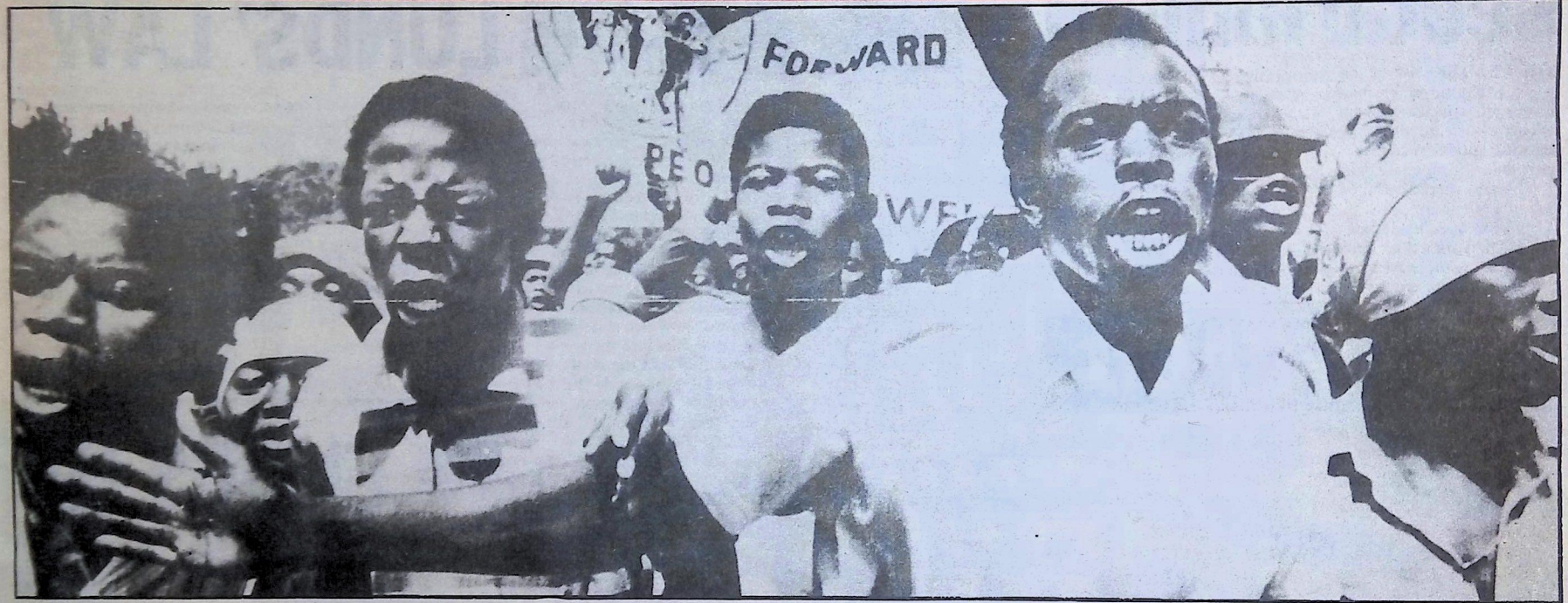


Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

SOUTH AFRICA:

REVOLUTION



is the only way

REFORM OR REVOLUTION?
That is the question most clearly presented by the recent events in South Africa.

After almost two years of revolt in the townships, mass action by sections of black workers and increasing loss of confidence among overseas investors, the apartheid regime has significantly upped the stakes.

The 'state of emergency' has seen the worst repression meted out against blacks for many years. But the response of some black leaders and politicians in South Africa has been to call for more negotiations with Botha, for the establishment of a 'dialogue'

between the regime and black leaders.

In fact, on the very day that thousands of black activists were being rounded up, Bishop Tutu spent time talking to Botha — one of the men most responsible for the terror.

But Botha has made it clear that no more concessions can be made to blacks. The 'reform' of apartheid has now unleashed a wave of black revolt which must be smashed if white South Africa is to survive.

The rulers of South Africa have created a monster — a white privileged population who will not give up their wealth unless they

are forced to.

All meetings, indoor and out have been banned. Church services have been attacked by the army and police. Over 900 trade union leaders have been arrested and detained without trial. For many their very lives are in danger.

All of this stands in sharp contrast to what happened on 16 June — the anniversary of the Soweto uprising. The whole country was paralysed by the stay away strike that day. Workers seemed to have the confidence to take action and not fear the consequences.

But there doesn't seem to be any process whereby workers feel

confident to continue such action and demand the release of detained leaders.

What the blacks of South Africa need today isn't the smooth talking of the reformers and compromisers.

The regime has shown how easy it is to 'reform' apartheid on the one hand, and increase repression against blacks on the other.

Compromisers have always sown the illusion that the murderers can be convinced of the error of their ways. In doing so they have set back and weakened the movement

for real change. They have opened it up to even greater repression.

What the blacks of South Africa need today is the clear revolutionary leadership of people who know that the time for talking is long past, that apartheid must be completely destroyed, that the Botha regime must be overthrown.

That means mobilising the massive might of the black working class and the energy of the youth in the townships with the perspective of an armed rising against the forces of apartheid.

The option of reform no longer exists in South Africa — revolution really is the only way.

Sir Bob's quotes of the year



WEEK ONE
This is crap.

On Sir Geoffrey Howe's speech given to the United Nations debate on famine in Africa

WEEK TWO
'Run by thugs, or representatives of thugs'

On the United Nations

WEEK THREE
'I am delighted and deeply honoured'

On the news of his honorary knighthood, given on the recommendation of and presented by Sir Geoffrey Howe

ICTU ducks sectarianism

THE LEADERSHIP of the trade union movement has once again run scared from taking a position on the national question and, in particular, from challenging the blatant sectarianism of its loyalist members.

On the opening day of the ICTU's annual conference in Belfast at the start of July, the out-going president of

Congress, Jim McCusker, made a passionate plea for the trade union movement in Ireland to remain neutral on the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

McCusker preferred to adopt an ostrich like stance of the head in the sand saying that "we must respect and indeed uphold the right of people to take different views on issues such as the status

of Northern Ireland and the Anglo-Irish Accord."

He was right in one respect. Trade unionists *should* respect and uphold the right of individual workers to hold different views — so long as such views are not against the interests of the working class. When they do conflict with working class interests then the trade unions should argue with its members against those views.

The ICTU has done just that in the past, for example, on the divorce referendum and the abortion referendum although both these referenda excited passionate disagreements between workers.

What McCusker and the ICTU leadership are really afraid of is the reaction of loyalist union members. Thus, McCusker continued: "Taking a position on one side or other of the debate on the Anglo-Irish accord would also tear asunder the unity of our movement. To those who seek to divide us, I say that the trade union movement rises above the sectarian quagmire."

In fact, it does not. The trade union movement in Ireland has consistently failed to challenge the sectarianism of its loyalist members. There has *never* been a campaign in the trade unions against the massive discrimination against catholics in workplaces like Shorts or Harland and Wolff. In the recent past, the Boilermakers Union was challenged by the Fair Employment Agency and found guilty of operating sectarian recruitment procedures which were keeping catholics out of jobs in the heavy engineering industry.

Similarly, the ICTU opposed the loyalist work stoppage last March, not because of its blatantly sectarian nature but because, they said, it brought "the issue of party politics onto the factory floor and our consistent view has been that we do not agree with people using the workplace as a political arena.

This is simply not true on most political issues. Once again to take the divorce issue — clearly a political one. The ICTU quite correctly issued a leaflet calling for a YES vote and requested trade unionists to distribute them in their workplaces.

That is why the debate at the ICTU conference on the motion proposed by Paddy Logue of Derry Trades Council — which aimed to write politics into the constitution of the ICTU — was so hypocritical. The executive opposed it on the basis that it could destroy the ICTU's unity and it was defeated by a large majority.

In a similar vein, a resolution repeating Congress' opposition to violence "to achieve any political aims" was passed but qualified by John Carroll, the incoming president, who said that the executive would not like it to be seen as condemning the actions of those driven to violence in self defence as in South Africa, Poland and South America. Carroll and the ICTU leadership do not, it seems, consider it possible that people might be driven to violence in self defence on this island.

Behind this resolution too, lies the unwillingness, even fear of the ICTU to challenge the vicious sectarianism of its loyalist members. Unity among workers is absolutely necessary if we are ever to defeat the boss class. But that unity can never be built by simply ignoring the sectarian ideas which bind loyalist workers to their Unionist bosses and keep them divided from their nationalist fellow-workers.

A campaign is needed in the unions to force the ICTU to face up to this vital question for class unity in this country. Resolutions like the one proposed by Derry Trades Council should be put through in workplaces, at Branch level and at union conferences.



TAX FRAUD

DESPITE THE government's repeated statements that we have all been paying less tax in the last two years, their own recently released figures say quite the opposite.

In fact, the exchequer returns show that the burden of PAYE tax continues to grow. In the first 25 weeks of 1986, the Exchequer collected some £1,081 million from income tax payers, an increase of £131 million or 13.8% on the amount of income tax paid in the same period of 1985.

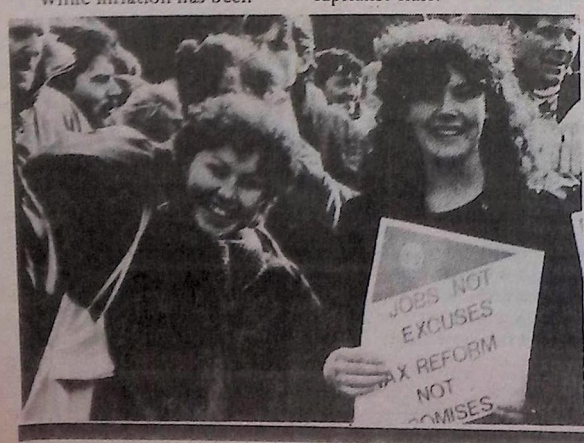
On the other hand, the much-praised drop in the inflation rate is not quite as great as they've led us to believe. Prices in Ireland (as if you didn't already know!) are actually rising at a rate faster than in most EEC countries.

While inflation has been

reduced to between 1%-2½% over the past year in most Western developed economies, in Ireland the inflation rate remains at 4.4% — one of the worst rates in the EEC.

Prices to the consumer have fallen in many countries — in Ireland they continue to rise. Much of the blame for the continuing hike in prices can be placed at the door of the government's decision to abolish price controls without putting anything in their place.

As a result, the fall in prices that the person on the street might have expected following the fall in oil and import prices simply hasn't happened. Instead the extra profit has gone straight into the pockets of the ruling capitalist class.



EMIGRANTS SHIPPED BACK

PAT JENNINGS, from Finglas, became an illegal immigrant in Canada.

According to the Irish government, there are now 15,000 emigrating each year from Ireland. But that figure wasn't counting the likes of Pat who are "illegals".

"I was out of work for over 4 years when I decided to go, I borrowed off my family and friends for the ticket. I got a tourist visa for a month's stay. Any time longer than that and you have to show an extra £500 for each month".

Pat got a job as a tree planter outside Vancouver, "The money looked good at first", said Pat. "You got £65 a day. But you had to work out in the back of nowhere and live in a tent. You paid £15 a day for food. You had to buy your own boots and shovel. If any trees were

damaged, you paid for them. You even had to buy your own tent".

Pat didn't survive for long. The emigration authorities picked him up. "They got me on a routine check — or so they said. They had no warrant or anything — but they treated us like animals. My mate was handcuffed and dragged off to the police station. We were kept over night and brought before an immigration board. We were given 'voluntary departure'".

It all happened so quick that Pat was done out of some of his wages that were held back. Today he is back on the dole in Finglas.

In the 60s, the likes of Pat could gain citizenship fairly easily. Nowadays, they are pulling down the shutters at home and abroad.

LUNDS' LAW

HENRY LUND, boss of the Clondalkin Paper Group, is well pleased. The value of his company has shot up sixfold since 1981. A £1,000 worth of shares in Clondalkin Paper Group in 1981 is now worth £6,328.

But how does Henry do it? What is the secret behind this genuine Irish entrepreneur that the "begrudgers" love to hate?

Very simple. In 1981, Henry Lund made 470 workers redundant at the Clondalkin Paper Mills. He

paid out the miserly sum of £110 per years' service in redundancy settlements. Many of the workers had been there for 14 years. He then sold the mill back to the state for £1.7 million. They in turn sold it off to the Canadian company FMI at a subsidised price in order to ward off pressure to nationalise.

