For a Workers Republic and International Socialism After Packard defeat and Haughey victory: BOSSES PLAN TO

BOOT



AMID ALL the confusion surrounding the election of the Haughey government in the South one thing stands out clearly-that the working class is going to be hit hard. Unless workers prepare

Unless workers prepare now to defend themselves, wage cuts and redundancies will be the order of the day. And all recent experience shows that the "official" leaders of the working class movement – the trade union bosses and the Labour and other "Left" TDs – will not put themselves at the forefront of any determined fightback.

While the right-wing parties wrangled about votes and preferences during the campaign, and over the personality of Charlie Haughey afterwards, they were absolutely united on one crucial point — that the economy is in dire straits and that workers must bear the brunt of putting it right. Haughey plans to make the workers pay for the crisis

The public sector is going to be savaged. Already the right-wing economists are calling for a complete wage freeze and further job losses in order to find the money to pay off the international bankers. Spending on health, welfare and education has also been targetted.



In the private sector, the buzz-words of the moment are "efficiency", "productivity" and "competitiveness". Which translated into working-class language means speed-ups, lower wages, tightened "discipline" and the destruction of hard-won trade union rights, What happened at Packards will set the pattern for the future.

In this situation it is useless – and worse than useless – for the main leaders of the Left to be

contemplating taking part in a "Forum" on the economy involving the bosses and the government. Any talks on these lines will be talks about

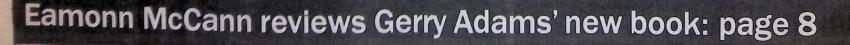
surrender without a fight. It is *not* the job of trade union leaders or left-wing politicians to "play their part" in "getting the economy right". It is their job to lead *our* side against the class enemy which has made its aggressive intentions clear. What we need to do more than anything else is to hold shop floor organisation together, and to rebuild it where it has been weakened and fragmented.



The narrowness of the back-to-work vote at Packards — despite an intense media campaign to demoralise the workforce — shows that there is a very sizable minority ready to stand firm against the attacks by the boss-class. And that minority would be much more substantial if the trade union leadership was at its head. This points up the urgency of the task of building an alternative rank-and-file leadership and, in the longer term, of building a revolutionary socialist party with the aim not of dancing a duet with the "social partners" but of overthrowing the system based on the exploitation and increasing impoverishment of the working class.

The immediate message must be: Stand firm-Defend every job-Resist every wage cut-Preserve trade union rights-No cuts in health, welfare or education-Fight Haughey.

Haughey. It's their system which is in crisis. Let them pay the price of clearing up the mess they have created.



PORTLAOISE COPS THROW THEIR WEIGHT AROUND

IN KEEPING WITH THEIR long tradition of coercion, intimidation, and brutality Portlaoise cops continue to harass any individual whom they deem to be indulging in "anti-social" behaviour. Stephen and Caroline Tynan are the latest victims to suffer at the hands of the navy clad

thugs. On November 7th 1986, the Special Branch, along with several Gardai, raided the couple's home, seemingly convinced that a hoard of hard drugs would be discovered. After ransacking the house and not finding any "illicit" substances, the thugs proceeded to strip search Caroline, who was nine months pregnant at the time, then as a final gesture of the brutality they strip searched the couple's 11month old daughter, whom they also. believed to be concealing hard drugs on her person. She wasn't.

PRIME TARGET

Stephen Tynan, who was the prime target of the raid was not me when the cops called. The cops didn't for some strange reason deem it necessary to question Stephen as to his guilt. There wasn't a shred of

evidence to substantiate their accusations. Undeterred by this, they did a tour of the town's pubs 'advising' the publicans not to serve Stephen, claiming he was a drug pusher. The couple are not Port-laoise's equivalent to the Dunnes

in fact neither have ever dealt in drugs. The only connection the cops can claim either of them have with drugs is the fact that back in 1974 Stephen Tynan was fined £10-for possession of cannabis. There is simply nothing whatsoever, either past or present, to support the idea that either of them deal in drugs. Their environment and lifestyle are similar to those of their largely unemployed neighbours and net the lowich lifestyle one not the lavish lifestyle one normally associates with the large drug pushing networks. The probable explanation

for the cops behaviour is that

the couple have a mildly anti-authoritarian image. While this amounts to little more than suggesting various ideas which are in variance with the establishment, i.e. supporting the campaign for divorce. Stephen was a supporter of the temporarily defunct Laois Unemployed Action Group, and has long argued for the legalisation of cannabis. The couple also married in a registry office. Hardly the stuff of a revolutionary, but the local cops are so paranoid that if anyone even asks questions, let alone oppose any single aspect of the system, they are interpreted as being anti-social in their behaviour and then are ruthlessly harassed.

This type of harassment will not come as a surprise to those of us in Portlaoise who have been confronted by machine gun wielding soldiers whilst flyposting for the divorce referendum, or have been questioned about armed robbery because "we heard you were selling a paper at the labour-exchange" or even more astoundingly have been lifted on the way to work for walking too slowly. This type of harassment does actua-lly happen in Portlaoise, where one in every four families have members in the security foramongst the highest rate in

the South.

Coercion, intimidation and brutality

Good riddance to bad rubbish

READERS of Socialist Worker would probably agree that most of what goes on in Dail Eireann is quite sickening, but the farewell greetings for Oliver J. Flanagan on his retirement surpassed that institution's normal level of puke inducement. Politicians from all

parties joined in praise of his wonderful contribution to Irish politics. Even the so-called liberal Irish Times was moved enough to join in the act

Could this be the same OI Oliver J. Flanagan that we remember? The opponent of contraception, abortion, divorce and just about every measly reform that was ever proposed in Dail Eireann?

One of his lesser known exploits was his contribution to a Dail debate in 1943. "There is one thing that Germany did, and that was to rout the Jews out of their country, Until we rout the Jews out of this country it does not matter a hair's breadth what orders you make. Where the bees are, there is honey and where the Jews are, there is money."

We are glad to see the back of the old bastard.



CORK: MARYFIELD FLATS Corpo slum scandal

THE CONDITION of the NBA flats in Mayfield, Cork is deteriorating into rat infested slum dwellings

The National Building The National Building Agency houses and flats were originally built from low standard material 20 years ago and were claimed originally to be a temporary measure only, to curb the rise in the need for housing in the Cork City area. Cork City area.

Twenty years on no measures are taken to maintain the flats, the maintain the flats, the Corpo maintenance crew are undermanned, due to temporary worker layoffs, and a recruitment

and a recruitment embargo. Meanwhile the tenants particularly those living in the flats, have to live with the atrocious cond-itions, while the Cork corporation are cutting back on essential services in the City. Many of the tenants left to stew in the flats are old people and single parents. They are find-ing it almost impossible

parents. They are find ing it almost impossible to get out into decent housing.

COMPLAINED

One woman with two children complained to the Corpo about a large nest of rats in the old air vents, and demanded that she be rehoused. They told her to come back when she was marr-ied to her boyfriend; even though the rent was ass-essed on the boyfriend's income.

income. Another woman single parent with two children was just told straight 'you've no chance of get-ting a house'. Old people seemingly don't fare any better. One old couple is still living at the top of a three storey flat after 8

years. The old woman has been having treat-ment to an ulcerated leg. She received signed doc-umentation from her doc-tor that she should be allocated proper housing immediately so as not to have to limp up two flights of steps.

This situation of discrim-ination and rapidly deter-iorating conditions can only be turned around by the collective action of the tenants themselves and the corporation workerss who are being continually who are being continually hammered by low pay, bad conditions, and undermanning.

ermanning. Tenants associations could be set up linking up with NATO and the rent strike. Putting for-ward a real fighting de-mand for better housing and lower rents.

EXPERIENCE

The Corpo workers need to regroup after the sell out they experienced at the hands of their union officials over parity their fellow Dublin with

with their fellow Dublin workers. A start can be made by Cork corpo workers on the twin areas of low pay and undermanning in leafletting workers to attend rank and file mee-tings to discuss these and other problems facing the workforce. Also electing their own shop stewards to pressurise the officials and management from below. The real potential of linking up these areas with the demands of lo-cal authority tenants

cal authority tenants would be a real collective force which would not easily be extinguished or ignored by our bosses and landlords. Eamonn Lewsley Cork SWM

Is Gorbachev's 'openness' genuine?

RUSSIA and its leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, have been much in the news lately. Some 140 dis-sidents have been releas-

place in Russia? To get an answer we need a closer look. the USA), thus putting a severe strain on the economy. Mr. Gorbachev and

a closer look. Mr. Gorbachev and the Russian Bureaucracy wiskes to compete with the Russian Bureaucracy wiskes to compete with Western Capitalism, par-ticularly the USA, on the world stage. The Russian conomy is in-ferior to the US economy. Soviet State'. These acts vary from 40% to 75% of the US economy. The world stage. The first, he has been im-policy of glasnot' or openness. Soviet journals are publishing articles on previously taboo subjects like masturbation fa war, the Russians are wining, repeatedly appearing to take the initiative. Is this a huge con trick or are genuine changes taking

to make political and social power less central-ised and 'liberalise' Rus-sian life, hence the re-lease of prisoners etc. When we examine this more closely, we find that most, if not all, of these dissidents applied for pardons and promis-ed not to continue

for pardons and promis-ed not to continue their criticism of the 'Soviet State'. These dissidents were pardoned for their 'crime' and Ar-ticle 70, under which 'anti-Soviet propaganda or agitation' is a criminal offence, remains. Last year 914 Russian Jews were allowed to emigrate were allowed to emigrate to Israel, pretty far short of the estimated 400,000

wich. wich. This 'liberalisation' has been tried before. In 1965 Kosygin intro-duced economic reforms which foundered when the central Ministries were able to claw back the central Ministries were able to claw back the powers they had con-ceeded. More important-ly, in the 1950's Khrushchev tried to ease the political and social controls, but when the Hungarians tried to init-iate change themselves, the tanks rolled in and reform stopped.

ENCOURAGE



ple to take things into their own hands, as ev-ents recently in China have shown The At root, Gorbachev has the same problems as his dom will encourage peo-

low, the state will attempt to reverse the reforms. Whether it reforms. Whether it succeds will depend on the strength of the Russian working class.

Video ban for Techs in Dublin

EARLIER this year, students of Bolton St. College of Technology and similarly Kevin St. learned that the goods provided in their Stud-ents Union shop would be limited and pool tab-les and video machines would be banned when their offices and common room were moved to new college buildings. This is a very ser-ious implication because not only will it be an end to subsidised station-ary and other course-related material, as well as loss of funds for clubs and societies, it also calls into question the right of students to trade on campus. According to Aidan Kerins, Union President: "Student Unions are do-ing the work that the colleges should be doing... we provide welfare for students that just don't exist otherwise". So far, an all-out one day strike has been hald in Bolton St. and the College canteen has been randomly boycotted. A 2 day all-out strike has also been planned. These actions will have to be escalated to ensure victory for the students and the main-taining of these import-ant facilities at both ant facil colleges.

