transition from hunting/gathering society to a reliance on production/agriculture and, subsequently, private ownership of property, led to a heightening of the sexual division of labour and to the concentration of the means of production in the hands of some men. This necessitated a

change from matrilineal to patrilineal descent in order that these men could be sure that they were passing their property to "their" children. This was the beginning of the oppression of women—as Engels puts it, "the overthrow of mother right was the world historical defeat of the female sex".

With the transition from

barbarism to civilisation emerged the monogamous family, where women were compelled to remain "faithful" to their husbands in order that paternity was confidently recognised within the nuclear family.

Engels points out that while early capitalism demanded monogamous marriage for the purposes of inheritance, the

development of ownership by contract rather than by inheritance contradicts the demands of monogamy. Therefore freedom of choice of marriage partner is denied the ruling class, whose marriage is still determined by inheritance, while the working class family produces what Engels calls "leaden boredom" disguised as "domestic bliss", based on the exploitation of women's domestic labour and their sexual and economic oppression. Engels concludes, therefore, that freedom in marriage can only come about with the abolition of capitalist production and its property relations.

Despite some inaccuracies and misconceptions (watch out for some unfortunate errors concerning genetics), *Origin* provides the essential ingredients for understanding and fighting against all forms of sexual oppression and for combatting the moral arguments that support it.

COLIN DARKE



*Origin of the Family,  
Private Property and  
the State*; 85p

# PACKARD DEFIANT

PACKARD Electric's present no-strike agreement ends on February 28th. The agreement, with a two-year no-strike clause at its heart, was forced upon workers at the end of a bitter two month strike. Management had threatened to close the plant unless their terms were accepted. The strike of 1987 featured the use of police to escort scab trucks in and out of Packard, a helicopter to lift goods over the heads of pickets and a distinct lack of ideas, support and leadership from union officialdom.

After the strike ended a number of shop stewards and shop floor activists left. The result of the ballot was a majority of sixteen in favour of going back to work. The management did not expect this to be so close. They did not go too quickly in their implementation of the agreement. At the moment temporary workers are employed on a week to week contract with a probation period of 9-12 months. The normal probation time was 3 months. A high percentage of

these people are young. In many cases it is their first job and they are understandably apprehensive about fighting back.

Packard have proposed a new agreement, which is much the same as the present one. All the clauses concerning shop floor activities such as supervisors working on lines and flexibility of labour are still there. The no-strike clause is still there. The difference now is that Packard want the agreement to last for four years. The agreement on conditions is to be effective for four years, but a pay agreement is for two years with further negotiations after that. The proposals are 3% on the first £120 and 2% after that.

The work force must vote on this before February 28th. A comprehensive four year no-strike agreement will be very hard to work against once in place. Packard will be able to introduce anything they want on shop floor level, and resistance will be difficult. People's basic rights, already eroded for two years, will have faded to distant memory after six.

The shop stewards at Packard must begin a clear, open campaign now to win the vote against the deal.



● Ms Pauline Doyle, shop steward, Security Cleaners, and Ms Esther Flynn, chief shop steward of Contract Cleaners.

## Take the bosses to the cleaners

LAST month's threat of strike action by cleaners made the bosses sit up and take notice.

TV coverage of packed meetings before the strike deadline showed a united and determined group of workers, in good fighting form. In fact nearly twenty workplaces, hitherto unorganised, joined the union the day before the proposed action. They wanted to 'have a go'. Sympathy and support, for one of the most down-trodden group of workers,

was high. In the hospitals, where nurses and other workers are hard pressed by the cuts, the cleaners' strike had the potential to inspire a fight back.

The executive of the cleaners' union (FWUI) strongly recommended the acceptance of a last minute deal hammered out with the employers. Many cleaners saw this as a betrayal. The deal leaves unanswered the main demand, which was for the eighteen hour week. Only then would they come under the cover of the Employment Protection Act which entitles workers to holiday and sick leave, minimum notice,

redundancy and pension rights.