There is absolutely no truth in the rumour that Henry Lund considered becoming a Self-Aid sponsor.

FF FUDGE

THE RESPONSE of Fianna Fail to the defeat of the divorce referendum has been most enlightening. Mr. Haughey and his cronies are not, it seems, worried that the entire population of the Six Counties — nationalist and loyalist alike — might be nervous for their civil liberties if a 32 County version of the Free State were to be established.

There's no need for our Northern brothers and sisters to worry because Fianna Fail would not dream of removing their right to contraception free on the Health Service, nor to abortion in the case of rape, danger to the woman's health or gross abnormality of the foetus. Gays in the North need not worry that their right to have sexual relations with whom they

please will be destroyed. And divorce too will remain.

However, before anyone in the 26 Counties starts thinking that a united capitalist Ireland under Charlie Haughey would be a lot better than what they have now, read on.

Haughey does not foresee these very limited civil liberties being extended to the South. Instead, he would see partition effectively remaining with different laws North and South — the only difference being that the laws would be enforced by Dublin alone, instead of Dublin and London.

Fianna Fail's position is an indication that they, like Socialist Worker, recognise that a truly united, capitalist Ireland is not possible. What they don't want to understand is that a socialist one is.



SOUTH AFRICA:
THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION
ALEX CALLINICOS

Available at 85p post free from SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

WE THINK



A Carnival of Reaction

THE DEFEAT OF THE DIVORCE referendum shows what enormous power the Catholic Church still wields in Southern Ireland. A month before the referendum opinion polls showed a 20% majority in favour of change. But by voting day the Church had managed to turn that around into a 63 - 37 majority against change. No other institution in Ireland is capable of exerting that sort of influence. Any notion that the power of the Church would fade gradually away has been shown to be nonsense. The power of the Church will have to be confronted and fought.

MODEST

The proposal put before the people was a very modest one. It provided that couples would have to be separated for five years before they could even begin the process of obtaining a divorce. Everybody knows that it does NOT take five years to establish that a relationship has irretrievably broken down. For example, a woman being battered by a drunken lout doesn't need five years to work out that there's no way she's

going back for more of the same.

The five-year condition was put into the proposal by the Coalition Government in an effort to show the Bishops that there was nothing terribly radical about the measure - which there wasn't. But the Bishops weren't going to be bought off by any concession. They interpreted it for what it was: a sign of weakness. They went in for the kill, and killed the measure stone dead.

DEBATE

Throughout the campaign the Government which had put the proposal forward provided no leadership at all. Unable to carry their own members with them, they fumbled and fudged and accepted the terms of debate laid down by the sectarian anti-divorce brigade - concentrating on property and succession rights and the division of land, and all the time assuring the Bishops that divorce wouldn't really weaken the Church's position in society.

The people who mattered most had almost been forgotten by referendum day. The thousands

who are trapped in loveless relationships and with no legal means of escape. The children of 'unofficial' relationships who will still be dubbed 'illegitimate'. The many, many people who made a mistake in an early stage of their lives and who are now condemned to live with it all the rest of their days. The referendum result means misery for many thousands of people. But of course that doesn't bother the Bishops in their palaces one bit.

RUTHLESS

It should be noted that the Church was utterly ruthless in its use of every institution available to it. Not only were the pulpits turned into political platforms but children as young as five, six and seven were brow-beaten in Catholic schools and dragooned into carrying anti-divorce propaganda home to their parents. The ferocious commitment of the Church wasn't matched by the liberals in the leadership on the other side.

The reason for this is that liberals like FitzGerald, Spring

and the Divorce Action Group are not opposed to the social power of the Catholic Church as a matter of principle.

They are opposed only to some aspects of it, and only when - as on the divorce issue - there is a sizeable lobby pressuring them into taking a stance. They are 'soft' on the issue because there is an important respect in which the power of the Church is very useful to them.

The Church has always been an important force in maintaining 'order' and 'discipline' in this society. Particularly at a time when the economy is in crisis and thousands of working class people, especially young people, are alienated from all authority, the Church plays key role in ensuring that things don't slide out of control. Its open condemnation of Republicans who challenge the Northern state is vitally important to FitzGerald.

Spring etc. Just as important is the fact that it has always been ready to denounce and try to isolate 'reds' or 'extremists' or 'agitators' who would try to give political direction to the anger of those exploited and oppressed by the capitalist society we live in.

The people who run this society, the ruling class and its political representatives need the Catholic Church. That's why they will always be half-hearted in challenging it.

SECTARIANISM

Only those who are committed to the overthrow of capitalist society can take the Church on frontally. If it's ever to succeed the fight against sectarianism has to be carried on in the context of the struggle for socialism.

Unless all those who regard themselves as socialist face up to this fact we will be condemned to long years of what Connolly predicted would be the result of partition: the division of the country into Catholic-majority and Protestant-majority states, and a carnival of reaction in both of them.

DOCK JOBS UNDER THREAT

IN THE DAYS when Ireland was Britain's first colony and the Americas were a mere start to the extension of that empire, Cork harbour was one of the busiest ports in the world.

One indication of this is that the Cork Butter Exchange set the world price for that important commodity. There were also cotton, linen and woolen mills in the hinterland availing of the excellent harbour.

In this century there was an important naval base at Haulbowline in the lower part of the harbour and things looked rosy when the mighty Ford company built its first manufacturing plant outside the U.S.A. at the Marina in Cork.

There were trade unions in Cork from the 18th century and there was a branch of Marx's First International in the 19th century. In the early years of the emerging Free State a workers' Soviet was set up on the docks, inspired by the Russian revolution.

In more recent years, Cork has been badly hit by the

general crisis in capitalism and especially affected because of its vulnerable position as a centre of older, heavy industry. Fords, Dunclops and Verolme Dockyard are the most well known closures but there have been dozens of others. Even the survivors, Irish Steel, N.E.T., Pfizers have had regular cut-downs in the numbers of workers every year.

In 1979 there was a 6.2 million tonnes throughput in the port. In 1982 this had dropped to 3.1 million tonnes and latest figures show the figures hovering at only the 4.0 million tonne mark.

The dockers, unlike those in Dublin docks where there is a regularised work force are entirely casual in Cork. They are employed by private stevedores. The former 331 ITGWU members have recently been cut to 285 by voluntary redundancy and without any fight.

There are another 150 'black card' dockers who, after five years, can apply for a full 'badge'. At the bottom of the pile are another 150 'floaters' who are

entitled to nothing, not even union membership.

Containerisation has, of course, changed the whole nature of dock work and much of the work has shifted to a container terminal at Tivoli further down the harbour.

"Changes in management and new work practices by the dockers" have increased the business at the Tivoli terminal and there is some evidence that some of the business is coming from other ports. Smaller ports like Dungarvan, Kinsale, Fenit, Foynes, Westport, Greenore - with "less restrictive labour practices" are all increasing business at the expense of the bigger ports but, fortunately for the unionised workforces these places do not have facilities to handle the larger cargoes such as the 30 ton containers.

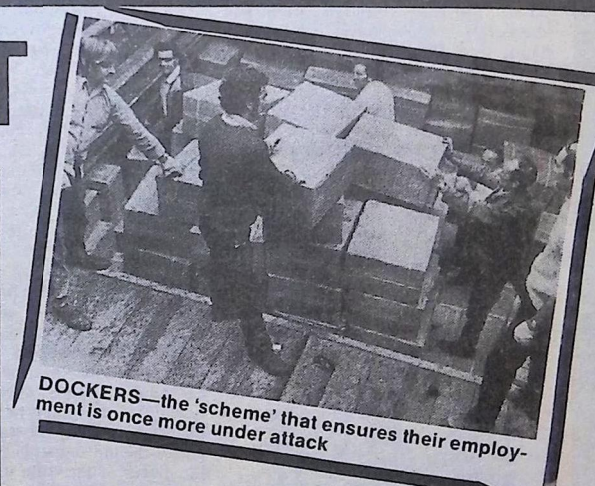
Tivoli terminal, on the other hand, with its large handling capability may be increasing its business at the expense of ports like Waterford. Certainly the new general manager of Cork port, Pat Keenan is boasting about the excellent

industrial relations which has given us 40 years without a strike".

Looming large for dock workers everywhere in Ireland is the partly-begun Ringaskiddy terminal with its proposed £100 million cost and its 60,000 ton ship-handling capacity. (Cork docks can handle only 15,000 ton ships.)

It is clear from the plans for the "free port" of Ringaskiddy that the employers want to scrap whatever little rights casual dockers in Cork have won over the years. In the Cork Harbour Commission's Plan of Jan. 1985, there are listed seven 'malpractices' which they say they intend to do away with at the move to Ringaskiddy. Their phrase is "only the most efficient work practices will be acceptable at Ringaskiddy". Translated into English, that means one man doing the work of three - so fewer workers.

It is obvious that, with reduced world trade all round and with only the smallest pick-up on the horizon, any



DOCKERS—the 'scheme' that ensures their employment is once more under attack

increased business for Ringaskiddy must come from somewhere else and that must be at the expense of other Irish ports.

Cobh which already has unused deep water facilities is being fobbed off with the possibility of an onshore base for oil and gas finds offshore. At the moment, with the slump in prices of oil and gas, this is a long-term hope.

Port and dock workers throughout the country must find a way of working together to ensure that they are not played off against one another by the bosses.

There must be a real attempt to ensure that

increased productivity through containerisation and mechanised handling does not mean further losses of jobs.

A shorter working week, such as that fought for by American longshoremen, could mean real gains for the working class.

The kind of big redundancy packages which laid off the 45 Cork dockers have nothing to do with the trade unionism of Larkin and Connolly. It is possible to stop the disease of increasing unemployment. But only if there is a real fight-back against all job losses.

— JIM BLAKE



TEN YEARS AFTER THE Soweto uprising the struggle in South Africa has reached a new pitch of intensity with Botha's imposition of the 'state of emergency'. The fight to smash the apartheid state is now truly a life or death struggle.

The mass of black workers continue to look to the ANC and its sympathisers in the UDF for leadership. But these organisations have not attempted to mobilise the power of the working class against the state. Instead they rely on community-based action or guerilla warfare.

But is the heroism of the black masses enough to defeat the entrenched power of the apartheid regime? Here, Socialist Worker offers a Marxist analysis of the forces involved and points the way towards revolution and final victory.

TWO MAIN strands have existed within the resistance in South Africa. The first, and by far the largest, is that associated with the African National Congress and the United Democratic Front. It is often called 'populist'.

It argues that apartheid can only be broken by a movement that brings together all sections of the black population, including the black middle classes, the respectable community leaders and the handful of black millionaires.

This movement can win, it is argued, by pressuring the state into negotiations. The power to achieve this goal will come from a combination of mass activity to make the townships 'ungovernable' on the one hand, and the hit-and-run military actions carried out by the clandestine cells of the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, on the other.

'Ungovernability'

This strategy bases itself on the experience of liberation struggles in other countries such as Algeria, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe. In each of these cases a combination of armed struggle by an organised minority and mass backing from the majority forced the oppressor to the negotiating table after bitter, long drawn out wars.

But the South African state has, so far, shown remarkable cohesion when faced with a rebellion of approaching 80 percent of the country's population.

This is not Algeria, the Portuguese colonies or Vietnam, where the brunt of the fighting had to be carried out by unwilling conscripts from Europe or the US. Nor is it Rhodesia, where the whites were only 3 percent of the population.

The core of South Africa's armed forces is the local, highly privileged white minority. These man its tanks and its aircraft, run its jails, sit in its courts, wield its batons and lash out with its whips.

The near identity of the white minority and the state means that the armed forces can show a very high level of cohesion. It also means that the white minority can put up massive resistance to even the most minimal inroads into their privileges.

That is why, 24 years after Algeria got its independence and seven years



Police whip black and white protesting students in Johannesburg, 30 May 1986. But the struggles will only be maintained if they are coordinated

What is to be done?

after white Rhodesia bit the dust, the South African government is still capable of imposing its state of emergency, arresting people wholesale, and murdering indiscriminately.

While such a state machine remains intact, it is capable of out-gunning the guerrilla organisations arrayed against it. It can also begin to regain some of its control over the townships if the tactic of 'ungovernability' is the only one it confronts.

The mobilisation in the townships has kept going on the basis of massive heroism in the face of appalling police brutality for 21 months now.

But the townships cannot exist without resources from outside, and eventually some sections of the population are going to be prepared to do dirty deals with the state to get these, unless the movement begins to threaten the power of the state itself.