Kowloon Hush-up

AN ORG ANISED cover AN ORG ANISED cover up is underway on the Kowloon Bridge disaster. This ship broke up off the Cork coast line spilling thousands of tons of oil. Now, however, there is not a word about he ship as tour-ist elements led by Bord Failte try to keep a gag on the incident. But there are 200

But there are 200 e gallon drums of a adly chemical compound of still stored on the p. TBT(tributyl tin) five TBT ship. TBT(tributyi tin) is an anti-fouling agent for ships. It is banned in some countries be-cause of its dangers to marine life. A small a-mount of TBT would be enough to wipe out all marine life in a big take ship. lake

Recent reports also suggest that oil is still eaking from the Kow-

suggest that oil is still leaking from the Kow-loon Bridge. In some parts of Cork, the coast-line is covered a few in-ches thick - and the oil is still coming in. In a statement to the press, the Kowloon Bridge Emergency Commi-ttee has called for an end to the cover up. Instead, they demand that all technical resour-Instead, they demand that all technical resour-ces are mobilised to deal with the spillage. They estimate that 800 to 1,300 people per square mile are needed to do an efficient clean

up. But the establish-ment in this country are well used to environment-al cover ups. They co-operated with the Brit-ish authorities in keep-ing quiet on Sellafield for wears ing for

WE THINK **Class realities behind** election arithmetic

FOLLOWING the inconclusive result of the general election, a new "Alliance of the Left" will appear attractive to many workers in the South. Tony Gregory has argued that Haughey could be coaxed into making "major concessions" if he was confronted by a united grouping of himself, the four Workers' Party TDs, Jim Kemmy and, possibly, the Labour Party. For its part, the WP has asked for talks with Labour. And a number of Labour TDs have indicated that they would welcome the formation of a "Left Liaison" group in Leinster House.

The notion of a broad "Left" pulling together in the new situation makes sense. A grouping along some such lines could possibly operate to restrain Fiana Fail from putting the boot into health, social welfare and education spending as viciously as the right-wing economists are demanding, and, up to a point, it could help to protect the public sector generally from the ravages of the privatisers and the advocates of cuts, cuts and more cuts in all directions.

Every sensible socialist will agree that the left-wing TDs should put their highest priority on organising themselves in the best possible way to protect the working class from attack over the period of this parliament. In fact all sensible social-ists will demand that they do this.

But that's not the end of the matter. It is necessary also to be aware of just how little can be achieved by use of the Leinster House arithmetic and, more generally, of the reasons the Left finds itself in this marginal position anyway – with some bargaining power to play with but still definitely not numbered among the

big political battalions The left TDs, without any exceptions, are committed to the parliamentary system they have just won seats in. In many instances it has precisely been their willingness to work diligently within this system, to be "better at it" than candidates from the Right, which has given them their electoral support. Voters have awarded them high marks for hard work

There is a price to be paid for playing this game.

The Labour Party accepts that there "must be" cuts, and argues about where they should be, when they should come and how deep they should go.

The Workers' Party suggests a new "Forum" to tackle unemployment involving government, trade unions and the employers.

These policies are very significant. They make it clear that the Left in Leinster House is set to use its bar-gaihing power to challenge the directions of some of the policies of the latest Right-wing government, and to suggest "decent" alternatives. They e not set to confront the Rightwing head-on.

This reflects both the mild reform-ist policies (such as the above) on which they have been elected and also the continuing weakness of the Left-wing forces as a whole. The fact that, potentially at least, the Left is in a pivotal position in Leinster



Flashback to last year's Dublin Corporation strike

House should not blind any of us to the fact that socialism in Southern Ireland remains very much a minor-ity interest. Eighty-five per cent of the voters – a figure which must in-clude a substantial majority of working-class voters – chose Right-wing candidates, not Left. The Left's combined percentage poll (13 per cent, including Sinn Fein) compares with the 17 per cent the Labour Party achieved on its own in 1969. In terms of popular opinion there has not been a "breakthrough".

has not been a breakthrough This weakness is far more im-portant than the sensitive position or bargaining skills of TDs in Lein-ster House. Notwithstanding some notable exceptions, it has been the absence of widespread grass-roots militancy, the lack of an obvious readiness by workers to fight back themselves, which has cleared the way, in Ireland as everywhere, for Right-wing governments to cut jobs and attack workers' living standards in order to make the working class pay the price of the captialist crisis. Much more imin Leinster House, what is need-ed in the next weeks, months and years is organised resistance to the Right by the working class itself. If the Left TDs were to use the platform and prestige

which goes with a seat in parlia-ment to say loudly and plainly to workers: prepare now to defend every job, get organised to resist every cut; if they were to cam-paign throughout the labour movement to put heart into that minority which is willing to resist, they could transform the political situation.

But it has been the absence of just this sort of leadership from the Left parties now represented in Leinster House which, more than anything else, has made the demoralisation and rank-and-file disorganisation we can see all around us inevitable. And there can be no confidence that this will change.

The politics of the Labour Party, the WP and the individual Left TDs means, inevitably, that they will continue to direct workers' energies and aspirations away from rank-and-file self-organisation and towards reliance on what can be achieved by parliamentary man-oeuvre. When they direct their attentions towards activity in the trade union movement they will not on their own capacity to fight but on the abilities and advice of full time officialdom.

The Socialist Workers' Move-

ment position is that the Left TDs should certainly be supported in whatever efforts they make to ease the impact of the Right-wing offensive, and should be encouraged to operate in the most effective, coordinated way towards that end. But at the same time workers should be under no illusion that solutions can be found or the Right-wing decisively defeated by looking to Leinster House. In the end, what's needed is a revolution-ary socialist party based on the struggles of workers themselves struggles of workers themselves, "an their behalf" in the opulent surroundings of Leinster House. The SWM exists to try to bring such a party into existence.

More immediately, the scattered groups of militants who do exist and who might accept the general thrust of this analysis, who may be members of various Left-wing organisations or none, Left-wing organisations or none, should come together and take precise steps now to lay the framework of a rank-and-file or-ijanisation which could take the lead in coordinating the resis-tance which assuredly will be necessary when the onslaught on our working-class rights and con-ditions of living gets/fully under way. way.

INTERNATIONAL **Food surpluses soar** while millions starve

Our television screens are again filled with scenes of widespread famine in Africa – this time in Mozambique. Here NIGEL HARRIS examines why famine has become such a common occurence and finds that much of the because if an attempt were made to sell the stocks, world prices would crash so low that less than half the notional value would be recovered.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR famine relief in Ethiopia and Sudan had the merit of spotlighting the terrible conditions there. But it had the bad effect of concealing just how many other countries were star-ving or close to eterribute or close to starving. chart shows the coun-The chart shows the coun-tries where the average calorie intake has fallen below what is medically considered the minimum between 1974 and 1983. The chart does not include all the countries that, in 1984, had insuff-icient food per head; 44 of the 96 main developing countries were in that

icient food per head; 44 of the 96 main developing countries were in that position. And it does not include some key famine cases, for example Ethiopia and Sudan, because they "improved" their position between 1974 and 1983 -from 82 to 93 percent for Ethiopia, and 88 to om 82 to 93 percent t Ethiopia, and 88 to percent for Sudan. Above all, the figures not tell you who: 90

do not tell you who: actually eats what; the figures are based upon the availability of money to buy the foodstuffs.. However, despite these severe weaknesses, the chart does show that a lot of countries now have access to only four fifths of what food is needed to maintain a minimum to maintain a minimum standard of life (and it is a pretty austere mini-mum). And it highlights some catastrophic cases-Mali, Ghana, Chad. Ghana is especially extreme-like to a lesser extent, Zimbabwe-because of the disastrous fall between

disastrous tall between the two years. It also illustrates one of the elements in the grow-ing import of foodstuffs

by developing countries, Between 1970 and 1984 these imports increased 71 percent. Now there is no harm in food imports-indeed, the enhancement, excidents and diversif.

indeed, the enhancement, enrichment and diversif-ication of diets requires increasing trade- provided developing countries have an equal opportunity to export those goods where they have an advantage. That is the problem. Agriculture is one of the most extreme cases of tight control within world capitalism-indeed, a new theory of imperialism could be based upon the control of foodstuffs rather than capital or rather than capital or manufactured goods. And it is here where we can identify one of the most powerful sources of famine.

NOTORIOUS

NOTORIOUS The good citizens of Europe, North America and Japan pay roughly an extra £51,000 million annually to subsidise food production at home. The Europeans, especially generous in this respect, pay about £66 for every man, woman and child in Europe each year. As is notorious, this prodigious open handed-ness has built mountains and lakes of surplus food-stuffs, now sufficient to feed the whole population of Africa five times over. World cereal stocks are approaching 200 million tonnes – when the countries of the Sahel region in Africa needed only 3 to 4 million tonnes to keep their starving alive. The size of European food

alive. The size of European food stocks is at last becoming insupportable. The value – $\pounds 8,760$ million – is notional.

The

chart

how

is

shows

hunger

getting

worse

The cost of storage is now coming to exceed the value of what is stored. Take, for example, the one and a half tonnes of butter (ten pounds tonnes of butter (ten pounds per head of the European population). It costs £143 million per year just to keep it — and even then an unknown quantity is deter-iorating into nasty butter oil. No wonder the EEC is so desperate to offload the stocks in any way at all provided it does not reach needy consumers in Europe.

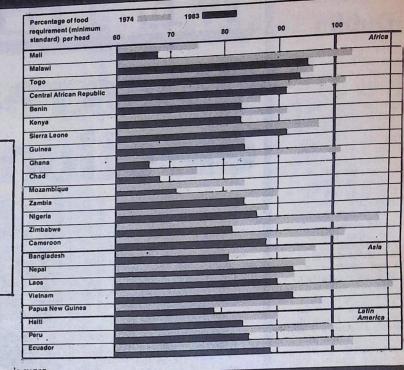
provided it does not reach needy consumers in Europe. They are now selling butter stocks at under 3p per pound (as against £1 per pound on the European retail market) to be fed to calves. And this year the Russians will be given a £143 million subidy to £143 million subsidy to

a £143 million subsidy to take EEC butter. This astonishing heap of corruption is not, however, the problem, nor simply the way in which European governments oblige the inhabitants to pay astronom governments oblige the inhabitants to pay astronom ical prices to produce food-stuffs that must in the main be pure waste. The real prob-lem – and where it connects with famine – is that the EEC subsidises agricultural exports. exports.