As it stands contractors employ cleaners for seventeen and a half and even seventeen and three-quarter hours per week, to avoid paying the PRSI contribution that the scheme requires. At Beaumont hospital, the cleaners work 17 hours and 50 minutes!

Contract cleaners at the Mater Private Hospital urged a 'no' vote to the deal. They point out that cleaners often work 30 hours per week and more, but anything over seventeen and a half hours is classed as overtime (without the extra money!).

The proposals put forward represented some gains for the

workers but fall far short of what they were willing to fight for. The sick pay scheme will cost them 20p per week and entitles them to the princely sum of £7 a week after 5 day unpaid leave, all certificated. The pension scheme will cost them and is just as miserly. Unpaid maternity leave, formally negotiated, has been an informal arrangement with most firms already.

It is likely with the executive pushing acceptance that the deal will stick. But the cleaners have learned an important lesson. It was their unity and determination to fight that moved the bosses at all.

## Letters

Dear Editor,

While reading last month's review of Hopkinson's recent book on the Irish Civil War I was rather surprised by the SWM's crude depiction of the belligerents.

Dismissing the "impression that sides were chosen on the basis of likes or dislikes of leading personalities", the reviewer argued that the "Free-Staters represented the larger farmers and the old established middle class" while the "Republicans represented those that saw that their interests lay in developing a closed protectionist economy".

This analysis is flatly presented and thus the uninitiated are led to believe that a conflict arose between conscious historical actors who coherently sought specific economic objectives. This is simply not so! The reality is that the effective horizontal split in the republican movement was obscured by ideology and the question of the economy's trajectory wasn't immediately relevant. The strength of a republican's dedication to the 'ideals of 1916' could, in general, be gauged by reference to his class, or position within a class, but one will rarely read a reminiscence by a Civil

War veteran wherein he or she claims to have properly understood, at the time, the fissure within the nationalist middle class.

Again contrary to the review, the 'partition question' was quite relevant and was mentioned frequently by anti-Treatyites in the Dail debates. The fact that more importance was attached to the proposed Oath of Allegiance doesn't negate the distress caused by partition. Also, "likes and dislikes of leading personalities" did play a not unimportant role in deciding allegiances. Padric O Maile TD wasn't alone when he exclaimed "Well, what is good enough for Michael Collins is good enough for me because I believe it is the best for Ireland".

To ignore the ideological element and to dismiss the personal attachments of some of the participants is to relegate subjectivity to the drawer. The SWM's positioning of the belligerents is largely objectively correct but it is wrong to propose that the war occurred over purely economic arguments. It is sad to see mistaken and simplistic nationalist interpretations replaced by an equally flawed and simplistic Marxist interpretation.

FINTAN LANE (Cork City)

## Strike at Womans Aid Refuge

IN December, Wenda Edwards, the co-ordinator of Women's Aid Refuge for battered women and their children, was dismissed following a year of harassment and victimisation by the Council of Women's Aid.

Wenda has worked for battered women and their children for fourteen years, since Women's Aid was founded in 1974. She has always advocated that battered women and people working with them should have an opportunity to influence the work and policies of the organisation.

But her employer, the Council of Women's Aid, did not see it that way. This is an undemocratic body composed of nine members. When the ex-residents of the refuge sought to join it, they were told that they would have to have "good social contacts". The Council has stated that

marital rape, mental cruelty, extreme verbal abuse, housing and poverty are "not relevant to Women's Aid". Individual Council members have made the most appalling statements that reveal how far they are from the reality of those who use and work for the refuge. One member claimed: "I will sack who I like".

The Council has refused to negotiate on the reinstatement of Wenda Edwards. This has left the workers with no option but to strike from the end of January. The women are determined to stay in the refuge and join the struggle. They feel they must gain control of Women's Aid for themselves and the people working directly with them.