We have already seen this with the police-armed vigilantes in Crossroads and the licensed-to-kill Inkatha movement of Chief Buthelezi in the Durban area.

Stranglehold

This problem of maintaining a high level of community-based struggle is not some new feature peculiar to the South African situation.

In the case of Algeria, for instance, the first centre of resistance to the French was the Arab part of Algiers, the Casbah. For a time the liberation movement virtually ran the area. But the first revolt failed to break the power of the state, and the state succeeded in regaining its stranglehold for a number of years.

As the leaders of the Russian revo-

lution once put it:

'The different states of a revolutionary process, in which the more extreme always supersedes the less, express the growing pressures to the left of the masses—so long as the swing in the movement does not run into objective obstacles. When it does, there begins a reaction: disappointment of the different layers...growth of indifference, and therewith a strengthening of the counter-revolutionary forces.'

The other current in the resistance is made up of the 'workerists'. These have put the stress on exploiting the opportunities that have opened up in recent years for the building of more or less legal trade unions.

They have rightly seen that the black workers now have an industrial muscle which the white power structure cannot ignore. For instance, the apartheid state can ban reporting of police massacres of the school students or the unemployed in the townships. It could not ban for more than a few days reports of a successful strike

in the gold or diamond mines, since this would pose grave problems for the bankers who hold the state's purse-strings.

It is this which explains why at present some of South Africa's biggest businesses are begging the government to introduce reforms. They know that their wealth depends upon the labour of an increasingly skilled and organised black working class.

But the 'workerists' have made a mistake of their own. They have not seen that, faced with the apartheid state, trade unionism itself can only survive if political questions are dealt with.

Insurrectionary

A mass strike can throw the state onto the defensive in a way which the township uprisings and the forces of Umkhonto we Sizwe cannot. For strikes can deny the state the resources it needs to fight back—the finance to pay its troops and police, the oil to keep its tanks moving.

But strikes alone cannot smash the power of the state. At the end of the day it can rely on hardship forcing people back to work, and then it can move in to smash up their organisations.

Strikes over economic demands, like strikes by metal workers and miners in recent years, are a marvellous way of building up the muscle of the black working class. One-day general strikes like that on May Day and that of last Monday are a wonderful demonstration of power. But the exercise of power requires more than that: it demands the mass strike as part of an insurrectionary onslaught on the state.

Mass strikes are the only weapon

capable of opening up the deep rifts within the white ruling class needed to paralyse the apartheid state temporarily. But they need to be coordinated with other struggles, such as those in the townships and the schools, and to be followed through by the mass armed action needed to destroy the power of the state once and for all.

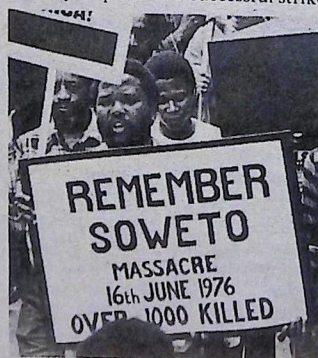
But none of this is likely to happen unless there exists an organisation, a revolutionary party, which fights within the black working class round such a perspective.

The ANC is not such an organisation. Its stress on alliances of all classes, its prioritising of the townships and its belief in guerrilla tactics have all meant that it has not put the effort into building a current in the factories and mines committed to using the black workers' economic power for revolutionary, political ends.

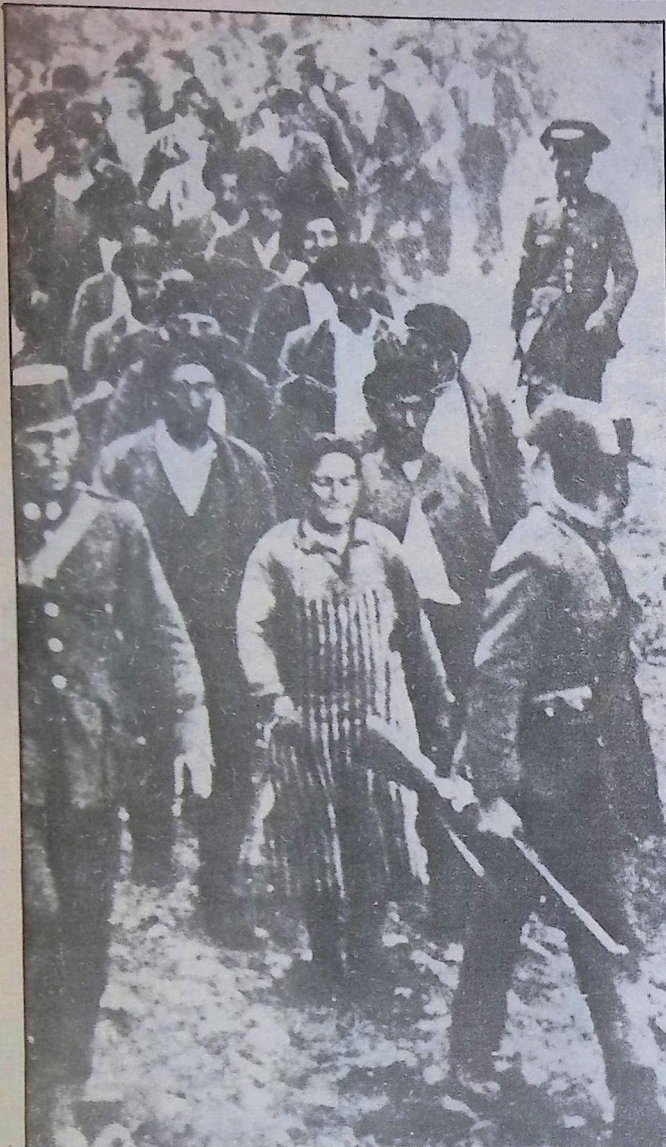
The black trade unions are not such an organisation either. They cannot be, for by their very nature trade unions have to unite workers with quite different political beliefs, with the most backward as well as the most advanced ideas, even when the level of struggle is relatively low.

There cannot be any substitute for minority organisation of conscious revolutionaries who seek to lead the rest of the black working class into an assault on the power of the state at the highest point in the struggle.

If such a party existed in South Africa today, we could well be witnessing the last days of the apartheid regime. If it does not, there will probably have to be very many more bitter struggles before the black working class finally wins.



THE MASSACRE OF THE SPANISH REVOLUTION



Asturian peasants being rounded up after fleeing to the woods, October 1934

FIFTY YEARS ago on July 16 1936, the working class of major Spanish cities rose in answer to a military bid for power by General Franco. By the end of the year they had beaten back the fascist threat with their workers' militias.

Yet ultimately they lost—not for lack of arms, nor lack of will or courage but mainly due to the false and counter-revolutionary ideas of the pro-Moscow Communist Party and of the reformist Socialist Party.

DERMOT BYRNE explains . . .

With international capitalism in deep recession, the mid-1930s saw the rise of fascism all over Europe. Hitler had come to power in Germany; Mussolini in Italy. The international policy of the pro-Moscow Communist parties had argued against a united front of all socialists against the threat of fascism.

The defeat of the revolution in Germany in 1923 and the failure of revolutions elsewhere in Europe had left revolutionary Russia isolated. This isolation, combined with the massacres, famine, and decimation of the working class caused by the war against the invading "white" armies, opened the door to counter-revolution in Russia and the crushing of the workers' councils.

Stalin, who had virtually become a dictator by the early 30s, needed to cover up the counter-revolution by giving himself a left-wing image. The result was a line of argument which labelled any left wingers not in the Communist parties as "social-fascists". This ridiculous argument made it impossible to build a real mass movement against the very real threat of Hitler's fascism and Germany was lost to the Nazis. With Hitler in power however Joseph Stalin swung the world Communist parties to the right. The policy now was that anybody, including liberals and reformist middle class who opposed fascism must be united with the Communist parties into a "popular front". When the Spanish civil war broke out it was this popular front policy which dominated the Communist party of Spain. Because of this alliance with the middle class and anti-socialist parties, the workers

of Spain found themselves up against not just Franco and his troops but also the majority Communist and Socialist parties who were willing to drop all the workers' and peasants' demands which conflicted with those of their middle class allies.

ABOLISHED

In 1931, the monarchy in Spain was abolished and a Republic declared. Spanish society which had suffered under a backward dictatorship for many years began to open up and look for democracy. A short lived Republican government was elected, only to be defeated in 1933, when a right wing government came to power.

With the establishment of union rights and land seizures by the peasants, the Spanish workers and peasants were becoming more radical. In 1933 the CNT, which was the main Anarchist union with over one million members, launched an ill-fated insurrection during which over 100 workers were killed. In the province of Asturias a miners strike led to the workers taking power. But, isolated, they were defeated by the army led by Franco and 3,000 were killed.

In December 1935 new elections brought in a Popular Front government comprising Communists, Socialists and middle class parties. With the election of the new government, a wave of militancy shook Spain. Strikes and factory occupations as well as land seizures by poor peasants began to frighten both the ruling class and the right wing elements in the government. At this stage, the

Popular Front acted as a referee between the working class and the ruling class but chiefly it acted to dampen down workers' militancy and undermine working class confidence.

The main revolutionary organisations were very ambiguous in their attitude to the Popular Front, and indeed to the State itself. In the 1933 elections for example, the CNT anarchist union urged, "Workers don't vote. The vote is a negation of your personality . . . all politicians are enemies . . . we need neither a state nor a government. Do not be concerned whether left or right emerge triumphant from this farce. Parliament is a filthy house of prostitution. Destroy your ballot paper."

The CNT, although a fantastic fighting organisation was syndicalist, that is, it thought workers could take power through a general strike alone. It did not see the need to smash the state nor for a revolutionary party of workers which would argue within the working class for the seizing of power.

On the 16th and 17th July 1936, with the aid of Moroccan troops Franco invaded Spain. He was there to defend the Spanish ruling class and the Catholic church. The workers revolted and occupied factories; peasants began to shoot the hated landlords and divide up the land between themselves. Workers came out onto the streets demanding arms.

In Catalonia a new economic order was brought into being. It was here that the writer George Orwell first saw the real power of the workers which he wrote about in "Homage to Catalonia".

Factories were under workers' control, cinemas and shops were under the control of the community. Free medicine was introduced along with creches, abortion rights, free cafes and free transport.

With two-thirds of Spain now in the workers' hands, a socialist revolution was on the cards. Franco, who had expected a quick victory, was beaten back.

The parties of the Popular Front "government" however had other things in mind than workers' power. The Communist Party—influenced by Moscow's foreign policy of not wanting to upset the French and British capitalist classes—decided that the fight was to restore democracy and a republican Spain.

So the Communists and Social-Democrats began to restore law and order and to give greater power to the regular army and its officers. One by one, factories and landed estates were restored to their owners; workers were chucked out often at gunpoint.

The CP gained influence mainly because it controlled the International Brigades and because it controlled arms from Russia. On September 4th 1936 a new government was formed with Largo Caballero as its head. The anarchist CNT took two seats in this new government. By so doing it gave the government more credibility and left anarchist workers confused and demoralised. Gone was the ultra-left "Burn your Ballot papers" slogans as CNT leaders were incorporated into a new Popular Front.

The war against Franco's Fascists raged on despite the attempts by the Popular Front to restore "law and order"

In many parts of Spain huge collectives were founded. In Barcelona collectivisation extended from bankers to bootblacks. In Aragon, where the anarchists had a great influence, over 430,000 peasants were collectivised covering three quarters of the land. Throughout the country 1,865 collectives were formed involving 1,600,000 people.

The main question of taking political power into the hands of the working class was still to be posed however. The absence of any genuinely revolutionary socialist party with a clear understanding of the need for state power and the influence among workers to be able to argue for its seizure, was to prove fatal to the outcome of the civil war.

With CNT participation in the government, the destruction of the revolution was accelerated. Gradually authority behind the lines was being re-established and the Communist Party in particular, aided greatly by the

influx of Russian aid and "advisors" was getting stronger all the time.

Communist Party forces clashed with workers' militias that would not give up their arms. On May 3rd 1937 forces controlled by the Catalan Communist Party moved to take the Barcelona Telephone Exchange—a symbol of workers power in the city—from the CNT. Rank and file members of the CNT, and the semi-Trotskyist POUM took over the streets as the police and Communist Party moved in. Over 500 were killed. At the end of the fighting a newly formed anarchist group—"The Friends of Durruti", the Libertarian Youth, some POUM members and a handful of Trotskyists finally gave in as the police occupied the city. Stalinists loyal to the Communist Party launched a bloody purge, massacring anarchists and Trotskyists with a zeal which would have been better used against the fascists.