Europe spends £3-4,000 million annually to dump foodstuffs on the world market – which then wrecks the export markets of develdeveloping countries are denied the opportunity to earn the revenue that allows them to buy grain (even though prices are now desper-ately low) to offset famine,

INEFFICIENT

Take, for example, sugar. Because of the subsidies, the EEC has now become the largest exporter of sugar in the world, even though, compared to sugar cane growers, sugar beet producers are very inefficient. In the sixties Europe supplied about 8 percent of world sugar exports; in the eighties over 20 percent. The scale of subsidies is scarcely believable – espec-ially, compared to most EEC politicians' views on social spending. In mid-1984, when the EEC exported sugar at 493.50 per tonne, it was buy-ing it from European sugar retiners at £346.50 per tonne. The subsidy – of £253 – was nearly three times the value of the sugar on the world market. You wonder why they don't just pay the money and cut the sugar out altogether. Becale of subsidy is death to Third World prod-ucers. On the island of Negros in the Philippines there is a famine because of the mass sackings that have resulted from the low sugar price that Common Market exports have caused. Filipino exports – 2.6 million tonnes in 1977 – were 600,000 in 1985. Mozambique is now an endemic famine area; 100,000 are said to have died in the famine three years ago, and over three million people are



Mozambique's sugar Mozambique's sugar exports, running at nearly 200,000 tonnes in the early eighties, were 23,000 tonnes in 1985. Mauritius depends in 1985. Mauritius depends for 65 percent of its export earnings on sugar, not to mention Jamaica. The World Bank reckons the developing countries are losing about £5,400 million per year because of the agricultural policies of the More Devel-oped Countries. The EEC is doing the same thing with olive oil, wrecking

The EEC is doing the same thing with olive oil, wrecking the export markets of Tunisia and Morocco. Argentina's debt crisis is vastly exagger-ated because the EEC has taken to dumping wheat and beef in keyArgentinian mar-kets (beef exports from Argentina have fallen 40 per cent in the past 15 years). Brazil has been hard hit in the sugar market where it is

Brazil has been hard hit in the sugar market where it is one of the cheapest producers (production costs are under half Europe's) — earnings from exports of sugar fell by 56 percent between 1979 to 1983. The United States has launched a major prog-ramme to subsidise rice exports to the severe loss of the world's largest exporter, Thailand.

Thailand. World agricultural trade has become dominated by these monstrous conspiracies that simultaneously rob the that simultaneously rob the consumers at home (the recent 'free food' as well as not being nearly enough, was just a PR exercise to cover up the way the EEC hits the poor through high food prices the rest of the year) and wreck the markets of developing countries, so forcing famines on them. The price of hunger is grow-ing abundance of wasted food. And on top of that, the system does not even protect the farmers.

system does not even protect the farmers. In recent years the income of smaller Irish farmers has been halved and their debts doubled. The Mid West of the United States is now being reduced to a new rural dereliction as family farms fold under the weight of debt, followed by the towns, villages and factories they supported; we don't want to see the same happen here. The only gainers in this situation are a handful of the largest farmers and big processing, storing or trading companies. Now, more than ever, the struggle to rid the world of famine starts here — not with the begging bowl and pleas for pity, but by breaking the criminal conspiracy of the Common Agricultural Policy.

Policy.

PHILIPPINES: Will Aquino be able to pacify the army? the ceasefire.

THE PHILIPPINES HAS THE PHILIPPINES HAS continued to be in the news in recent months. In the referendum on Feb. 7th 78 per cent of the population voted in favour of the new constitution proposed by President Cory Aquino. The main thrust of the constitution was that the army was to be confined to a secondary role. The role of the military under the Marcos regime and the attempted coup last November has inspired fear of the mili-tary. The size of the wote in favour of the new constitution is then an indicator of a high level of support for Aquino herself. continued to be in the

herself. Internally Aquino is facing major problems, not just from the military threat from the right, built also from the Communist led New People's Army (NPA). General Ramos, the Minister of Defence claims the NPA control at least 19% of the country's villages and that they operate in most regions of the coun-try.

most regions of the coun-try. A ceasefire had been in operation since Dec 10th. The National Democratic Front (NDF) the political front of the NPA, had been involved in peace talks with the government; they were pushing for participation in a coalition government, redistribution of land without compensation, a

If a coalition government, redistribution of land without compensation, a revamp of the military and a rewritten constit-ution; they also refused to give up the armed struggle. The NDF pulled out of negotiations in Jan-uary after 15 farmers, marching for land reform, were shot dead by gover-nment troops outside the Presidential Palace.The ceasefire ended officially on Feb.8th. The NPA has refused Aquino's offer to return to the negotiating table as no progress was made during

the ceasefire. Aquino has since ord-ered the resumption of this 18 year struggle, taking up Marcos' unfin-ished business. Since the ceasefire ended more than 40 have died. Villagers in Lupao, Nueva Ecija prov-ince, north of Manila, claim that the military massacred the 14 civil-ians who died there on massacred the 14 civil-ians who died there on Feb.13th. The rebels have met in Agusan Mindanao to prepare for a protracted struggle against what they claim are U.S. supported counter-insurgency tactics by the government. Since the overthrow of tha Marcos regime in Feb-ruary 1986 little has changed in the Philippines for the farmers and work-ers. The murder of 15 farmers outside the Pres-

ers. The murder of 15 farmers outside the Pres, idential Palace is an indic-ator of the lengths the present regime will go to to stop any protests at its failure to introduce reforms reforms.

tis failure to introduce reforms. Economically the Philippines is suffering because of its massive foreign debt (# 26 bill-ion) and the collapse of the raw materials market on which it depends for export revenue; at present the price of sugar, one of the Philippines main ex-ports, on the world mar-ket is less than its production cost in the Philippines. Financing reforms will be difficult for Aquino and to pacify the milit-ary and big business she will have to deal with the NPA. A compromise with the left seems ruled out by the failure of the negotiations. The next period will be a big test for the resources of the NPA. Its ability to link its struggle to the strugg les of the 21 million filipino workers will be crucial. Under Aquino strikes have increased by 60% and is an indicator of the increased confid-ence of the working class after the ousting of Marcos.

INTERNATIONAL

Where now for South Africa?

WILL BOTHA continue to increase the repression or will he be forced to return to some sort of reform programme after the spring elections?

IT IS NOT exactly clear what is going to happen. But one thing is certain. deep There is a economic and political crisis in South Africa. The ruling class cannot continue to rule in the old way, as someone once said.

It has offered numerous fake reforms designed to co-opt a layer of leaders from the black middle class and demoralise the movement.

But the level of struggle, particularly in the townships, has meant this strategy is really a non starter now.

In industry it is clear that the government saw the Weihan reforms—which legalised independent black unions provided they registered with the In-dustrial Council—as the there of a main change

dustrial Council—as the start of a major change. They provided a basic structure for "containing conflict" in the words of the Manpower Department. Sections of big business say the reforms have been successful, that trade union leaders and em-ployers are starting to behave as they imagine they should in a western democracy.

they should in a western democracy. In a certain sense they are right. The trade unions have had to develop a means of working through bureaucratic negotiating procedures with the bosses and the Industrial Council. Workers are behaving less unpredictably. But if Botha tries to base

But if Botha tries to base his rule on these sort of re-forms they will have to be of real interest to significant sections of the black population. He may even have to seriously consider the multi-racial representation being proposed in Natal by Inkatha leader Chief Catcha Ruthelezi. Equally the government might try to develop a similar strategy for the townships to that of the homelands. This would in-volve a higher degree of credibility and patronage for the local leaders, and more resources for the township police. more resources township police.

township police. But full scale reform of the Weihan nature would require massive resources and a significant liberal-isation. The government is just not capable of supplying those resources.

And it knows such reforms open up space for action and organisation to organisation to

develop. The possibility of negotiations with Nelson Mandela and his possible release, which Inkatha lays down as its starting point for a deal with the govern-ment, has been on the threshold for two years now

the talk was of an offer made to Mandela. Maybe it will happen, anything seems possible. All of these are In the press last year all

All of these are possibilities, but I think we have to assume for now that the repression will intensify.

WHAT ABOUT the bosses. What are y proposing?

WHAT IS AMAZING is how much the so called liberal capitalists are prepared to go along with the state.

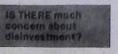
Eighteen months ago there seemed to be a broad alliance starting to develop between the United Democractic Front (UDF), the churches and liberal bosses.

The Federated Chambers of Industry produced a "business charter" that was basically a manifesto of liberal democracy. But with the first bit of pressure from the government these bosses completely folded

bosses completely folded up. COSATU, the main union federation, pushed some bosses to formally dissociate themselves from the state of emergency. But very little has happened since then. Basically the bosses are not suffering. All the indices of business confidence rose in every month after the every month after the

every month after the emergency. A recent survey on management's attitude to the emergency showed about 40 percent of them were not opposed to it. A minority even said it was a good move because it got rid of the stewards from the factories and strengthened their hand on the shop floor. floor

Most of them have just learnt to live with it. It only affects them where a shop steward has been detained and they have been forced to provide for the family.



THE BOSSES don't like disinvestment. It is massive international slap in the face to South

African capitalism. But conscious political motives are not really behind the withdrawals of IBM and General Motors. The process of "South Africanisation" was going on anyway.

The economy is dominated by South African multi-nationals like Barlow Rand and Anglo American. These companies are quite capable of making bids for companies like Barclays Bank when they pull out. Take the case of General Motors. In the car industry

there are seven manufacturers. But they have the problem of a small market, which is kept small because of in-stitutionalised racism. The export market is also in decline.

On top of this, exchange meant that the value of South African investment halved overnight. In other

halved overnight. In other words, the earnings of foreign companies with South African investments have declined drastically. Companies have pulled out because South Africa is a much less attractive proposition. Added to this is the political pressure from the anti-apartheid movement.



movement.

ONE INDICATION is the size of the strike that followed the Kinross mine disaster last September. It must have been the biggest health and safety strike in world history—right in the middle of the

the middle of the emergency! Up to 300,000 miners— about half the industry— took action in the Kinross strike on 1 October, making it the biggest ever strike in the mines. The black miners union, the NUM, could not believe the success of the

believe the success of the action. Another 100,000-250,000 other workers came out on strike in

solidarity. In terms of township In terms of township organisation the Eastern Cape seems to have been particularly hard hit. In some areas people have been removed street by street, committee by committee. The UDF has been the hardest hit by the latest de-tentions. The police are now going after targeted individuals in a clear attempt to smash the UDF national leadership. But the rent boycotts are

But the rent boycotts are still continuing. These re-quire a level of organ-

Socialist Worker talks to a South African political activist



BLACK MINERS stage a massive protest strike while the regime sends security forces into the townships

isation, so it is a good indi-cator that some of it is still isational power.

intact. The youth are more and more looking to a military solution. They have faced the police and the army day after day for years; without weapons. They in-dentify with MK (the mili-tary branch of the ANC)

tary branch of the ANC) because of this. At most large gatherings wooden

replicas of guns are on display. The hold of the ANC

The hold of the ANC ideas has not weakened. But there is a feeling that the strategy of "liberation before education" and "ungovernability" in the townships is over for the time being. The youth feel they can't win the struggle in just one township. Even though some have become no go areas for the security

areas for the security forces, the struggle has always been contained in

the townships. Therefore, they reason, the only solution is a military one.

organisation changed as a result

THE organisation of COSATU is very much the same as it was at the

time of its foundation a

The long established, big industrial unions are still very largely under work-erist leadership—those who put industrial workers in the centeroid constant

in the centre of organ-

HAS UNION

intact.