The roots of the problem go back to the Eastern Health Board. They pay the salary of the workers, including that of the dismissed co-ordinator. They have actually two members on the Council.

But like many other aspects of society, they hand the running over to a 'voluntary body' which is under no obligation to provide any democratic structures.

If the case of Wenda Edwards is to be solved—and all the issues that have arisen with it—the focus must be put on the Eastern Health Board.

Publicly funded refuges are a necessity in this society. For many women the refuge is the only place they can go as other refuges, North and South, are very small and usually full.

Homeless accommodation, some of which is run on Oliver Twist lines, is very dangerous for battered women because they are made go out to violent men, and it usually does not take older boys.

The Eastern Health Board should therefore take full responsibility for the refuge and have it run on democratic lines that involve the workers and the women who use it.

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Solidarity, reform and  
revolution in Poland 1980-81

By Colin Barker  
On the night of 13 December 1981 the Polish military moved in to suppress the independent trade union Solidarity. In the brief sixteen months of its existence, Solidarity had proved itself the most impressive working-class movement the world had seen for over half a century. The Polish workers' movement had vividly and dramatically revealed the possibilities open to an advanced working class when once it challenges the structures of domination in modern society.

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# Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

As Guilford Four Case Reviewed

## NOT MUCH IRISH

## JUSTICE EITHER

SIXTEEN years after their conviction, Douglas Hurd, the British Home Secretary, has referred the case of the Guildford Four to the Court of Appeal. They will spend another year in imprisonment before the case comes up again.

The Guildford Four had been found guilty solely on the evidence of their own confessions. A man who wanted to give an alibi for one of the defendants was threatened with arrest. The case showed what a farce British justice is.

Spokespersons for all political parties in the 26 Counties have now condemned the miscarriage of British justice. But now they try to pretend that the Irish judiciary are fair and unbiased.

The same politicians who resisted Thatcher's demand for the extradition of Fr. Patrick Ryan now want to see him tried in the South under the Criminal Law Jurisdiction Act.

The Criminal Law Jurisdiction Act was passed during the Fine Gael-Labour Party Coalition of 1973-1977. It allows people to be tried before the Special Criminal Court for offences committed in the Six Counties or in Britain.

### FIANNA FAIL

At the time Fianna Fail opposed it. Haughey condemned it as "alien to the principles to which we are accustomed".

Gery Collins, the present Minister for Justice, claimed the Act was "totally unacceptable since it is at variance with the constitutional guarantees of fairness of procedure".

This is the law that they now support wholeheartedly. They claimed that Fr. Ryan will get a fair trial under this Act because it is "Irish justice".

Where they meet a big level of opposition to extradition in particular cases, Fianna Fail will aim to use the Criminal Law Jurisdiction Act. That is the meaning of their decision to allow the Attorney General—a Fianna Fail appointee—to filter cases.

But "Irish justice" for republicans and socialists is no better than British justice. It is administered in a juryless Special Criminal Court. Garda superintendents are allowed to simply state that they have knowledge that someone is a member of a subversive

organisation. This is then taken as evidence.

And there have been plenty of miscarriages of "Irish justice".

Don O'Leary, a member of Sinn Fein in Cork, had in his possession a number of posters that saluted the IRA. This was used to convict him on a charge of membership of the IRA and sentence him to five years.