Meanwhile collectivisation was stopped, and factories and lands returned to their former owners. Strikes were forbidden and new powers given to the police to abolish workers' patrols. A new right wing socialist, Negrin, became head of the government.

A full blooded counter-revolution was now underway which was playing right into the hands of the Fascists. Everything was subordinated by the Popular Front to winning "liberal" capitalist support. The Communist Party and Socialist Party restored "law and order" to the regular army and began to strangle the militancy of the Spanish working class.

As Joseph Stalin sought new pacts with the West, the distribution of Russian aid was strictly controlled by Russian agents loyal to the Spanish CP.

RESTORE

As the Popular Front attempted to seek Western aid to restore "law and order", Republican Spain General Franco's army was closing in on Madrid. In the end the rulers of western capitalism and their allies, the Catholic Church realised that when the chips are down, Franco was the best bet to ensure the restoration of Spanish capitalism.

The tragic events of Spain are still relevant today, fifty years later. Time and time again workers have fought capitalism, only to be sold down the river by reformist and pro-Moscow parties. In Spain the working class were in a position to take state power but there was no mass revolutionary party to push for it.

It was the failure of many genuine socialists and anarchists to see the need for the creation of an alternative state, based on the armed power of the workers at the front, in the factories and on the land.

Today if we are to learn anything from Spain in 1936 it must be that there is no parliamentary road to workers' power. There is no way of overthrowing capitalism in stages. Now, as in 1936, a revolutionary party is necessary to ensure final victory against the armed might of the ruling class

Revolutions that are defeated are soon forgotten. Yet the defeat of the German revolution after the First World War radically shaped the world we live in today, opening the door for both Hitler and Stalin.

THE LOST REVOLUTION
Germany 1918-1923
by Chris Harman

£7.00 post free from:
SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

IS RUSSIA SOCIALIST

WHEN THE nuclear disaster happened at Chernobyl the western establishment had a field day. The press and politicians talked of Russian "backwardness" and secrecy and implied that "socialism" was to blame.

They conveniently ignored accidents at Windscale in Britain and Three Mile Island in the US. These would have been as bad as Chernobyl but for sheer luck and the secrecy surrounding them was no different from that of the Kremlin.

The western bosses were, in fact, almost using the disaster and the callous disregard shown for human life by the Moscow bureaucrats, as further "proof" that "communism" does not work.

RUSSIA

The idea that Russia is socialist is a powerful weapon for our rulers. If workers identify socialism as consisting of secret police, labour camps and mass poverty then they will obviously not try to bring it about in the west.

In Russia itself, the rulers regard themselves as socialist and pay homage to Marx and Lenin.

For them it is also an ideological weapon. If Russian workers were to realise that the Kremlin had departed from everything which the Bolshevik party stood for, Gorbachev and his colleagues would be shaking in their boots!

Many on the left still cling to the idea that Russia is somehow socialist. This is true of the western Communist Parties although some of these admit that the USSR is not a workers' paradise, that there are "imperfections".

ANALYSIS

The experience of the CPs proves the importance of having a correct analysis of Russian society. Their belief that a centralised bureaucracy represents socialism, or has something to do with a transition to socialism, has led them into collaboration with "progressive" ruling-class parties in Europe and elsewhere. In several countries this has led to defeat for the working class and in some cases for example Spain in 1936 and Chile in 1973, disaster.

To put it simply, if socialists are to believe that what goes on in Russia is socialism, or that a Russian-style society is a stage in the fight for socialism, then they will make that their goal.

If on the other hand they reject the idea an alternative will be sought.

Theory, which is developed

Feature by:
DAVE McDONAGH

from the experience of history, is what determines practice. In the case of Russia the theory is very important.

The basic idea of Marxism is that of workers' control of the means of production.

When the October Revolution happened in Russia in 1917, the working class took control of the factories, shops, offices, etc. Soviets, or workers' councils were elected by the masses with each member being subject to recall at any time. Russia was no longer run in the interests of a tiny ruling class but was instead run by the workers in the interests of the vast majority of Russian people.

That kind of workers' democracy no longer exists even though Russia is still called the "Soviet" Union. Russia is no longer a workers' state because it is not controlled by workers.

The USSR's defenders will answer this last point by saying that all industry in Russia is nationalised, therefore it is a workers' state. Or, to put it another way, the non-existence of private ownership implies socialism, or at least a transition to socialism.

CENTURY

But even as long ago as the end of the last century Friedrich Engels, who along with Karl Marx had written the Communist Manifesto and was also a leading theoretician in his own right, stated that the tendency of capitalism was away from private ownership:

"What does capitalist private production mean then? Production by a single entrepreneur, and that is of course becoming more and more an exception. Capitalist production through limited companies is already no longer private production, but production for the combined account of many people."

Since then, nationalisation of key industries has become commonplace in many countries. This has been brought about not only by Labour Governments, who claim to do it in the name of "socialism", but also by conservative governments. In fact, we need look no further than Ireland, where there has never been a majority Labour government, to see that this is so.

CIE, Aer Lingus, RTE and Telecom are all state-controlled companies.

Yet in the present crisis they are all driving down wages and conditions and looking for redundancies. This is not done for the benefit of the working class so how can it have any thing to do with socialism? It hasn't. In fact it is state

capitalism, capitalism controlled by the state and run in the interests of a privileged minority.

Russia is the same except that there all production is under the control of the state.

The driving force of capitalism is not private ownership of the means of production—it is in fact competition.

CAPITALIST

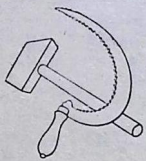
Every capitalist concern—whether it be a private company or a nation-state—has to compete with other similar concerns in order to survive. By exploiting workers, the capitalists make profits and the needs of ordinary human beings take second place.

If profits are to be made the most efficient methods of production must be used. This demands investment. Capitalists have no choice but to re-invest their profits, to "accumulate capital".

Capitalism is a society in which competition forces the accumulation of capital. As Karl Marx put it in "Capital": "Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the prophets! . . . Therefore, save, save, ie re convert the greatest portion of surplus value, or surplus product into capital! Accumulation for accumulation's sake, production for production's sake."

And that is exactly what happens in Russia. Vast amounts of wealth are accumulated so that competition with the west can be maintained.

Tony Cliff—a leading member of the Socialist Workers' Party, our fraternal organisation in Britain—termed the Russian system Bureaucratic State Capitalism.



STATE CAPITALISM IN RUSSIA

by Tony Cliff
The classic critical analysis of the economic and social structure of Russia after Stalin.
ISBN 0-902818-51-5
309 pages paperback

£2.00 post free from: S.W. M. P O Box 1648, Dublin 8.

The competition which Russia faces is more military than economic—every NATO missile pointing towards the East must be matched by one targeted on the West—but the dynamic of accumulation for accumulation's sake is the same as in the West.

So why then did the Russian Revolution fail?

Some would point to "human nature". They would argue that any attempt to bring about a classless and truly equal society is doomed to failure because human beings are "naturally" greedy.

But greed is not a permanent thing: it is caused by scarcity. In the past scarcity meant that society had to be driven forward by a ruling class in order to develop the means by which everyone could have enough of what they needed or desired. Capitalism was a stage in this process.

STALIN

Today we have developed those means and class society is no longer necessary. We also have a working class which can overthrow the existing order and bring about real freedom and equality. Socialism is now possible.

Joseph Stalin, who ruled Russia with an iron fist for almost thirty years, is often given the entire blame for what happened in Russia.

He was, to say the least, a rather unpleasant character, but it was not his personal lust for power which caused the problem. Stalin just happened to be chosen for the role of dictator—it could have been anyone.

No. The failure of the Revolution had to do with specific conditions.

Socialism must be international. This is because capitalism is international. So socialism cannot be built within one country in isolation. A workers' revolution has to spread in order to survive.

1917

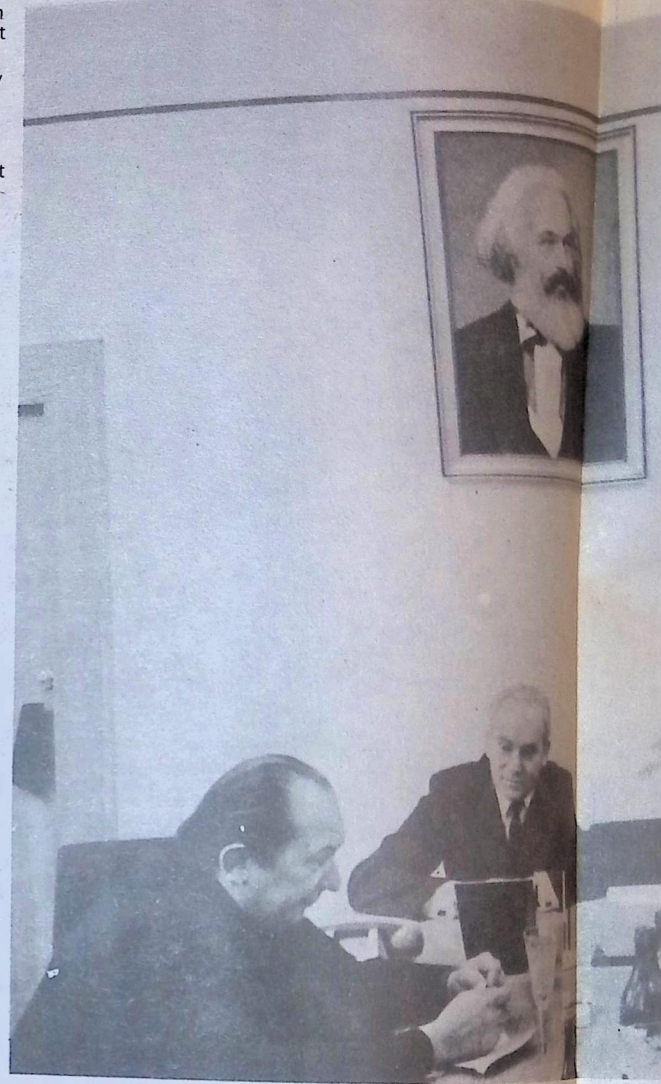
In Russia in 1917 the task was extra urgent. It was a backward country at the time: in fact, productivity of industry in Russia in that year was below that of Britain in 1688! The working class, which made the revolution, was small in terms of the overall population. Survival depended on revolutions occurring in at least a few of the advanced countries.

This did not happen. Revolutions in Germany, Hungary and elsewhere failed and Soviet Russia stood alone.

Then civil war broke out. The invading White Armies were defeated but the Russian working class was decimated in the process.

Lenin and the Bolshevik Party became the custodians of workers' power for a working class which barely existed.

In the midst of poverty and backwardness some Bolsheviks talked of building up industry. Following Lenin's death in 1924, Stalin came to power and soon began to pursue a policy of "building socialism in one country". What he was really talking about was a new Industrial Revolution inside



Could be a meeting of the Board anywhere in the world

...OR STATE

Russia's borders. He said in 1931:

"We are fifty years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this lag in ten years. Either we do it or we are beaten".

It was done by means of intense capital accumulation. Britain's industrial revolution, which took place between 1760 and 1840, was equalled in Russia in the space of a few years.

Brutal exploitation and oppression were the order of the day.

Slave labour was introduced: at the height of the Stalin period, there were millions of prison labourers being worked as slaves on the roads, and in factories.

Piece-work and competition between individual workers were commonplace. A worker named Stakhanov launched a campaign in 1935 whereby the best workers were awarded medals and would set the pace for the rest. These Stakhanovites were hated by

their workmates and many were killed as a result.

Women were again oppressed. Abortion was criminalised and divorce became difficult to obtain. Mothers were awarded medals for having several kids.

New workers had to be produced and fed and raising a family became all-important. Gays were, of course, oppressed for deviating from this "norm".

CLASS

Meanwhile the bureaucrats had become members of a new ruling class complete with privileges such as party shops and special Black Sea resorts.

Those who fought back were severely repressed. The "Great Terror" in the countryside, the hysterical "Purges" with the physical liquidation of masses of party cadre and the spectacular "Show Trials" of the thirties became the political instruments by which Stalin defeated all possible opposition. Scarcely a political leader of

SOCIALIST?



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STATE CAPITALIST?