Some populists—people who put emphasis on com-munity based organisation

-also have influence. The leadership of COSATU is, however, overwhelmingly populist. This has meant COSATU becoming identified more with the ANC.

The workerists have not come out with a per-spective that is any real alternative. They are often silent about national issues which COSATU has to take a position over the is take a position over. It is left to UDF people in such

situations. There is a tendency There is a tendency among the workerists who have been tired out and demoralised by day to day struggles to withdraw into the individual unions. The left has con-centrated on maintaining their bases through edu-cation and shop stewards councils. The metal work-

councils. The metal work-councils. The metal work-ers' union, MAWU, is developing a whole range of shop stewards councils. of shop stewards councils. It is due to merge with the motor assembly industry union, NAAWU, and the motor mechanics' union MICWU, and is starting to make big gains. They have organised most of the major private

They have organised most of the major private sector engineering em-ployers now and may move

ployers now and may move into the state sector, which employs at least 50,000 potential members. In the mines there is now a demand from the NUM for the shaft stewards—the miners' shop stewards—to take over the health and

safety jobs. It also wants to get rid of the bonus sytem. These demands follow These demands follow the Kinross mine disaster. At present white miners have sole charge over health and safety. But their main role is maximising production. The situation is made more out but he

production. The situation is made more acute by the bonus system. White miners can double or treble their earnings on a bonus system based on the productivity of black miners, who get next to nothing from it.

THERE HAS been a dispute at the Beartix mine which culminated in miners from one tribe going home. What lies behind this sort of conflict in the mines?

THERE IS a tendency in strike situations to get conflicts, and very often groups of miners will just give up on it and go home.

There is a level of tribalsm, which is even reflected in the membership of the NUM in various localities. But it basically comes from 100 years of enforced 100 years of enforced tribalism by management. Their strategy has always been to divide and weaken. It differs considerably from mine to mine. But, in general, management spread various myths about miners from dif-ferent tribes. They say that Sotho are good face workers, for example, while Zulus make good security police.

police. On top of this the com-pounds are segregated according to tribe. And this doesn't just happen on the mines. There are segregated hostels in the industrial areas. MAWU made its big expansion in the early 80s by recruiting workers from by recruiting workers from the hostels.

the hostels. One worker at a hostel would be signed up, and very soon the rest of the hostel would also join. So the result is that the union the result is that the union, temporarily gets a tribal character in a particular locality, reflecting the composition of the hostel. But the NUM has a de-clared policy of non-tribalism. The leadership of the union certainly comes from a variety of the different tribes. different tribes.

There is not even a specific problem with Zulu workers. The strikers at the workers. The strikers at the long running dispute at BTR Sarncol, for example, are overwhelmingly Zulus. But they are 100 percent solid behind the strike and the union, despite the attempts by Inkatha (the Zulu tribal organisation) to split them away. Tribalism is only really a major feature in the mines where the employers strictly control the situ-ation—and, of course, in Natal, where Inkatha's attack on union organ-isation has had some effect. But it is not an issue in general industry.

in general industry.

AIDS – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome seems to have no bounds to its destructive potential. But fighting the disease is not impossible. It depends on clearing away the bigotry and anti-gay hysteria that is compounding the problem. Here, GORETTI HORGAN looks at the disease which has produced more moral than medical debate, at the chances of a cure being found and at how the spread of AIDS can best be stopped.

AIDS MAY BE ONE OF THE MOST serious health threats to face the world for some years. But in the four years since medical scientists isolated the virus, there has been less talk about how to fight the disease than about the morality of the most effective way to fight it. AIDS has been used by the 'Moral Majority' to provoke fear, prejudice and conservative attitudes to sexual morality which they hope will roll back even the very limited sexual freedoms won by women and gays in the 60s and 70s.

The reasons for fear are real enough. It is estimated that as many as ten million people world wide may be infected with the HIV virus, the cause of AIDS. In the USA by Jan, of this year, there were 16,667 deaths from the disease. It is estimated that by the end of 1991, 270,000 cases of full blown AIDS will have occurred in the US, causing 179,000 deaths in the ten years since the virus was first identified in 1981

In Britain, there are already more than 30,000 AIDS carriers. Over 550 people have been found to have

full blown AIDS. Half of these are dead. And the number of people with AIDS in Britain doubles every ten months.

In Ireland, the numbers are still relatively few. In January of this year, the Southern Dept. of Health had year, the Southern Dept. of Health had fifteen registered cases of full blown AIDS and at least 520 people were known to carry the disease. Thirteen Irish people have died of AIDS – nine in the South, four in the North. But in spite of this, and in spite of the fact that the spread of the virus can be slowed down by safer sayual

can be slowed down by safer sexual practices, the Southern government has yet to begin its mass education campaign on AIDS. Such a campaign would be meaningless unless it were to advocate the use of condoms to protect against the virus, yet the delay in getting the campaign under way is due to indecision on this point. The Health Education Bureau has produced only one booklet on AIDS and that was of little use since it refused to

encourage the use of condoms and the other "safe sex" practices promoted by groups like Gay Health Action.

This refusal is not all that surprising since homosexual acts between men are still illegal in the Twenty Six Counties. While homosexuality is no

longer illegal in the other Six, anti-gay bigotry is still rife with the DHSS doing as little as possible for fear of the combined wrath of the Catholic Church and the remnants of Paisley's 'Save Ulster from sodomy' campaign.

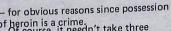
Nor is it only in relation to the sexual transmission of the disease that the governments, North and South, have their heads in the sand. The highest risk group by far in Ireland is not

gay men or haemophiliacs. It is heroin addicts – intravenous drug users. Yet there has been no sign of the kind of dramatic action needed if the spread of the disease among the country's drug users is to be stopped. Sharing needles with someone who has the AIDS virus is perhaps the most certain method of contracting the disease. Sharing needles is common among junkies, the only way it can be stopped is by giving free needles to addicts.

Not only has there been no official move towards distributing free needles, but according to a recent *Hot Press* article, the kind of facilities available for testing addicts for the virus are so overworked as to be totally useless.

When addicts come to the Drug Unit in Jervis Street hospital in Dublin seeking physeptone, a substitute drug for heroin which lessens the withdrawal effects, they are given a blood test for the HIV virus.

The addict receives the physeptone for two weeks, after which there is no further contact with the Drug Unit. However, it takes about three weeks before the results of the blood test are available. The addict is no longer attending the clinic and normally the contact address which they have given is false



of heroin is a crime. Of course, it needn't take three weeks to get the test results. Under ideal circumstances, results of the HIV tests could be available in a day and a half. But ideal circumstances demand proper funding of laboratories and full staffing levels. Ten times more people are now being screened for AIDS than when testing was initiated. The number of staff remain the same. Increas-ing the laboratory staff would not cost very much, would not involve facing up to the Church or the moral majority, yet even this simple step has not been taken.

Indeed the attitude of many of those dealing with heroin addicts, including that of the Coolmine Treatment Centre has effectively been that addicts should be punished for their illness by refusing them free needles or other facilities which might prevent them contracting AIDS.



A scene from the American film Buddles about coming to terms with Alos

Here are the facts

* AIDS is caused by a virus, HIV (human immuno-deficiency virus. This attacks the immune system, which is used to fight off infection. Once the immune system is broken down the body is easy prey to diseases, and death follows. Not all people infected with the virus however go on to develop AIDS.

* Like all viruses HIV is tiny -about one thousandth the size of the blood cells it infects. And like all viruses it can only reproduce itself within liveng cells. It specifically attacks those white blood cells known as 'helper' T-cells that trigger our immune system to destroy invading micro-

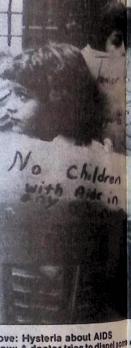
organisms. It is because semen contains many of these T-cells that the disease is so easily sexually transmittable and why using a condom can protect.

AIDS: The truth

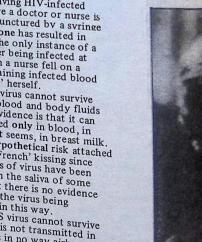
condom can protect.
* By January of this year, thirteen Irish people had died of AIDS while another 600 people were known to carry the virus. The highest risk group in Ireland is not gay men, it's drug addicts. This explains why Ireland has the highest incidence in Europe of babies being born with the AIDS virus.
* In Britain, mainly as a result of

the AIDS virus. * In Britain, mainly as a result of individuals taking basic precautions, the number of new cases of AIDS among gays has started to level out. In London, the incidence of other forms of sexually transmitted diseases has fallen by two thirds among gays

In London, the incidence of other forms of sexually transmitted diseases has fallen by two thirds among gays. * Despite all the hysteria, the virus is not easily transmitted. For example, of more than 650 reported cases of 'needle stick' injuries involving HIV-infected blood - where a doctor or nurse is accidently punctured by a svringe needle - not one has resulted in infection. The only instance of a health worker being infected blood and 'injected' herself. * The HIV virus Cannot survive outside the blood and body fluids and all the evidence is that it can be transmitted only in blood, in semen and, it seems, in breast milk. There is a hypothetical risk attached to deep or 'French' kissing since tiny amounts of virus have been isolated from the saliva of some carriers. But there is no evidence whatever of the virus being transmitted in this way. * The AIDS virus cannot survive on the skin, is not transmitted in sweat and is in no way airborne. It has not been found in urine or faeces, though even if it had there would be absolutely no risk from toilet seats or swimming pools. * The virus is easily destroyed by simple health measures used to protect against much more highly untectous blood borne diseases such as hepatitis B. It is killed by household disinfectant and bleach, and no additional precautions are workers and so on.