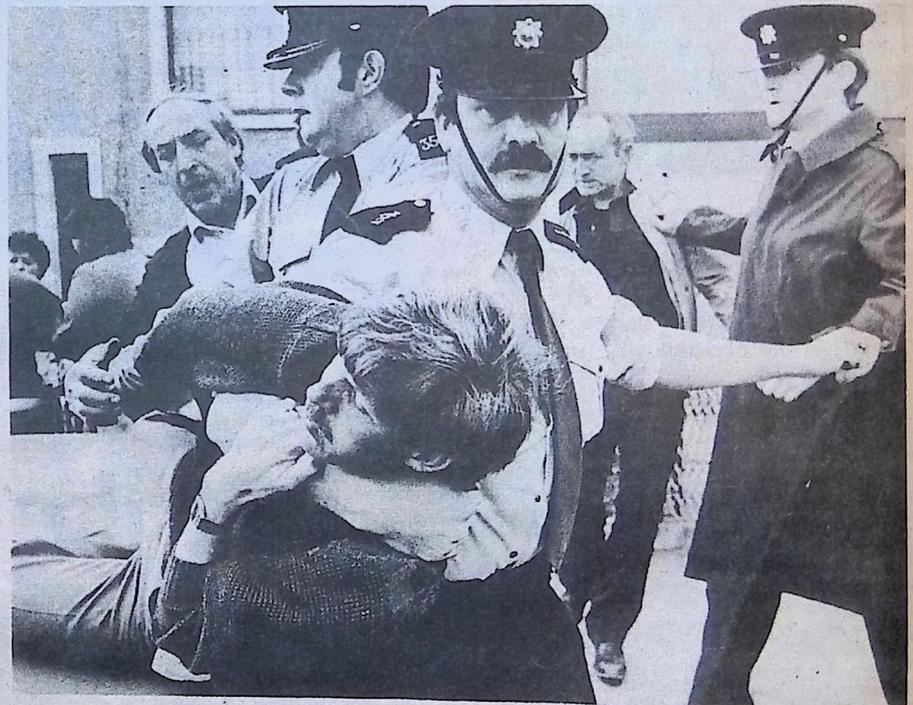
In 1981 Patrick Keogh took part in an H Block demonstration to the British embassy. One journalist, Darach McDonald, described what happened on the demonstration: "One Garda shouted 'No quarter'. Gardai with numbers removed batoned fleeing women and elderly people." Yet twenty demonstrators were arrested days after the march ended. Patrick Keogh, a member of no political organisation, was sentenced to two years imprisonment solely on the basis of photographic evidence.

### FRAME UP

In 1977, a Dublin man, Christy Lynch, was forced to confess to the murder of an old woman. In 1980 Lynch was released by the Supreme Court when it was shown he could not have committed the crime.

Councillor Liam McIlhinney spoke at a republican demonstration in Donegal last year. He spoke in favour of the IRA. His words were used to convict him of membership.

In 1976, Tipperary man Thomas Connors was arrested under the Offences Against the State Act. He was brought to the Cahir garda station and tortured. Such was the terror of his treatment that he tried to



commit suicide by jumping from a window of the station.

In 1978 Nicky Kelly was convicted of robbing the Sallins train. A confession had been beaten out of him by the notorious "Heavy Gang"—the torture unit of the Irish gardai. Amnesty International and many international legal organisations condemned the trial as a frame-up. But Nicky Kelly was not released until 1984. Even then there was no admission of a miscarriage of justice.

These are just some of the most publicised cases of "Irish justice". There are many more. There is harassment of socialists and republicans by police and Special Branch in the South. Any young person with political views from

working class districts such as Cabra or Finglas in Dublin, Southhill in Limerick or Mayfield in Cork will be familiar with the routine searches and contempt with which gardai treat them.

In every area of repression, the South has given a lead to the British.

Section 31 gave the example to Thatcher to censor the airwaves in Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Offences Against the State Act—praised by a South African Prime Minister as a "wonderful piece of legislation"—allowed suspects at one stage to be held for longer than the emergency provisions in the North.

The removal of the right to silence in the North is a direct

copy of the Criminal Justice Act passed in 1983.

The Diplock Courts themselves are modelled on the juryless Special Criminal Court with one judge instead of three.

The hypocrisy of Irish politicians should not fool us.

They hate any militant opposition to partition as much as the RUC and the British army. They will protect that border no matter what it costs to beat the 'subversive threat'.

That is why every time you hear a Fianna Failer letting off steam against British justice, remind them: *There is not much Irish justice either.*