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the Bolsheviks from 1917 survived the thirties. Leon Trotsky, a renowned Bolshevik and leader of the Red Army in the days of the Civil War, became Stalin's Number One enemy. Although he wrongly believed that Russia was still some sort of workers' state, he argued that a revolution was necessary to overthrow the bureaucracy. For his attempts to organise among the international working class he was murdered, on Stalin's orders, in 1940.

In present-day Russia there is still oppression and poverty but the days of terror are long gone: not because there are nicer people in charge but because Russian State Capitalism no longer requires such brutality.

In the mean time Russia has created a whole number of states in Eastern Europe in its image: complete with centralised bureaucracies, nationalised industry, etc.

Similar regimes exist in countries like Cuba and

Zimbabwe where national liberation movements have come to power. Their existence prompts a number of questions.

If Russia is a workers' state then they too are workers' states. Yet Poland, Hungary and the rest were brought about by Russian Imperialist tanks while Cuba and Zimbabwe were the result of elitist armed struggles. How can they be workers' states if they were not created by the working class?

How can the Eastern Bloc countries be socialist if workers have had to take them on in major struggles as they did in Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Poland in 1980-81?

Theory determines practice. If we are to believe that Russian-style dictatorships are somehow "socialist" then we must believe that socialism can be brought about by an agent other than the working class.

If on the other hand we regard these countries as State

Capitalist then we can stick with the basic ideas of the Marxist tradition: that only the working class can create socialism and that socialism is international or it is nothing.

In Ireland, those who accept the former include the Workers' Party and left-Republicans. Their idea of socialism consists of state-investment to build up industry.

Our idea of socialism is a classless society brought about by workers' revolution on an international scale.

Our task in Ireland is to build a party rooted in the workplace which can lead the struggle for a workers' republic. In order to be consistent in our approach we must reject the myth that Russia is socialist.

Russian workers too must reject this myth. Their task is to overthrow the bureaucratic ruling class. The heroic struggles of workers in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland gave us a glimpse of how this can be done.

SOMEWHERE around the end of 1843 Karl Marx grasped with blinding clarity that the social and economic position of the working class gave it the potential to overthrow capitalism and liberate all humanity from oppression and exploitation.

Since then all genuine Marxism has developed under the sign of this world shaking discovery.

Having made this discovery Marx, not surprisingly, expected to see the working class realise its potential more or less immediately.

He hoped that the impending bourgeois revolution in Germany (in 1848) would be 'but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution'.

He was wrong and in 1850 he had to face the fact that capitalism, having survived its international crisis, had gained a new lease of life. Its immediate overthrow was not on the agenda.

Even so Marx would have thought it most unlikely that capitalism would still be around 136 years later.

The fact is that capitalism has proved more resilient than Marx or any of the Marxists of the past such as Lenin and Trotsky expected.

Let no one tell you that this is because the working class has not fought, or has been bought off by higher wages, or permanently brainwashed into accepting the system, or any of that nonsense.

Power

The class struggle has raged continuously throughout this time, and in the twentieth century its scale and intensity have increased many fold.

In the nineteenth century the working class made only two serious challenges to capitalist rule, in 1848 and 1871. In this century there have been at least 20.

The problem is not that the working class has failed to fight but that it has been repeatedly defeated.

The June insurrection in Paris in 1848 was put down. The first experiment of workers' power in the Paris Commune was crushed.

The second, much greater attempt of the Russian Revolution succumbed to internal Stalinist counter-revolution.

The opportunity for European revolution which was so real in the years 1919 to 1923 and which would have saved Russia from isolation and Stalinism was missed. The penalty was the death camps of Hitler and Stalin and another world war.

The magnificent rising of the Spanish workers in 1936 which could still have turned the tide was betrayed by its leaders' and annihilated by Franco.

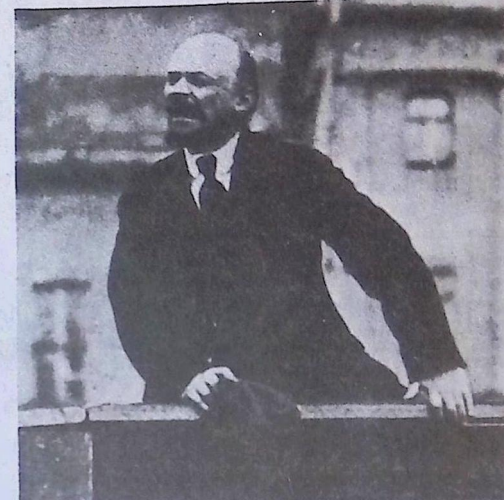
At the end of the war the revolutionary potential of the mass resistance movements in Greece, Italy and France was squandered on orders from Moscow as the price of the deal between the superpowers at Yalta.

In the post-war period the repeated risings against the Stalinist state capitalism in East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia

JOHN MOLYNEUX

Teach yourself MARXISM

Learning the lessons of the past



and Poland were crushed by 'communist tanks'.

In May 1968 the splendid spontaneity of the French workers' general strike was dissipated for lack of revolutionary leadership.

For the same reason the awesome mass mobilisations that ousted the Shah of Iran produced only the Islamic tyranny of Khomeini.

In Chile in 1973 reformism played once again its historic role of delivering the workers' movement into the hands of counter-revolutionary repression.

The roll-call of defeat is a terrible and depressing one but it has to be faced because it is fact.

Moreover, it puts into historical perspective the defeats presently being suffered by the Irish working class as relatively minor setbacks.

So how should revolutionary socialists today respond to this grim history?

Certainly not by despair, for the potential of the working class to challenge capitalism on a world scale is now greater than it has ever been. And unless capitalism is challenged, and indeed overcome, its insane logic will sooner or later destroy us all.

Nor should we respond by looking for alternatives to the working class, for short-cuts through armed struggle or the ballot box.

There is no other social force that has a record of struggle remotely comparable to that of the working class, or with the capacity to create socialism rather than re-establish capitalist exploitation in a

new form. In fact, the quest for alternatives, short-cuts and 'broad alliances' has been one of the main causes of the defeats we have listed.

The only realistic and genuinely revolutionary response is to study the history of the workers' movement.

Learn the lessons of the past and apply them to the present, so as to be prepared for the great class struggles that will inevitably come in the future.

This means turning to Marxist theory, to the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg and Trotsky and those Marxists who have developed their ideas in more recent years.

These writings are not abstract intellectual philosophising for its own sake.

They are, above all, a generalisation of the entire experience of the working class movement of the last 150 years and a guide to action.

The socialists who today equip themselves with the main elements of this rich heritage will not only survive better the depressing circumstance of the present but will be a pledge for the future.

They will constitute a core of active revolutionaries who know what is to be done to put an end to the long history of defeat and begin the real history of human emancipation.

And should you, the reader, wish to act on this advice, there is no better way of doing so than by coming to the Socialist Worker Weekend at the end of Sept. (for details turn to page 9).

ANALYSIS

Why women are bottom of the pile

by
MARY
RYDER



Two images of women: fighters or victim. Strikers from last year's UCD dispute or kitchen drudge?



THE DIVORCE referendum is behind us. One thing was abundantly clear: those who called for a NO vote believed that women also should be kept at home. Their slogans talked of a woman being "supported" by a man. If the husband left, then she was "impoverished". She was seen as a victim of circumstances—someone who had to be protected.

The image of women gets to the heart of the position of women in Ireland. It is simple to say but nevertheless it is true—women are oppressed. In Ireland it is more obvious than most other places. Women make up only 34% of the workforce here. Their wages are less than three quarters of the male average. Women's wages have actually dropped in relation to men's since the Equal Pay legislation came in.

In many areas single women still find it hard to get contraception. It depends on the doctor or the chemist. The abortion amendment gave the same rights to the foetus as to a woman. There are virtually no state funded nurseries, the fact is that more than ten years after a series of laws were passed to give women equal rights, women are still oppressed and put down.

Why is this? Where does women's oppression come from?

This oppression of women starts in the way the family is organised. One of the exciting things about the family is that it is ever changing. And so it can change again from what we know it as today.

The family today is a relatively new invention. And it came with the coming of capitalism. For the ruling class it was essential that they pass on their inheritance (ie their profit to their legitimate heirs).

For this reason; the women they married became their sole property and was treated as such. "My women" must be protected to ensure that the continuation of the line never be in danger. Women became "breeding machines".

The working class family is different. For one thing there was not much inheritance to pass on. But the ideas of our rulers go right through society. The upper class type of family was held up as a model. Today, we are still told to look at the ideal families like Prince Big-Ears and Lady Di. But the working class family also has a more direct economic role.

PROFITS

The working class family, as we know it today, emerged during the industrial revolution. In their battle for never ending profits the capitalist class had to ensure the birth of a new generation of workers. Initially women had been drawn into the workforce in the textile mills as they proved more agile workers and more docile. But when the heavier machinery came into being and the toll on women became too great, the more enlightened capitalists realised that women would not be fit enough to breed and socialise a new generation of workers.

So women were encouraged back into the home to do the work that the state should do: to provide child care facilities to rear, feed, educate and keep healthy the next generation of workers. Women adapted very quickly to this role—as the chance of not continuing in the dull mindless and dangerous jobs that were on offer to their husbands. It was seen as a real escape from the torture of the 19th century

working conditions.

So women accommodated their own oppression and even though feeling isolated felt that they had at least gained some respect from the community as successful mothers.

But this isolation led them to being prey to traditional values. Never being out in the world of struggle their ideas were rarely discussed and so they often remained unchanged. Their husbands adapted and changed and fought against the changing face of capitalism. Both capitalism and one of its chief agents, the Church, saw the advantages of this situation. And women became as we see them portrayed today—the teacher of traditional values, the reproducer of the next generation of workers and the person who services the needs of those workers.

Interestingly enough upper class women do not have the same function. They must produce the next generation but not of workers: they must produce the next generation of the exploiters so the very idea that all women are sisters is an outright lie. Women who see themselves as being sister to all other women are the women who "only look at where women are weakest—when they are raped and battered.

Inherent in that is the idea that man is the enemy. As socialists we say that only women and men united can win women's liberation. Obviously this means disagreeing with the feminist movement. We do not deny that individual men can oppress women and the areas chosen by the women's movement can prove that—in rape, pornography, violence in the home. But what we say is that concentrating on these

issues is concentrating on where women are weakest as victims of male oppression with little hope of change.

We look to fighting women, organised women, where the collective rights of women can be fought for and won—abortion rights, equal rights and equal pay in the workplace, nurseries etc.

Socialists put the blame squarely where it lies—on the shoulders of the ruling class and not on the individual agents of that class—men. The feminist movement encourages a situation where only the ruling class benefit by dividing: men from women.

Divide and rule is the bosses' tactic—men versus women: black versus white. As socialists we identify with struggle of all oppressed groups and try to break down those divisions. Women's oppression is not in the interests of working class men. As long as they support it they are upholding the system in which we live and lose any chance of gaining their own freedom and having some control in their own lives.

ENCOURAGE

That is not to say we do not fight for reforms. We encourage the fight for reforms especially when it helps women to break from seeing themselves as wives and mothers and helps them see themselves as taking part in the struggle liberation for all workers. The UCD strike was a good example of how women's ideas change in struggle.

The part-time workers in this country of which 70% are women are probably one of the most exploited groups of workers. When the women cleaners in UCD went on strike

they realised that they were not only confronting their employers, they were also confronting the state—in the guise of the police.

Their attitude to the Gardai originally was "they're only doing their job". They soon saw the truth.

They were pushed, shoved and knocked to the ground because they were standing up for their rights—out of the window went the idea that women had to be protected—they were workers and had to be kept in line. Also the media coverage was so biased against them they began to question all they read in the newspapers and saw on TV. They realised the media were part of the struggle of the rich against the poor and they had their part to play.

The best example of how ideas can change and how quickly women are involved in struggle must be the miners' strike in Britain.

The miners realised very quickly that if they were to win they would need the support of all those around them—their wives, sisters, girlfriends, mothers included. When the women's support groups were set up they proved to be a tremendous asset to the strike—they were brazen, strong and gave uncritical support to the miners. This meant that the sexist ideas of the miners had to change rapidly. Women were no longer just the page three beauties—they were the comrades in struggle, they stood side by side with the workers and fought as hard and bitterly as the miners themselves—despite all the hype and the pressure: to stay at home and put the emotional pressure on their menfolk to return to work. So many women were politicised and

have begun to question their role after this tremendous activity.