Above: Hysteria about AIDS Below: A doctor tries to dispelsom that the disease is not infectious



Africa: why millions may be facing death

The Gay Plague', 'The disease of Sodom' are the kird of labels which the media has attached to AIDS. But these labels hide the fact that the disease has never been confined only to gay men. Africa.s tragedy is grim proof of

Africa is devastated by disease. Polio Africa is devastated by disease, Polio measles, tetanus, diphtheria and dysentry are rampant. They kill six million Afri-can chiklren each year. For the past five years AIDS has seemed like just one more disease amongst many. Now it threatens to out-kill them all

Already a quarter of the people in some central African cities are infected with the virus which causes AIDS. Anything between 30 - 70 percent of these will die. Maybe all of them, Third

World agencies predict that half the Wond agenets predict that nail the population of some countries will die Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zanbia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Zaire and Ghana are among the worst hit countries. The vast majority of people infected

are in their 20s and 30s, as many v as men. At least one million will die in the next ten years, possibly many more. Eighteen percent of blood donors in Kigali, capital of Rwanda, have the virus. In Zambia,Lusaka 33 per cent of all men

In Zambia, Lusaka 55 per cent of an inen aged 30-35 are infected. The key to explaining this frightening speed of AIDS in Africa is poverty. The surest protection against AIDS and all other sexually transmitted diseases is the sheath. But just one percent of the world's production of condoms reaches Africa and the Middle East. And those that do are often old and defective, 'dumped' on the Third World market by

profiteering companies. Screening blood stocks for HIV contamination is expensive. It requires special equipment, training and chemicals imported from the west. So it just doesn't happen. Yet the need for blood transfusions is vastly greater in Africa. In Rwanda, one child in three requires a transfusion against anaemia caused by malaria. Large numbers of

women need transfusions for anaemia

following multiple pregnancies. The shortage of needles for hypodermic syringes means that disposable needles are used over and disposable needes are used over and over again. If not properly sterilised they transmit the AIDS virus. Yet hospitals in Kampala (Uganda) often lack so much as bleach!

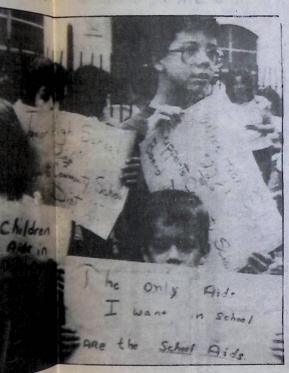
Crippled by international debts, African governments cannot attempt even the kind of miserly campaigns begun in the six counties and promised in the South. Some governments have produced posters and leaflets. But what produced posters and leaflets. But what use is explaining safe sex where there are no condoms. And what effect can leaflets and advertisements have when in much of the region no more than one in two adults can read?

Wo adults can read? Millions, maybe hundreds of millions, face death from AIDS in Africa. They could be saved from infection by simple health measures. Instead, they will continue to be screwed for debt repayments.

SOCIAL IST WORKER PAGE SEVEN

hbehind the scares





of the hysteria by kissing an AIDS victim to show



SINCE-the AIDS virus was first isolated in 1981, it has been portrayed by the media as a "gay plague"; the ruling class has exploited understandable fears about the disease to try to impose their much talked of, but little practised (by them), "family values" and to attack "promiscuity" and homosexuality. To the born-again Christian element of the moral majority, the virus is a "punishment" from God" for all sex outside marriage and especially for gay sex.

The Catholic Church's attitude to to AIDS has been downright dangerous. They say that governments shouldn't encourage "safe sex" practices such as the use of condoms that sexual intercourse is right only within marriage and that the use of condoms, which are barriers to conception as well as disease, is forbidden by the Church. The majority of people, even

perhaps the majority of younger practising Catholics, don't hold to the view that sex should be confined to marriage. But AIDS appears to have given the forces of reaction some medical "evidence" for their view of what is "natural" and "right". In fact, it does nothing of the kind. To start on a minor, but telling, point: the one group in society least likely to contract AIDS is lesbians. Vaginal secretions can carry the AIDS virus but only at such a minute level that it is not easily transmitted. Semen on the other hand contains highly trans-mittable levels of the virus – so for women who want to avoid AIDS marriage is not the best solution. Having sex only with other women is much safer.

The most important point to be made, however, about the sexual attitudes of the moral majority, is that it is precisely

spread of AIDS?

uch attitudes which have allowed AIDS to become the major health problem it now represents. The virus has always killed more heterosexuals than homosexuals. But the majority of such deaths were in Africa and ignored. When the virus first hit the Western world, it killed mainly homosexual men, drug addicts and prostitutes. As long as the disease affected only these "marginal" groups, nothing was done about it. It was only when the death rate crept into the thousands among gays and only when it became obvious that it would soon kill thousands of heterosexuals that Western governments started to do anything to stop the spread of the virus. By then the disease had already spread to all sections of the population.

The notion that the disease could have been confined to the gay community was based on a fundamental misconception. The stereotypical image is that gays live and move in a small ghetto, quite separ ate from "normal" society. This is rubbish.

In fact about ten per cent of men in Ireland are gay – at least one hundred thousand men North and South. A further twenty percent are bisexual and it is estimated that about a quarter of a million Irish men have had a homosexual experience leading to orgasm at some point in their lives. In other words, homosexuality is an integral, if largely hidden, part of our entire society.

The idea pushed by the Catholic Church, fundamentalist Protestant churches, the "moral majority" and the government is that AIDS spreads because too many people, and too many gays in particular, are having

In spite of what the Moral Majority say, AIDS is not like the Great Plague or the Black Death. We know now what a virus is and how to fight its spread. AIDS will undoubtedly be pecularly difficult to cure. But despite the difficulties in finding a cure, there is no reason whatsoever for AIDS to become an epidemic in the same way as the epidemic in the same way as the bubonic plague, cholera etc. did. But one thing is certain: a cure will only be found when huge

resources are given to research. It means taking over research efforts from private drug companies that see AIDS not as a disease for which see AIDS not as a disease for which a cure must be found as quickly as possible but as the source of potentially vast profits. For example, the Wellcome company which has developed the drug AZT explained why they weren't worried that the drug only suppresses the symptons of the disease, instead of curing it.'In the drug world' said Wellcome's Dr. Barry, 'treating large numbers of people for life means very big earnings'. Bur while waiting for a cure to.

sex with too many other people. They are pushing this view because it bolsters the ruling class idea that sex should be confined to one faithful marriage – as something to be endured not enjoyed, its sole purpose to bring children into the world. This view puts gay sex way beyond the pale, since it is in no way connected with reproduction.

It is because sex with someone of the same sex is so totally separated from reproduction that gays are made outcasts in society. Be-cause this separation challenges all the stereotypes of man-woman relationships, all the ideas about sexual love being possible only

within the family set-up. In fact, people have always found ways of breaking out of the artificial limits placed on their sex lives by social and religious morals. In the 6th-8th centuries, when Ireland was known as "the island of saints and scholars", all heterosexual intercourse was deemed to occur within marriage; there were, however, different grades of marriage. So a one night stand was a very low grade carrying with it very few rights, while a legally contracted marriage, complete with dowry and property settlements, was a grade one marriage with many rights and responsibilities.

This historical fact goes to show that in every age, regardless of public morality or religious commandment, sex has been enjoyed, overtly or covertly, by as many people as have the opportunity. Humans have a capacity for enjoying sex way beyond what is required to reproduce the species. And in

the virus. Any type of sexual activity which doesn't involve an exchange of bodily fluids - like mutual masturbation—is perfectly safe The risk from sexual intercourse safe The risk from sexual intercourse is greatly reduced by using a condom. In case the condom bursts or tears, it's a good idea to use a spermicidal cream which contains the active ingredient NONOXYL-9. Nonoxyl-9 has been shown to actually kill the AIDS virus; it is available in Ortho-Gynol II (with the silver stripe) and Delfen spermicidal foam. Using the spermicidal is particularly important for anal intercourse as its lubrication will also cut down on the likelihood of condoms tearing.

symptons of the disease, instead of curing it. 'In the drug world' said Wellcome's Dr. Barry, 'treating large numbers of people for life means very big earnings'. Bur while waiting for a cure to. be found, we don't have to become celibate in order to avoid contacting

The Gay Health Action's "safe sex" information card different societies, homosexuality has often had equal status with heterosexuality. So neither heterosexual nor homosexual promiscuity is in any way unnatural or



POSSIBLY RISKY

But anti-gay propaganda and moralism about promiscuity continues to allow AIDS to spread. People who suspect they have the disease have to keep quiet for fear of victimisation and to avoid being attacked for being gay, or using drugs, or even enjoying sex. This moralism makes the promotion of 'safe sex' more difficult as it causes people to adopt an "it-will-never-happen-to-me, I'm not promiscuous" attitude. But a single contact with a virus carrier is enough to transmit the disease. So having fewer sexual partners only cuts the risk, it doesn't eliminate it. Promoting the use of condoms and of the spermicide which kills the AIDS virus, whether people have one sexual partner or many, is the only way to stop the spread of AIDS.

But a campaign advocating safe-sex is unlikely in the Twenty Six Counties where it is illegal to advertise the sale of condoms or any contraceptive. Nor can we expect the Southern government to tell gay men how to have illegal sex more safely. It is clear then that the section of the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act which makes homosexuality illegal must immediately be repealed. No cam-paign to stop the spread of AIDS has any real hope until gay men can openly admit to their sexuality without fear of harassment or even imprisonment.

ounter at all health centres North

counter at an nearly does stem the Safe sex really does stem the spread of AIDS. In Britain, the number of new cases of AIDS among gays has started to level out as a result of gay groups' 'safe sex' compaiens.

An open, frank and straight-forward information campaign like those conducted by the gay organisations is needed in schools, condoms and spermicide should be freely available, drug addicts should be provided with free syringes and sexually transmitted disease clinics and counselling services need to be improved and expanded. Such action requires two things which are unlikely to be forth-coming North or South-money and an open, non-moralistic attitude to sex. If AIDS does assume massive proportions in this country, it will

proportions in this country, it will be because it has had fertile ground to grow in a sick society that denies people the right to a free and open sexuality.

What can be done to stem the

THE POLITICS OF GERRY ADAMS

GEERY ADAMS's book, The Politics of Irish Freedom, is well worth reading. It's the clearest and most extended account yet of the thinking of the present Republican leadership. It highlights the strengths of the present Republican Movement - and at the same time reveals what from the socialist point of view are the fatal weaknesses of the Republican ideology itself

Adams clearly establishes the political "legitimacy" of Sinn Fein and the IRA, in the sense that they grew out of the reality of life in the nat-

ionalist ghettoes of the North. In much of the Left, as in the bourgeois media, the Republicans are portrayed as an alien presence which has pushed its way violently into political life. As Adams says: "The IRA is commented on in an unreal way, as if its motivation were the pursuit of violence for its own sake.

In fact the Provisional IRA emerged in the North in the early seventies as an entirely natural result of circumstances created by the British presence. The campaign for civil rights had been met by fierce repression from the RUC and sectarian assault by loyalist extremists. Civil rights moderates like Gerry Fitt and John Hume had high hopes that this would change after the British Government intervened directly in August 1969 and sent the British Army onto the streets to take over from the RUC.