So it can be seen that for women to liberate themselves it is necessary to fight alongside men and for men to be liberated they too must fight for women's liberation.

This is something that is understood and understood very clearly by the ruling class. They will do all in their power to divide this potential union. In Ireland, they use the church to keep women in line. Through the education system, through the forcing of a catholic constitution on this country the church do all in their power to keep women in line because they know if women gain control over their own lives, be it in the area of work, control over their own fertility and begin to make their own decisions—no longer will the role of educator or encourager of traditional values be carried out. And so there will be a danger to the ruling class. Because if women take control they might even learn that they can do things for themselves and pass on that wonderful discovery to others and then what would you have—Revolution! The overthrow of the ruling class. So when it comes to even the minimal reforms to aid women the church must fight against them.

But why then did Fine Gael call for a Yes vote? After all they too are the ruling class. Fine Gael realise that their support lies mainly with the middle and upper middle class who like to term themselves liberal. They are embarrassed by the backward reputation that Ireland has in the western world and they would like to clean up that image but obviously without giving easy access to the majority of the population to the reforms that they intend to introduce. So they will allow divorce but you must wait 5 years and it will cost you a fortune.

ACCEPTABLE

So it will only affect themselves as the rich will be able to afford it. It will not relieve the misery of the lives of many working class men and women who would willingly start a new life with a new partner if it were socially acceptable. Look how Fine Gael liberalised the contraception laws. It was such a lily-livered cowardly advance on what went on in 1979 when we had Haughey's "Irish solution to an Irish problem".

If you want women's liberation you must fight for it. To do that you must fight not just for women's issues, you must fight where all are in struggle. Because every struggle won is one more chink in the ruling class armour and one more advance in our confidence and our ability to fight back. Every struggle is important and it is important to link these struggles to the fight for women's rights and liberation. It is the same struggle as the Corporation workers strike for a decent living wage. When we struggle we learn to know our strength and we learn to build on that strength so that someday we will have the confidence to overthrow the rotten system that forces us to allow people to die of starvation, to allow people to die from radiation from nuclear plants, which pays its workers minimal wages to help keep them in subjection.

LETTERS

Write to PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

Church role must be challenged

The Divorce referendum has shown the massive power of the Catholic Church in this country — a power which must be challenged if the working class is ever going to break from sectarianism, North and South.

It was the Church which stopped the introduction of divorce — there is no doubt about that. It used the schools which were built with our money but are controlled by them, to distribute anti-

divorce literature. And the hospitals — also maintained with tax-payers money — were similarly used.

The holy, catholic and apostolic Republic, that's what the 26 Counties has been proven to be. The Church will have to be taken on if we want to smash the state and build a Workers Republic.

Fran Walsh
Cork

Wrong to attack Catholic power?

I must object to the way in which your paper attacked the Catholic Church in your June issue.

I am an active trade unionist and a socialist but I am also a christian and believe in a person's right to practice his religion. It's true that the Church has sometimes been against some progressive measures but without the Church, how

many of us would have an education? How many of us would have died without the help of Catholic hospitals.

James Connolly said that everyone had a right to their religious beliefs. In a Catholic country, the SWM should respect that right.

Alan McCarthy
Dublin 9.

The Self-Aid scam

Congratulations to the SWM on your principled opposition to Self Aid. That event has now been shown to have been the farce you said it would be. Most of the jobs 'created' on the day have turned out to be hoaxes or else jobs that would have been advertised whether or not the concert had been held.

I actually stayed at home and watched it on TV and the music was great. But when the rubbish about 'projects, ideas and job creation' came on between the music, I was glad that there had been some people calling it what it was — right wing propaganda.

It's reassuring to know that there is a group on the Left with the ability and imagination to organise the kind of opposition you did. Well done!

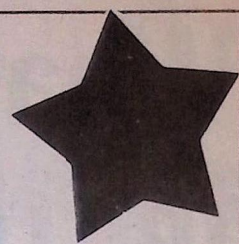
D. Healy
Dublin 12



Old Red Socks takes the cup from Maradona

Two simply written pamphlets spell out the politics of SWM. "What we stand for" contains four articles: on the unions, the North, Women and Russia. "Why we need a revolution in Ireland" spells out the revolutionary socialist case. £1.20 from SWM PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

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Speaker: Alex Callinicos of the British SWP — originally from South Africa, Alex is a marxist author and lecturer in politics

* **NICARAGUA UNDER SIEGE**
Speaker: Mike Gonzalez (SWP, Britain) — author of "Nicaragua: Revolution Under Siege"

* **FROM WOLFE TONE TO GERRY ADAMS: the politics of republicanism**
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WHAT WE STAND FOR

The Socialist Workers Movement is a revolutionary socialist organisation that fights for a workers' republic and international socialism.

The system under which we live, capitalism, is based on production for profit—not for human need. It leads to poverty and war; racism and sexism. It is a system that can only be destroyed by the class which creates all the wealth—the working class.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

Capitalism cannot be patched up or reformed—it must be overthrown. That cannot be achieved through parliament as the Workers Party and the Labour Party argue. The real power in this society lies in the boardroom of big business. The structures of the present parliament, courts, army and police are designed to protect the interests of the ruling class against the workers. At most parliament can be used for propaganda against the system—it cannot be the instrument by which workers destroy the power of the rich.

We therefore stand for a workers' revolution which produces a different and more democratic society—one based on councils of delegates from workplaces and areas who are democratically elected answerable to assemblies and subject to recall at any time.

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

That kind of socialism does not exist anywhere today. Workers have no control over countries like Russia, China or Poland. They are exploited by a state capitalist class. A workers revolution is required in those countries too.

AGAINST PARTITION

The six county Orange state is propped up by British Imperialism. That state divides the working class by the guarantee of marginal privileges in housing and jobs to Loyalist workers. The struggle of Catholic workers to rid themselves of sectarianism and bigotry can only succeed by smashing that state.

The slow task of building working class unity against imperialism must be begun. However imperialism must be fought in the here and now and we support all forces engaged in that struggle regardless of our differences of programme.

We stand for:
The immediate withdrawal of the British Army
The disbandment of the RUC and UDR
No to extradition and collaboration on border security

Connolly wrote that partition would bring a carnival of reaction. He was absolutely right. Irish workers confront two reactionary states. The Southern ruling class have no longer any fundamental conflict of interest with imperialism. They have become junior players in the world capitalist system. Their state props up partition—despite their occasional nationalist rhetoric.

The 'national question' will only be solved in the course of mass working class struggle against both states. Republicanism, by limiting the struggle to nationalist goals, by appealing to all classes in Irish society, can never defeat imperialism. Only a revolutionary socialist organisation that fights openly for the Workers' Republic can unite sections of the working class who have nothing to gain from a bourgeois Eire Nua.

AGAINST ALL OPPRESSION

Revolutionaries oppose all form of oppression that divide and weaken the working class.
We are for real social, economic and political equality for women.

We are for an end to discrimination against homosexuals.
We stand for full separation of the church and state.
We stand for secular control of the hospitals and the schools.

THE UNIONS

Today the trade union movement is dominated by a caste of bureaucrats whose principal aim is to make their compromise with the system. They have destroyed solidarity between workers by the two tier picket system. They have failed to lead any fight over tax, wage cuts and unemployment.

We stand for:

100 percent trade unionism
A 35 hour week to reduce unemployment
The election of all union officials, subject to recall
Against redundancies. We say: occupy to demand nationalisation under workers' control
Full independence of the unions from the state. No reliance on the Labour Courts or the arbitration schemes in the public sector

We fight for the building of a national rank and file movement that links together the best militants to provide an alternative leadership to the trade union bureaucrats.

We fight for the formation of Right to Work committees that link the unemployed to the power of the trade union movement.

THE PARTY

To achieve socialism the most class conscious sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party. The SWM aims to build such a party around its activity in the working class movement. It stands in the tradition of Marx, Lenin, Trotsky and Connolly. We urge all those who agree with our policies to come in and join the SWM.

Nicaragua: REVOLUTION UNDER SIEGE

by Mike Gonzalez

Judge by the reaction of the US, and the Nicaraguan revolution is a Marxist threat on a par with Joe Stalin. According to its supporters, it is a socialist revolution of a new type. Beneath these highly coloured reactions, what is really happening in Nicaragua? Has mass involvement in the over-throw of the Somoza dictatorship been translated into mass democracy? What are the political effects of the US blockade and military threat?

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REVIEWS

What relevance for rock 'n' roll?

Beating Time: Race'n'Riot'n'Rock'n'Roll is a new book by Dave Widgery, a member of the Socialist Workers Party in Britain. It's about the part played by rock music in the fight against fascism in the 70s. Here, EAMONN McCANN looks at some of the differences between the music featured in the book and more recent attempts to use popular music as a means of confronting major problems.

BAND-AID Live-Aid, Self Aid etc. have given rock music a new political relevance. Or so it would seem. Hardly a day passes now without some rock star being quoted on a political issue, from famine and apartheid to the North or the divorce referendum.

This has reached the stage where many rock fans have begun to believe that music is almost a political activity in itself, that, for example, cheering a concert performance of "Sun City" or "Free Nelson Mandela" is a meaningful contribution to the struggle against apartheid.

It is true of course that cheering songs like these is a much more positive activity than listening to pomp-rock

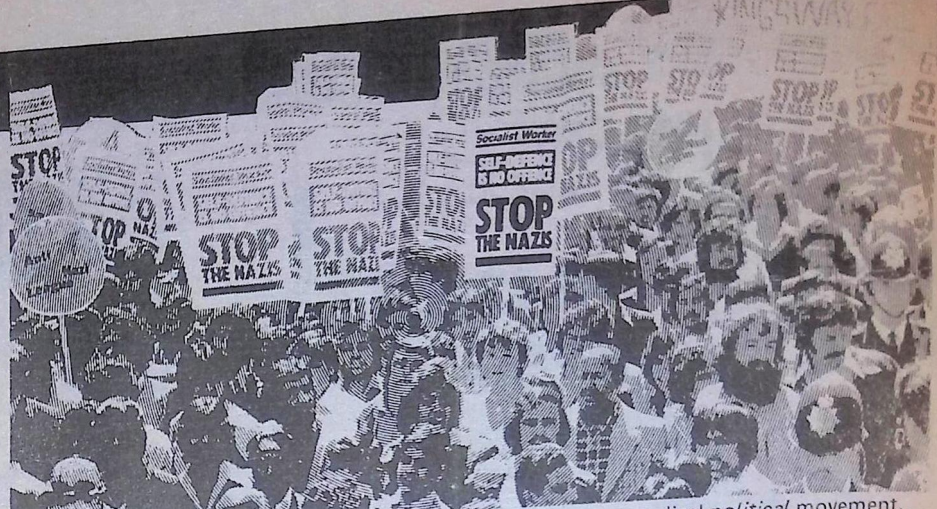
drivel from the likes of Queen. And the very fact that such songs are written and performed to vast audiences indicates at the very least that there is some interest in the issues. Just as the Band-Aid and Live Aid affairs reflected some sort of concern about world hunger — which is certainly to be preferred to no concern at all.

However, listening to music is a very passive activity. It doesn't actually change anything. Only if music is connected to political activity can it have any real effect on the world.

With that in mind, it is worth looking back on a rock-music movement which, unlike the Geldof-inspired events, did draw people

into political activity. In Britain in the late 70s, as unemployment began to rise and the sell-outs of the Labour Government left workers demoralised and bitter, the racist National Front began to make significant gains. Blacks were beaten up in the streets and harassed in schools and factories and the NF gained more than 100,000 votes in London alone, pushing the Liberals into third place in many areas. Between 1976 and 1981 at least 31 black people were murdered in racist attacks.

In 1976 the Anti-Nazi League was launched, mainly on the initiative of the Socialist Workers Party. The SWP argued for direct, militant confrontation with the racists. Tens of thousands had turned out to oppose major NF demonstrations in Wood Green and Lewisham in London and the ANL took the arguments against the racists into workplaces and



schools and onto the streets.

The rock-music element of the campaign was launched after Eric Clapton made a speech to the audience at a gig in Birmingham praising Enoch Powell and supporting the repatriation of Blacks.

In response, a number of SWP members and supporters wrote to the *New Musical Express*, *Melody Maker* etc. denouncing Clapton, pointing out that this guy had made a torture ripping off the music of black people and had just had a hit with a version of Bob Marley's "I Shot the Sheriff". They called for a Rock against Racism campaign and invited interested musicians and music lovers to join in.

For the next few years, RAR and the Anti-Nazi League were parallel organisations, with overlapping memberships and joint activities. Highly political concerts were organised all

over Britain. More than 100,000 turned up for a single RAR open-air gig held in East London, which had been one of the NF's strongholds.

RAR was strengthened by the fact that punk happened at the same time — and for some of the same reasons. Punk was angry, urgent, unmelodic. It came spitting and snarling out of the high-rise flats which were grey prisons for working class kids with no reason to have faith in the future. Punk wasn't inherently political, but it expressed an alienation from the state and from the same system which RAR and the ANL were pitched against. It was natural that bands like the Clash, the Jam, the Damned etc. gravitated towards RAR.

The result was a rock-music movement which had a style of its own and which was in very close association with a

radical political movement. The fans who turned up for RAR gigs and festivals were drawn into activity which didn't cease when the music stopped.

That was the crucial difference between RAR and Band-Aid, Live Aid, Self Aid and so forth. The Geldof inspired campaigns are about charity. They invite the audience to "play a part" by attending the gigs, buying the records, books etc. They do not provide for the audience to get involved in changing things themselves.

What's more, RAR directed its audience into activity against the system at 'home', against the racism of the British state itself. It was fiercely anti-establishment and sounded like it.

Whereas Band Aid etc. are very much associated with the establishment, as evidenced by the patronage of banks and big businesses, and most clearly of all by Geldof's knighthood. He was recommended for the royal honour by a Tory cabinet.

Geldof's style of 'political' rock presents no threat to the system responsible for the problems which it is supposed to be dealing with. Which is why the system is well pleased with it.

RAR played a real part in political events in Britain in the late 70s. It was an important element in the movement which cleaned the Nazis off the streets and halted the rise of the NF. That was mainly because it recognised that rock music on its own can change nothing. That only political action can change things. That rock must be linked to socialist politics if it's to play any part in bringing an end to the system which offers no hope to young people in these islands and nothing but starvation and misery to millions in the so-called 'Third World'.

On the brink of revolution

WITH THE smashing of apartheid in South Africa becoming more and more inevitable, there has been an upsurge of interest in South African writers.

Of these, the novelist Andre Brink has tended to be most popular. His books are well-written, often gripping and give a light flavour of what life is like in that racist state.

Many of Brink's novels have historical themes — both *An Instant in the Wind* and *A Chain of Voices*, for example, are set in the last century when all Blacks were slaves.

All his novels, including those set in modern times, like *Rumours of Rain* and *A Dry White Season*, deal with personal relationships and the way in which racism and

especially institutionalised racism poison such relationships. The most common theme is that of a black man involved with a white woman — the ultimate sexual taboo in S. Africa.

Through the eyes of his characters, Brink very effectively gets across the message that the system of apartheid is inhuman and degrading to people of all races.

But that is as far as Brink's writing goes — it remains personal and humanitarian without any attempt to explore the role of the state in enforcing apartheid, or to explain why apartheid exists and how it can be smashed.

And that perhaps, explains why Brink is able to lecture at Rhodes University in S. Africa and

to write and live freely and in luxury in Grahams-town.

Breyten Breytenbach, on the other hand, is banned from S. Africa and forced to live in exile in France. He spent seven years in prison in S. Africa accused of having plotted acts of violent sabotage and spying in the ports.

Breytenbach was a founder member of an organisation called Okhela — which was set up by white intellectuals to help the emerging black trade unions. Such activity earned him a nine year jail sentence, most of the seven years he served was spent in solitary confinement.

Breytenbach's novel, *The True Confessions of an Albino Terrorist* is a brilliant description of his arrest, interrogation, trial and time in S. Africa's high-security prisons.

Unlike Brink, Breytenbach is an extremely political writer. He criticises the ANC, its search for respectability and stages approach to socialism from a left-wing point of view. He explains why Okhela decided against becoming involved in the armed struggle. He says that in his experience the necessarily clandestine nature of such organisation "makes underground work a very undemocratic process".

Instead, he believes in looking to the working class movement because, he says, in spite of all the

unsocialist ideas held by many working class people, the nature of their lives means that the "struggle for freedom and justice is such a natural instinct that one fights for it...as the fish struggles for water".

The True Confessions... is full of vivid detail of prison life, in particular of how the prisoners "destroy time". Polishing and re-polishing the bare concrete floor to try to shine it; carefully tending the smallest of plants because it provides contact with some other living thing. Counting off every day, week, month, season, year of their "time", grateful to have a release date however far in the future — unlike the "natural lifers" or those held "at the government's pleasure" or without trial.

PRISON

In spite of the obvious differences, much of this detail will be all too familiar to many of those who have sampled the dubious hospitality of Her Majesty's prisons and Free State jails.

Even in prison though, the obscenity of apartheid is enforced. Prisons are divided into White, Black and Coloured sections. White prisoners eat meat, Blacks don't. Whites get to wear underwear, Blacks don't. Even on Death Row, the segregation and discrimination continues. For the "last meal", a white gets a

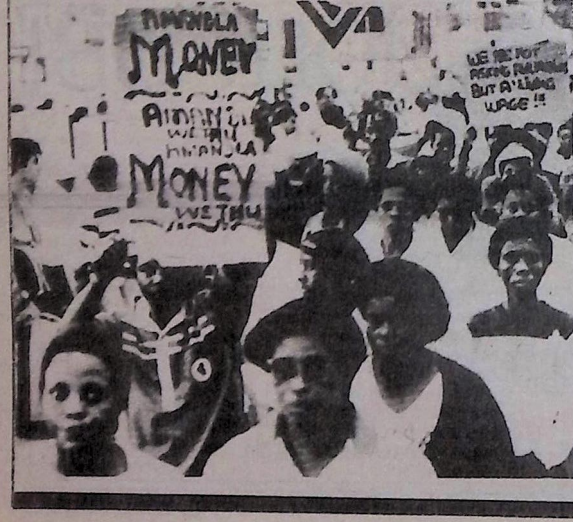
full chicken, whereas the Black gets only half a chicken!

Breytenbach lists the petty harassments of the warders — "forgetting" to bring him out for his precious half-hour's exercise, bringing him Westerns to read when he's asked for something "intellectual", denying him paper and ink and then taking away every thing he wrote.

But while expressing frustration even despair at these petty harassments, Breytenbach never gives up hope for political change. In a paragraph typical of this clinging to hope amid despair, he warns against trusting any white S. African because "the elemental presence of discrimination and oppression have tainted and corrupted one and all. Truly, South African culture is the picture of painted putrefaction! Don't believe, don't trust — navigate! Survive! (And tenaciously recommence and continue the struggle for social and economic justice)."

Andre Brink's novels paint a picture of a South Africa which is inhumane but not barbaric, in need of reform, but not of revolution. Breytenbach, on the other hand, speaks of South Africa as "No Man's Land" a country "where freedom does not exist except as a subversive idea".

— GORETTI HORGAN



INDUSTRIAL NEWS

Dublin Corporation strike— LIMITED ACTION— LIMITED GAINS

THE Dublin Corpo/Council strike came to an end on 15th June, after three weeks which saw army and police intervention on a scale previously unknown.

Having rejected a Labour Court recommendation of a 7% pay increase over 18 months, the workers went on strike for an across-the-board £15 non-phased increase.

From day one of the strike, army personnel were installed in the waterworks department in Marrowbone Lane, in the sewage pumping station in Ringsend and in the Pidgeon House Road sewage treatment plant. Pickets were placed on these departments but were too small to seriously challenge the army.

Commenting on the role of the army, striker Brian Flynn, ITGWU (Cabra Depot) said: "The way the army was allowed to operate during the Corpo strike has created a very dangerous precedent, they almost were taken for granted. The government were allowed to use them without any real opposition".

The weakness of the pickets strengthened the government's hand, with talk of increasing the role of the army beginning to emerge in the second week of the strike. Application to Congress for an All Out picket was made, but no move came from the Joint Strike Committee of the three unions to utilise more effectively the considerable number of strikers already on strike - 4,200 G.O.s plus 200 craftworkers. Most of these were picketing scores of largely non-essential depots and offices in small numbers for weeks before they were sent to more essential areas -

by which time the strike was nearly over.

Many craftworkers passed the pickets having been misled into believing that an agreement had been made between the unions. This misunderstanding was the result of a letter sent just before the start of the strike, to the committee of the Craft Group of Unions by Sean Redmond, Gen. Sec of the IMETU.

In the letter Redmond suggested that craftworkers should continue working although, of course, strictly to rule. This had not been agreed by any of the G.O. unions, including Redmond's own union!

Nor had it been agreed by the craftworkers as no meetings took place on the matter. In fact the ATGWU, which was one of the unions representing craftworkers, acted in the best traditions of the trade union movement, by officially instructing its members to respect the pickets.

Nevertheless at the start of the strike the Sec. of the Craft Group, John Montgomery went ahead and used Redmond's letter to the extent of claiming that it represented an agreement between the G.O. unions and the Craft unions.

As a result of pressure from those craftworkers totally opposed to passing pickets under any circumstances, the letter was finally withdrawn.

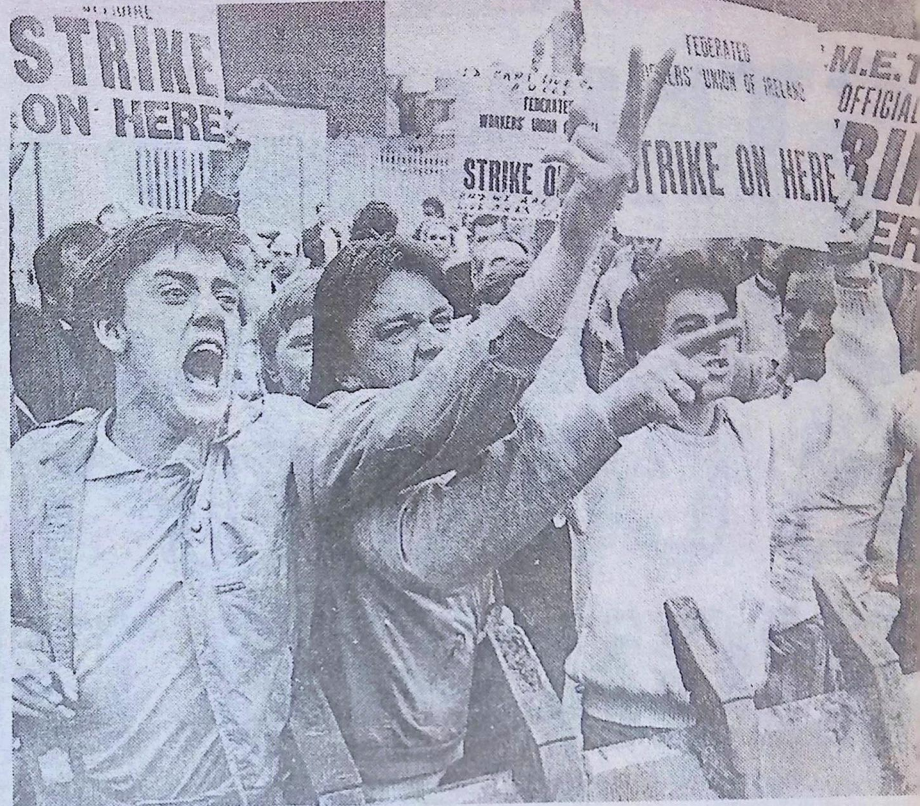
Unfortunately by then the strike was into its third day. At this stage, Redmond issued a second letter denying the contents of the first and now saying that the Craft unions should issue their own

instructions. But considerable damage had already been done by the first letter and as a result only about 40% of craftworkers respected the pickets with some 60% continuing to pass the pickets. However, the size of the minority refusing to pass the pickets was sufficient to force a meeting between the officials of the craft unions and the G.O. unions in which support for the All Out picket was agreed.

The effect all this had on weakening the picket lines was considerable, as striker Anthony Reid (IMETU) said: "Pickets were badly organised and although we in Stanley Street had one of the highest number of craftworkers not passing pickets, the ones who did pass (approx. 30%) got it far too easy, with some of the strikers even going out of their way to be friendly to them. This only tended to demoralise those craftworkers who respected the pickets right through the strike".

The prospect of an All Out strike terrified the government. It would have literally crippled the city. On top of the services already effected - cleansing, sewage, waterworks, paving, roadwork housing maintenance, public baths and parks, an All Out would have affected fire and ambulance services, housing loans, grants, motor taxation and registration, planning, development services, traffic signals, public lighting, libraries, markets and yet more.