CURFEW

Within months, however, it looked obvious from the ghettoes that that's all that had happened: the British Army had taken over from the RUC. Adams recalls the dramatic impact which the 'Falls Curfew" of July 1970 had on young working class Catholics

Three thousand British troops stormed into the Falls on July 2nd while, from helicopters hovering overhead, the entire population was told through PA systems that until further notice anyone found outdoors would be shot on sight.

All intruders, including the press were excluded, the area cordoned off. British soldiers rampaged through the streets, emptying them. Hundreds of doors were kicked in, Furniture, fixings and floorboards were smashed up. Any who resisted or complained were beaten up in their own homes Five people were shot dead. More than a hundred more were arrested and taken away. nd as people huddled in squire Lord Brookeborough, of the Orange Order and the Unionist Party, toured the area in.a British army land-rover lourding it over the er, lording it over the locality.

That's what created the IRA: That and a dozen other incidents like it....such as the casual killing of two young

by EAMONN McCANN

unarmed men, Seamus Cusack and Desmond Beattie, in Derry the following month. And Bloody Sunday. What had begun as a campgign for very basic civil rights within the Six Counties became. because of the way the State responded, a violent fight against the existence of the State.

Adams describes this process (too briefly) in a calm, matter-of-fact way. His assessment of particular incidents can be argued with. But the general thrust of what he has to say is a very effective response to those in the Labour and trade union Left whose analysis of the last 18 ears is based on the proposition that if only the Provos had never come into existence things would be much better for socialists now. The only thing which would in theory have stopped the Provos coming into existence would have been the granting of the civil rights demands at an early stage and the dismantling - as opposed to the deploy ment - of the apparatus of repression. It proved impossible for the Six County State to do that.

Adams is able to show, too, that today's IRA can plausibly trace its tradition back to the 'old" IRA of the War of Independence, which also lacked the type of "democrat-ic mandate" for war which constitutional nationalists constitutional nationalists denounce today's IRA for lacking. He writes, quite accurately: "In reality it was a small number of Republicans who advanced the struggle and it was only when that and it was only when that struggle was about to become successful that it enjoyed

"The IRA is commented on in an unreal way, as if its motivation were the pursuit of violence for its own sake"

mass support". (In fact, it can be doubted whether the "old" IRA ever had mass support in the sense of being actively encouraged towards war by the bulk of the nationalist population.)

There is another area, too, in which today's Republican Movement can claim a close affinity to the Republican leadership of the 1919-1922 period: that is, its attitude to class politics and to the relationship between Repub-licanism and socialism. And it is here that the SWM, as a Marxist organisation, disagrees sharply with Adam's position.

Adams writes very interestingly about political developments within Sinn Fein between the mid-70s and the present. He frankly admits that until near the end of the last decade Sinn Fein wasn't a political party at all wasn't a political party at all in any meaningful sense of the term, that there was little discussion of political ideas or perspectives within it and that, it operated mainly as a rather-loosely-structured support-group for the IRA, and not While recognising and welcoming the genuineness of the "shift to the Left", the SWM has argued consistently that there are very strict limits to how far Left the Republicans can move. We have also argued that whatever support the Republican Movement gathers by campaigning under Left slogans will, inevitably, be directed not against the capit alist system, towards the achievement of socialism, but towards the age-old Republican objective of a united capitalist Ireland. We have argued, against some in the Republican Movement itself who style themselves 'Marxists' that the movement is NOT in the process of transforming itself into a working class party serving specifically working class interests.

Adams's book clearly confirms the correctness of the SWM's assessment.

He writes that in Ireland socialism has not yet come onto "the historical agenda", that it is necessary to win "national independence"

before a seriously intended struggle for socialism can begin. He makes it plain that the independent nation which the republican struggle is now aimed at achieving is a capitalist independent nation: "This classical view of the matter contrasts with the ultra-left view, which counter-poses republicanism and socialism and which breaks up the unity of the national independence movement by putting forward "socialist" demands that have no possib-ility of being achieved until real independence is won..." De Valera expressed it more

succinctly in 1918: "Labour must wait".

Adams follows the logic of this line by arguing that the Republican Movement can and must make room for both those who regard themselves as socialists and those who do not: "The Republican struggle should not at this stage of its development style itself as 'socialist-republican'. This would imply that there is no place in it for non-socialists''.

By the same token in Adams's analysis there is no reason the Republican Movement as a whole shouldn't make tactical alliances with groups or parties which would go some of the way towards "national independence" but not an inch of the way towards socialism – such as the SDLP for example!

"...the emergence of Sinn Fein may have unecessarily brought out some of the class differences between ourselves and the SDLP leadership. These differences are there, of course, indeed they are dictated by the class nature of the struggle and they should not be disguised, but it might have been better in this phase of the independence struggle if there could have been some kind of general unity, in which both parties would have agreed to disagree on social and economic issues and maximise pressure

on points of agreement". Adams traces his argument from the proposition that socialism is impossible within the confines of either the Six Gounty State or the Twenty Six County State, that it is necessary therefore to achieve

"national independence" before socialism can be put onto "the historical agenda". The SWM on the other hand argues (from what Adams would regard as an "ultra-left" position) that it is only by putting socialism on the agendaright now that national

independence can ever be achieved.

CLASS

It is not in the interests of the capitalist class in Ireland - North, South, Orange, Green – to achieve "national independence" in any sense in which Gerry Adams might mean the term. It is for this reason that the partial indep endence which native capitalism won in 1922 (or which rather and this should be of some significance for Republicans – was won for it by the IRA struggle) was never used as a springboard for achieving 'full" national independence.

To be sure, there have been contradictions between the interests of "independent" native Irish capitalism and those of British capitalism. These were reflected most clearly in the "economic" war" which De Valera dabbled in in the thirties as he tried in vain to protect the tiny Irish economy from British competition. And there can from time to time be conflicts of interest still.

But these are of no significance whatever when comp-ared with the broad and well established identity of interest between "national" capitalism on the one hand and British and indeed world capitalism

on the other. There is no possibility – NONE – of any section of

in an anti-imperialist struggle. The only class in Ireland which has both an interest in settling accounts with imper-ialism and the potential power to do it is the class which is ground down by imperialism and by imperialism's local, capitalist represent-atives. That one class is the

the Irish capitalist class joining

working class. The SWM argues from this that it is only by basing our selves on working class struggle now that a movement can ever be built which will carry the fight against imperialism through to a successful conclusion.

The fundamental difference between this perspective and that described in *The Politics*

of Irish Freedom is clear. Gerry Adams makes it quite explicit that, contrary to what members of Sinn Fein who regard themselves as Marxist argue, the Republican Move ment is not in the process of shifting steadily leftwards along the political spectrum towards a revolutionary socialist position. It is siphoning into itself a considerable amount of considerable amount of socialist energy and chanelling it towards what has always been the objective of Irish Republicanism — a united Ireland in which capitalist property relationships would still dominate. The Republican Movement is a more left-wing nationalist organisation than it used to be. But it is still, and will continue to be, a nationalist and not a socialist organisation.

All the ramifications of this argument cannot be contained in the space available here. But it might be common ground between Republicans and the SWM that these are important matters which deserve serious discussion. The SWM repeats that it would welcome any opportunity to debate these issues publicly with Republicans.



Gerry Adams addresses Sinn Fein supporters

taken entirely seriously by the IRA.

He describes the impact on the organisation of the H-Block campaigns of the mid-to-late seventies, the hunger strike struggle of the early eighties, Sinn Fein's entry into serious electoral politics in the course of the hunger strike and of the effect this had both on the existing membership and in terms of influx of new members. This has been

the "shift to the Left", which has been much commented on and which has been expressed in a greater concen-tration by the party on social and economic issues and in the decision of the last Ard Fheis to drop abstentionism in the South

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by ABBIE BAK SN

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SWM PUBLIC MEETINGS

AIDS and the moral majority

speaker: MARY SMITH

DUBLIN: CIE Hall, 25th March CORK: Carpenters Hall, 19th March WATERFORD: venue to be announced, 26th March

AIDS and the moral majority

speaker: GORETTI HORGAN

DERRY: Gweedore Bar, 16th March BELFAST: Conway Mill, 11th March

Unemployment: the socialist alternative

KILKENNY: Club House Hotel, Wednesday 25th March

All meetings start at 8 pm.

THE SWM swung into action on the recent gen-eral election. Although it did not stand candid-ates, it reckoned that the heightened political atmosphere would prov-ide an audience for its ideas. Branches around the country stuck up posters proclaiming: Fianna Fail/ or Coalition: DON'T TRUST ANY OF THEM. Build a Real Socialist Alternative. In Waterford it looked as if there were more SWM In Waterford it looked as if there were more SWM posters around than some of those who were of those who were

of those who were standing. 70 people turned up in Dublin to hear SWM speakers argue for far harder left wing politics than that on offer by the workers than that on offer by the workers the Workers Party and Sinn Fein. Meetings were also held in Dun-dalk, Cork, Waterford and Dungarvan. In Water-ford, the usual sale on the Dole jumped to a massive 200 as the front page headline tapped a mood of anger.

BOOKMARKS, the pub-lishing house of the Soc-ialist Workers Party in

Britain, have just brought out Connolly's "Labour and Irish His-tory" in a bright new edition, with an intro-duction by SWM mem-ber Kieran Allen. In their blurb, Bookmarks say: "Labour and Irish History was written as a challenge to the Irish nationalists in whose company Connolly was to fight and die. Con-nolly's aim was to con-wince the nationalists that their policy of a 'union of classes would lead to disaster'. Next month Socialist Worker does a full review of the re-issue. In the meantime you can avail of a special offer to Socialist Worker readers and not the poly for f2 Socialist Worker readers and get the book for £2 instead of the normal

instead of the norma-f2.95. A full catalogue of left wing books is avail-able from our own book service. Our own pam-phlet "Why we need a revolution in Ireland" has just been sold out and is going through its second edition. However, "What we stand for" -an introduction to SWM an introduction to SWM politics is still available at 60p.

R

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

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

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

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

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 Catholio 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

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 lundamental 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 to nationalist geals, 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 bourgoes Eire Nue.

AGAINST ALL OPPRESSION

AGNINGT ALL OFFICEDUM 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 homesoxuals. We stand for full separation of the church and state. We stand for secular control of the hespitals and the scheels.

THE UNIONS

Teday the trade union movement is dominated by a caste of bureau-crats whose principat 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

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'

demand nationalisation under workers control Full independence of the unions from they 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 cower 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.





SWM NEWS

REVIEWS **Revolutionary eye-witness**

KRONSTADT AND PETROGRAD IN 1917 by RASKOLNIKOV 1892-1939. £5 sterling

RASKOLNIKOV was a member of the Bolshevik Party involved in the October Revolution of 1917. Unlike thousands of others, he wrote a history of his experiences during the revolution and was, in fact, quoted by Trotsky in his "History of the Russian Revolution". Raskolnikov's story was first published in the 1920's but withdrawn by the Stalinist bureaucracy as soon as they began rewriting and distorting history. It has recently been re-published for the first time since that period by New Park publications and can be ordered through the SWM. SWM.

Raskolnikov, though not really a Trotskyist, became an enemy of Stalin's secret-police a rd was poisoned by them in France in 19 39.

France in 19 39. Raskolnikov joined the Bolsheviks in 1910 while still a student. He began working on Pravda in 1912 as an editorial secretary, was arrested and sentenced to three years inprisonment but managed to escape Russia -only to be arrested by the Germans as a Russian spy and sent back.

Germans as a Russian spy and sent back. He was called up to the armed forces in 1914 and joined the Tsarist navy as an officer-cadet. When the February Revolution of 1917 took place, Raskolnikov was sitting examinations for his commission in Petrograd, now Leningrad. He describes how the revolution began with the women's march for "Bread, Freedom and Peace" on February 23, 1917. Armed workers and soldiers took to the streets and a group of them descended on the Cadet college on February 27. The Commanding Officer for naval cadets, Frolov, went

for naval cadets, Frolov, went to meet the crowd, several

thousand strong. The crowd said they wanted all cadets sent home and all weapons surrendered. "Gentlemen that's not possible," Frolov objected, "We are holding examinations" One voice from the crowd shouted: "All Russia is now taking an examination!" The crowd surged in and seized all the weapons. Raskolnikov says "Joyfully, I left the stuffy barracks and joined the iisen people".

people". He was sent by the Bolsheviks to Kronstadt which Bolsheviks to Kronstadt which was the main naval base in Russia. He described how the argument went on within the Bolsheviks whether or not they should give full support to Kerensky's Provisional Government. Raskolnikov stated his own position: "Our party could have no confidence in the Provisional Government, given its bourgeois given its bourgeois composition but since Tsarist power still threatened a power still threatened a backlash, we must support it".

INSURRECTION

It was not until Lenin arrived back in Russia that the Bolsheviks got around to their

own military organisation and preparing for insurrection. Lenin's speech, when he did arrive in the Famous Finland Station in Leningrad Finiand Station in Leningrad was "Long live the worldwide Socialist Revolution". His speech and his activity united the Bolshevik party in organising the working class and themselves in such a way that the October revolution become possible

that the October revolution became possible. Roskolnikov was involved in the organisation by the Bolsheviks of the sailors at Kronstadt in support of a real workers' and soldiers' uprising to win state power for the working class. Kronstadt occupies a special place in the story of the

place in the story of the Russian revolution. All

through 1917, Kronstadt was through 1917, Kronstadt was a hive of revolutionary activity. In the February revolution, the soldiers there had sought revenge for the mistreatment by the officers and several had been taken out and executed. Roskolnikov records that once the Bolshavits had won the Bolsheviks had won the majority of the Soviet (council of workers and sailors) they

He makes the point that the sailors, even in the excesses of lynch law, had executed only the most brutal of the officers and, therefore, it was not indiscriminate killing.

Throughout 1917, Raskolnikov brought out a paper called Golos Pravdy paper called Golos Pravdy which was important to Bolshevik organisation throughout Petrograd. He worked at this from morning to evening and recounts how manuscripts arrived in enormous numbers from enormous numbers from workers, soldiers and sailors. He asserts that intellectuals played no part in the running of the paper or in writing for it. The evening was given over to Marxist education classes for workers.

This was the period of "dual-power" when the country was economically in the hands in the hands of the workers and soldiers councils workers and soldiers councils or soviets but when state power still lay in the hands of the provisional government which wanted to stop total revolution. But the Bolsheviks were winning the argument for revolution. Raskolnikov describes how the sailors used to drag him out to make speeches to visiting women workers or to part of the civilian force. The Bolsheviks sent speakers round to the sent speakers round to the sent speakers round to the various ships and on occasion whole Companies asked to join the party. The Bolsheviks succeeded in winning the mass of workers at Kronstadt to the need for revolution and for a revolutionary next to head revolutionary party to lead



Revolutionary ferment in the armed forces made October 1917 possible

that revolution. Besides the Bolsheviks, only the anarchists had any influence.

Raskilnikov describes how the anarchists engaged in adventurist actions, they seized buildings in Kronstadt without any reference to the Soviet on which they were represented. They did use the Soviet in May when the Bolsheviks were not present to effectively declare an "independent Kronstadt Republic" with "All power to the Soviet". The Bolsheviks opposed such unilateral action by individual workers' councils because of the danger of Raskilnikov describes how

isolation by the provisional government's forces. Within a few days, however, Trotsky's arguments had convinced the sailors that they must withdraw their declaration until the power of the soviets was established throughout most of the country.

DIFFICULTIES

Raskolnikov describes the immense difficulties faced by the Bolshevik Party through the summer of 1917—and the no-where was it more difficult than in Kronstadt — as it tried

at one and the same time both to advance the support and organisation of the working class for the seizure of power and to hold back those sections of the class—like the anarchist influenced Kronstadt sailors who wanted to stage an insurrection immediately, even though the majority of the working class had not been won to revolution, There is something tremen-dously refreshing about first

dously refreshing about first-hand accounts of events as momentous as workers' revolution—that's what makes Raskolnikov's book well worth reading. —JIM BLAKE.

INTERVIEW WITH THE HOUSEMARTINS

SITTING ON THE **ENCE**

THE Housemartins is the band which took "music with a message" to the top of the charts again.

MARTIN BOTTOM-LEY went to Hull to ask two members of the band, Hugh and where they Paul. stand.

HUGH SAID: "I believe the working class and all oppressed people should be allowed to have their destiny in their own hands. My nave their desuring in their own hands. My outlook is still revo-lutionary from the point of view that I don't think we can come to agree-ments with the ruling

elite. Hugh used to be a member of the Workers Revolutionary Party. He left because he feit the leadership kept betray-ing the party's prin-ciples. Paul, on the other hand, has never been a member of a political party. He sees his ideas as a gut reaction to his experience. experience.

Paul said: "Political thought stems from reaction. I'm still reaction. I'm still maturing and there's still a lot I'm not sure about. But I'm sure there will be a day I'll commit myself to an organisation of the working class. I'll have

to see. Both have major crit-icisms of the left, which

they claim to be borne out by their personal ex-perience. These crit-icisms amount to accusations of middle

accusations of middle class opportunism and a failure to relate to the working class socially. According to Paul: "The SWP may be in-volved with struggles, but not socially. And this is really important. If there's a strike at Hull docks they'll all be there. But what about the rest of the year? I want people to know I'll be around for a lifetime." Hugh added: "The

Hugh added: "The problem with the far left is how they orientate to the Labour Party. The big question for me is how do we forge links with them?

"I'll vote Labour and would be in favour of the band lending its support to them. But I wouldn't argue with someone for an eventor

argue with someone for an evening to support them, because I under-stand how people feel about their betrayals." An obvious way for the Housemartins to lend support to the Labour Party is through

Red Wedge. As there have been no visible signs of this, I wondered whether they saw contradictions? Paul said: "The prob-lem with them is lack of clarity. Red Wedge is to clarity. Red Wedge is to the left of the Labour Party and wants to speak out, but can't. It's in the same building, it's fin the Housemartins are fielther reformists nor revolution aries, but stuck somewhere in be-tween. Until they clarify remain sitting on a fence of their own making. But hopefully their com-mitment to seeing a socialist soclety means they won't end up on the



INDUSTRIAL NEWS

IN BRIEF Workers defensive

as strikes decline

STRIKE FIGURES THE DEPARTMENT OF Labour in the South recently issued its strike statistics for 1986. During the year there were 101 strikes with 315,500 strike-days. This is a decline on the This is a decline on the figures for 1985, when there were 417,726 strike days, and 1984, when there were 386,421 strike-days. Workers have incr-

workers have incr-easingly depended on union officials to lead the action. This is ref-lected in the low numlected in the low num-ber of unofficial strikes. Last year 38 per cent of strikes were unoffic-ial. This marks a big decline since the seven-ties when 75 per cent of strikes were 'held without official sanction. The vast majority of recent strikes have been in the Public Sector. Teachers, Aer Lingus workers and Corpo workers in Cork and Dublin account for the

Dublin account for the bulk of the figures. These strikes were all dominated by the union

dominated by the unior bureaucrats. The strike at Pack-ard's in Dublin is the biggest recent fightback in the Private Sector. Otherwise the last two years have seen numer-ous defeats in this ares. The decline in milit-

ancy cannot continue for ever. As the crisis deep-ens the new government will continue to attack for with continue to attack workers' living standards. With workers becoming increasingly bitter a major upsurge in struggle is possible.

is possible. None of this is wish-ful thinking. Last Decem-ber there was a major fightback among students and railway workers in France. This happened in a country where a right-wing government had recently won a major election victory and where the fascist "Front National" had won ten per cent of the vote in the European elections. The strikes happened because workers decided that they had had enough of cutbacks and low wages.

low wages. When workers here decide that they have had enough, socialists must be ready. The S.W.M. will continue to S.W.M. will continue to intervene in areas of struggle. We do so as part of the process of building a marxist alter-native to the reformist bureaucrats, an alter-native that can have a significant influence on workers when the tide begins to turn. So don't let those strike figures depress you. Join us and depress you. Join us help to make the fightback a reality.

DUNGARVAN CRYSTAL REDUNDANCIES DUNGARVAN Crystal are seeking 14 redundancies

seeking 14 redundancies among cutters in their Rheintour section. These redundancies are not a result of new technology

but are due to low sales of the Rheintour products. These job losses must be fought all the way because otherwise the union will have difficulty fighting future

redundancies when new technology is introduced. The union has a policy of no NET job losses and shop stewards should make this a central demand.

central demand. Dungarvan Crystal will make huge profits as a result of new technology and the workers should demand the benefits of this by way of shorter hours and extra -WATERFORD SWM

FIFTH MONTH ON STRIKE AT SHELBOURNE

THE STRIKE over pay at Dublin's Shelbourne Hotel is now in its fifth month. Trust House Forte, the owners, are refusing to negotiate with the strikers' union, the ITGWU. Morale on the picket line is good and the strikers are prepared for a long battle. Regular meetings are held in Liberty Hall to discuss the strike.

the strike. Meanwhile, the hotel continues to operate, em-ploying scabs flown in from Britain. But its function room is not do-ing so well with the Irish Rugby team holding its after-match parties elsewhere and several guests at a recent wed-ding refusing to cross the picket line. The main hope of victory now lies in sol-idarity from the workers at the Airport Hotel in Dublin, also run by Trust House Forte. They are also looking for a pay increase and the op-ening up of a second front against the man-agement would give a boost to the strike. Aer Lingus has told the union that pickets cannot be placed outside the hotel because it is an Airport property. The best response to this is to occupy the hotel. In order to keep the strike going at the Shelbourne, money is needed. Members of the LGPSU and PTWU have already contributed. Workers in other jobs should follow their example. - Dave McDonagh

SHEILS' BUTCHER SHOP STRIKE THE OWNER of Sheils'

THE OWNER of Sheils' Butchers in Dublin's Moore Street recently decided to retire and shut up shop. Meanwhile the workers are being thrown on the scrap-heap without severance pay. As we go to press the eight workers, members of the Vitners and Grocers Union (INUVG and ATA), have gone on strike to demand their money. This strike deserves plenty of support. This is just another case of a boss retiring in comfort with a small fortune while the workers who created the profits get two fingers.