But the response of the government to the prospect of a total shutdown of Dublin Corporation was to extend the use of the army in the



strike.

On the 5th June, army trucks escorted by gardai were sent to remove the mounting piles of uncollected rubbish that had built up everywhere but especially in Moore Street. The unions finally decided to make a stand and a mass picket was organised for Moore Street that evening.

The trucks arrived at 7.30 and were confronted by some 200 pickets who forced the army to stop just at the entrance of Moore St. at the junction with Henry St. The Gardai with batons

drawn laid into the strikers in an attempt to disperse them but they stood their ground and both the gardai and the army were forced to withdraw.

Morale was high - after all, the army had been held off! Mass pickets on the pumping stations could easily have been organised in the 'high' after the "battle of Moore St.". Instead no mass pickets, even of Moore Street itself were organised - the union leaderships were as frightened by the confrontation as the Govt. had been.

Congress immediately granted the All Out picket but without fixing a date for its implementation. This showed up the weakness of the union bureaucracy and created a lot of dissatisfaction and demoralisation among the rank and file.

On the 13th June, the rank and file L.A.W. group organised a protest demo on the Congress offices in Parnell Square over the delay in implementation of the All Out. John Byrne EEPTU (plumber, Ballyfermot Depot) said about the picket: "We were representing some 200-250 craftworkers out since the start of the strike. They were opposed not just to the delay in implementing the All Out, but to the whole policy of the Congress two tier picket, which since its introduction in the 70s has operated more for the benefit of the employers than for the workers. The slogans on the placards at the demo read One Out - All Out; that was an appeal to the rank and file more than the Congress itself. It was a demand for an end to a policy which hinders rather than promotes

solidarity between unions."

During that week the steering committee of the Employer/Labour conference met and on Friday 13th June an offer was made of a two phased increase of £6 and £5 over 18 months plus £250 lump sum - less tax of course!

It was recommended by all three unions and on the following Sunday was accepted by an almost two to one majority.

But as Danny Whelan FWUI (Sundrive Rd depot) one of 618 G.O.s who rejected the offer said:

"Only 1,753 of the 4,200 workers on strike turned up to vote. With 618 voting against and 2,448 who were so disgusted and demoralised by the lousy leadership shown during the strike that they didn't even bother turning up to vote. For me, the increase on top of the 7% which we were already offered before the strike, will work out at approx £1.67 less tax a week for 18 months - and that's on full eleven years service pay of £138 per week."

Danny continued "The failure to deliver on the All Out and the way the army and police intervened without any serious opposition meant that the push for the £13 non-phased claim would be forgotten about, after that people lost interest".

Although the strike succeeded in preventing the government from imposing the 7% norm across the board, the unions failed to win more by not seeking solidarity and pushing the All Out. Instead the union leaders settled for crumbs when they might have gone for the cake.

- CHARLIE NOLAN

FG Boss Puts Boot In

KILKENNY IS currently having its most bitter strike in years. The dispute is between 17 members of the ITGWU and Kieran Crotty T.D., chairperson of the Fine Gael parliamentary party.

The strikers work in the Crotty Family's confectionary cum-bakery and large coffee shop in High Street.

This employer has long resisted attempts by general operatives at his family business to organise in a union. In 1984, he successfully divided the workers, conning them into leaving the union.

With the recent expansion of the business, new workers were taken on and in the last few months these workers became ITGWU members. Ever since, they have faced continual harassment from the Crotty's. "What can the union do for you that we can't?" asked the owners/managers who paid less than £50 for a six day week when the union rate would have been £85 - £115!

Crotty's tried to break

the union by victimising two workers, one of them the shop steward, by sacking them. A secret ballot of the twenty workers voted unanimously for strike action in support of their fellow-workers.

The ITGWU pickets were placed on the High Street premises and the bakery on the 29th May; almost a month later, on 20th June, the ICTU granted an All Out picket which has yet to be implemented.

The strike has been receiving support and solidarity from factories and work places throughout the city and county. Collections and socials have been organised both by the strikers and by other workers.

It is a very popular strike as Crotty has long been overt in his attacks on the workforce. Even the local shopkeepers have "supported" their fellow-businessman by offering valuable spot prizes for the strikers' support socials!

Kieran Crotty TD has used all the weapons open to the ruling class in this strike. The legal system has backed him by granting an injunction 'limiting' the number of picketers on the High Street premises. The gardai have been keeping a close watch on pickets, while Crotty's son Pat attempted intimidation by photographing the picket line. Other members of the Crotty family have also tried to intimidate picketers, but to no avail.

This dispute can and must be won. The only people capable of defeating Crotty are the workers themselves. But not all the strikers have been turning up for picket duty. It is essential that they do so.

The actions of some of the union officials, in particular Tony Ayton, have been disgraceful. He has told some of the supporters of the strike that they are not welcome on the picket line!

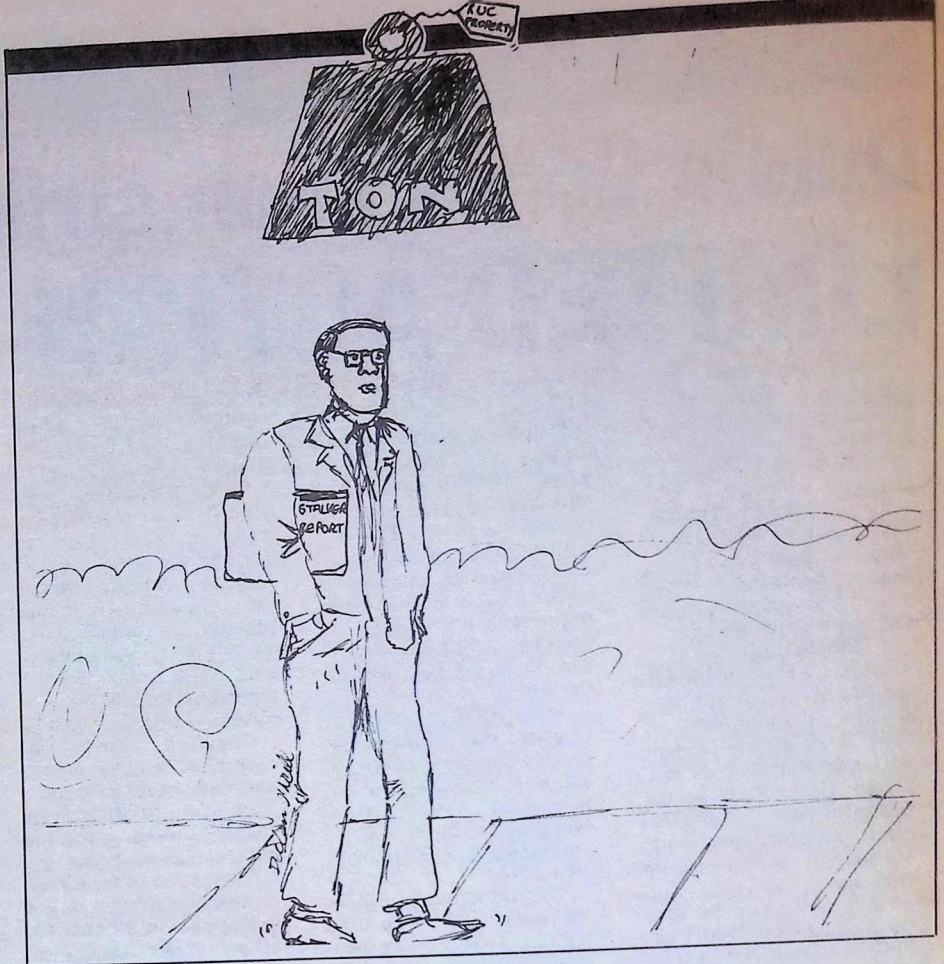
Similarly, on Tues. 17th June at a meeting organised to rally support for the strike, a worker at Kilkenny Textile Mills was laughed at and ignored when he tried to bring up the fact that union members have been passing the picket. And he has since come under pressure from the union officials to keep his head down.

The insistence of the union officials on obeying the injunction has served to prolong the strike. Crotty went to the Courts because the pickets were losing him business. The need to escalate the strike and defy the injunction is vital. The strikers themselves must push for a mass picket or march on Crotty's. This could generate the support needed to hit Crotty where it will hurt him most - in his pocket.

- KILKENNY SWM

Socialist Worker

STALKER SHOWS RUC IS CORRUPT RIGHT TO THE TOP



WHAT THE "Stalker affair" reveals is that corruption and sectarianism in the RUC goes right to the top.

Even right wing British newspapers and Tory MPs now accept that Stalker, deputy chief constable of Manchester, was suspended from duty to prevent him exposing conspiracies to murder and to pervert the course of justice by RUC men, including some of very senior rank.

This is the police force which Garret FitzGerald, Dick Spring and the SDLP have been urging nationalists to support as "impartial" since the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.



Stalker: in disgrace?

RUC

Stalker was investigating the RUC killings of six unarmed men in late 1982 - three members of the IRA, two of the INLA and a 17-year old with no paramilitary or political connection. He was taken off the case and suspended from duty on the most flimsy of excuses when it became clear that his report would blow the lid off RUC a massive political scandal.

The *Guardian*, *Observer* and *Sunday Times* have all reported - and no one has denied - that Stalker's interim report recommended that charges of conspiracy to murder be laid against RUC men in respect of five of the killings: those of IRA members Gervais McKerr, Eugene Toman and Sean Burns in November and of INLA members Seamus Grew and Roddy Carroll in December of 1982.

RUC men had already

"bug" planted by British intelligence agents. However RUC boss John Hermon had flatly refused to allow him to hear the tape. It was when he insisted on hearing the tape that Stalker was suddenly sent on leave and then suspended.

What emerges absolutely clearly from this is that the RUC is rotten, right to the top. It was the chief constable himself who repeatedly refused Stalker access to the tapes. Just as it was the chief constable who refused Stalker's earlier request that he suspend two special branch men - Superintendent George Anderson and Chief Inspector Flanagan. It was these two men who had directly ordered uniformed RUC men to perjure themselves in order to cover up murder.

Hermon

It was Hermon who "sat on" Stalker's interim report for five months before allowing even the North's Director of Public Prosecutions to see it.

What's more, the killings were the work of specialist surveillance teams known as E4A, in which M15 is involved. And these units evidently were not operating outside their terms of reference. They weren't disobeying orders. In other words, Stalker's investigation was leading towards an inescapable conclusion that killing unarmed suspected Republicans was official, approved policy.

The involvement of M15 means that it wasn't just the Northern security forces who were up to murder: the shoot

to kill policy had strong support from a section at least of the British state machinery.

This is confirmed by the fact that it was from within the British police that the allegations came which resulted in Stalker being taken off the enquiry.

Police

The RUC obviously has friends in the British police willing to conspire to cover up their crimes, just as they had M15 agents at their side to join in the crimes.

Indeed, it is highly likely that British involvement goes much higher. M15 agents report directly to Whitehall. The head of the intelligence services is the Prime Minister. It is inconceivable that senior British officials, if not indeed Thatcher herself, did not know what their agents were up to in the North. They, too have been involved in a cover-up and may well have also been involved in the manoeuvre to have Stalker suspended.

In the light of all this, talk of the North having been "reformed" or changed in any fundamental way by the Anglo-Irish Agreement, is pure hogwash. The North is still a brutally sectarian state and Britain may want to see some changes, but they do *not* want changes which might threaten the existing structures of the state.

It is this aspect of the affair which puts FitzGerald Barry, Hume etc in a quandary. Their fear is that this scandal will make it impossible for them to go on

telling Northern Nationalists that the RUC is becoming more "acceptable" by the day.

All along their constitutional nationalist strategy has been to get very minor concessions from the British which they would then present to Northern Nationalists as major changes - so as to encourage Nationalist acceptance of the status quo and thus marginalise the Provos.

This strategy would be undermined if they were now to get stropky with the British over the *lack* of change which the Stalker affair reveals. They are in a

classic Catch 22 situation - which, absolutely, inevitably is where constitutional nationalists *always* end up when they try to deal with the North.

As Socialist Worker has repeatedly argued, there is no constitutional nationalist solution to the Northern "problem", no solution which will both stabilise the North and end the oppression of the Catholic minority.

The Northern state itself must go. The working class movement, North and South, must face up to that stark fact.

- EAMONN McCANN

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