Jobs loss after Packard defeat

Towards the end of the Packard strike, we received the following article from a shop steward in the plant. SW disagrees with many of the opinions expressed in the article but nonetheless we print it in full. Below that SW comments on the defeat of the strike.

THE STRIKE at Packard Electric, a subsidiary of GM, is now in its seventh week. Most of the workforce were, if fact, locked out a week before the official strike began. This was confirmed on Tallaght Community Radio when Packard's personnel manage said the workers could come back when they accepted the new labour agreement. He also seid at an earlier date that management was available for talks - but the conditions were not negotiable.

conditions were not negotiable. The important conditions in the original sixty page document, a copy of which was given by the company to every worker, are basically:
(1) Acceptance of all changes required by management;
(2) No appeal against dismissal, except through the courts;
(3) Full flexibility of hours, shifts, grades and jobs;
(4) No strikes, official or unofficial. The first has enormous im implications, and makes all the other details in the document insignificant.

other details in the document insignificant. Earlier this week a company spokesman stated that progress had been made, but the company's demands had not changed in any way. The progress claimed is in concessions given by the unions on some of the less important issues. Last October GM announced in the Financial Times that its European workforce, which numbers about one hundred

REBUILD SHOP FLOOR ORGANISATION

WORKERS at Packards in Tallaght WORKERS at Packards in Tallaght have suffered a serious defeat. A management "re-organisation plan" which outlaws strikes was accepted by a very small majority. This means that workers at the plant are now hamstrung while the local managers for General Motors press through a complete flexibility mackage.

through a contra-pack age. Management have also established that they will take back workers on a phased basis. This means that they will pick and choose who they want. They will try to set up their new work practises before the best militants get back near their jobs. At one of the negotiating

In below that SW comments of thousand, would have to be reduced by five percent per annum to cut costs. Couple this to the fact that Packard's new personnel manager has been associated with recent job losses elsewhere in Dublin and a pattern annears to emerge.

appears to emerge. Many people conclude that the Federated Union of

Many people conclude that the Federated Union of Employers is putting unavoidable job losses to good use by forcing workers to accept repressive conditions under threat of redundancy. The redundancies may of course take place no matter what workers accept. Urneys and Chadwicks are examples we can learn from. Before our strike/lockout management was guaranteeing eleven hundred jobs, now they tell us only four to five hundred will be going back if the plant reopens. Within the year numbers may reach their original level. Looking back over the past year or so, every trick in the book has been used by the company to split the workforce. Distrust between the shifts and antagonism between the unions has been encouraged. Favouritism and victimisation were commonplace. The old agreement and labour law were twisted, bent and biatantly broken. After all that it is difficult to

were twisted, bent and the broken. After all that it is difficult to accept long-term commitments from a personnel man with only six months service with the

six horizon company. Submission to the new conditions is insisted on by management which has a history

sessions, management intimated that there will be some individuals who won't get back at all. This is an attempt to victimise and strike fear into the shop steward network is the fear there.

an attempt to heart of the shop steward network in the factory. Workers at Packard showed tremendous bravery in standing up to GM and resisting the pressures on them. The IDA came down openly on the side of the bosses. So did the self-styled Tallaght Community Councils and the press. Most sickening of all, so did the ITGWU official, who recommended the package. This individual had been for the package all along. A certain passivity on the picket lines gave the officials an opening to sell the package. There should have been more regular meetings to keep everyone involved and in touch. There should have

of breaking the last agreement. To ask us to rely on labour law for protection is unrealistic when Packards has shown that it can disregard these laws with apparent

PINCHTL

immunity. On the other hand, the strike is the nuclear bomb of the workers. Generations of union workers. Generations of Union activists have passed without the development of a new weapon. With proper protective legislation – which must include realistic penalties for management and other offenders – no strike would

be necessary. But can workers really expect fair legislation when the major political parties get 90 percent of their financial backing from

their financial backing from business? The partners in production – workers and employers – must co-operate in good faith to ensure fair play for all. Instead, both sociations of opposition. At this point in time only unconditional surrender giving management absolute power, may save our jobs. For this the unions must bow out in graceful defeat. We must ask ourselves if the price – our unions, our integrity and our dignity – is too high. May this decision is too important for a small group like the Packards workforce to make. All union members should have a voice in rejecting such an objectionable untimatum before they are faced with the same problem in their own jobs. –FRANCES O'HANLON (SHOP STEWARD)

been a stepping up of the action sooner – like picketing Opel dealers and getting GM products

blacked. However, the key thing now is to rebuild.

However, the key thing now is to rebuild.
* There must be weekly or fort-nightly meetings for all those workers who have not been taken back. No way should their names and jobs be forgotten.
* Every effort at victimisation should be resisted — by breaking the no-strike pledge if necessary.
* Confidence must be slowly rebuilt by go-slows and stoppages inside the factory. A f. w small victories can act give fresh heart and amplify the wave of anger and bitterness that still exists.
* The links with other GM workers in Europe must now be made.

&I fight ackings nd cuts

Piar ficers in B & I are on strike because management efused to operate with I crews on ships which e Sealink vessels while tter are under repair. The fficers have been on allrike since 2nd February pickets were placed in n, Dun Laoghaire, Rossnd Cork. Some strikers ting in on board a ship erpool.

No

e all-out was granted when ompany sacked sixty-five officers in January. Mean

one thousand workers in other grades were laid-off as the strike began to bite. While the media blames the strikers for the job losses, the various unions representing the sacked workers have left their members sitting at home instead of fighting with the officers.

B & I have also demanded that the ship's Officers take a reduction in leave of 36 days per year. This would leave the workers with 84 days per year. This figure seems amazing to "land-lubbers" but as one picket at the Westmoreland St. office pointed out to Socialist Worker: People working in offices and factories should realise that we work on a week-on, week-off basis. When we are on duty we are at work twenty-four hours a day, seven days running. That is why we need so many days off, yet the company is looking for a cut in leave this year after a similar cut last year.

Sixteen craftworkers are also on strike in B & I after refusing to accept a wage deal. They too have been vilified by the media for being the only workers in thecompany to fight on the issue. Clearly links must be built between these and the officers.

The strikers must, as a matter of urgency, fight for the involvement in strike action of the sacked workers. Otherwise the strike will drag on and demoralisation will set in. At the moment morale is good but regular meetings of the strikers are needed if this is to continue. In the Shelbourne Hotel strike -reported elsewhere on this page-such meetings have been a key factor in keeping everyone active.

Another factor in winning the strike is the likelihood of one Sealink ship is already in dock at Rosslare without a B & I replacement. The situation could become more critical when the Holyhead boat comes

in for repair at Dun Laoghaire. The strikers have discussed the possibility of picketing Sealink offices. There should be no hesitation in trying to forge links between workers in both companies. In these days of division every oppor-tunity must be taken to build

solidarity between workers.

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

As SPUC go on the rampage **Defend the clin**

9 0 1

by MARY KILLIAN

FOR TWO months now, the ruling of Justice Hamilton, which closed the pregnancy counselling facilities of Open Line and the Dublin Well Woman Centre has been in operation. These were only two agencies which offered to women with unplanned pregnancies a full, unbiased service which involved advice on abortion and abortion

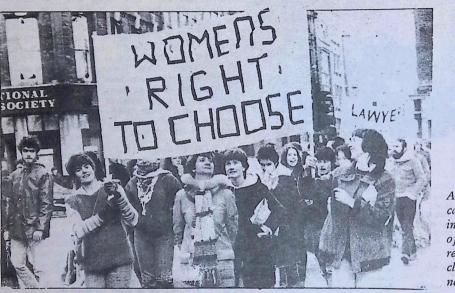
referral, This judgement makes the passing on of information about how to get an abortion illegal. Its aim is to intimidate and push women further back into the Catholic and family mould favoured by our rulers; to make sure that those who move outside of it are severely punished -by law and by the denial of basic medical and information rights. It is the latest example of the right wing backlash being orchestrated by SPUC and their allies in the Catholic hierarchy

The Defend the Clinics Campaign was set up last year to fight the ruling. An information sheet, with clinics' phone numbers and clinics' phone numbers and addresses—now being extended into a full pack—has been prepared for distribution through women's and community groups. One trade union has also volunteered to take the information. A spontaneous picket on the Sunday before the injunction took effect on January 12th brought a large number to 12th brought a large number to stand in the snow outside the Four Courts, under a banner bearing a telephone number of a London

telephone number of a London abortion clinic. Displaying this telephone number is now illegal. 150 people had to be turned away from a public meeting already 400-strong in Liberty Hall, and a demonstration on February 7th drew about 600 people-one of the largest street actions in recent days

largest street actions in recent days on any issue. Yet in spite of all this support, the campaign is not really carrying its message across to new activists-in fact, numbers at planning meetings are dwindling and energy is being lost.

is being lost. The reason for this lies in the defeats and demoralisation of the '80s which have taken their toll on the women's movement as much as on workplace activity. The leadership of the Defend the Clinics Campaign are still following the disastrous tactics of the Divorce Cmapaign-aiming to cultivate as much as possible the support of the centre middle classes.



This is very clear from their emphasis on, for example, a woman's right to counselling rather than on right to counselling rather than on abortion. It is even clearer in the mistaken idea being strongly expressed that if we do not alienate 'public opinion' we will be able to continue indefinitely supplying information about abortion through the Helpline that has been set up. Symptomatic of the lack of fight in the campaign is the reliance on figures like Kadar Asmal to argue our case. There is a proposal to find

our case. There is a proposal to find 100 such similar 'prominent' people to stand publicly in favour of the campaign. While such people may advance our aims somewhat, this strategy is no substitute for a militant, broad-based campaign.

FOOLISHNESS

Aside from the foolishness of relying on prominent names, who often have a less than real interest in genuinely fighting, it is very demoralising to those large numbers many of whom have already come forward, who want to act-and to shout back and to say we are not letting SPUC call the shots on

women's lives today. People will act when they see they are not alone in their anger; and the anger which is undoubtedly there must not be allowed to die away.There is nothing more powerful than mass street action for giving people the confidence to fight on—and there is no doubt that a mass public response, which must be organised now, would cause the likes of SPUC and Family

Solidarity to draw in their horns, as well as protecting indivduals in the campaign from becoming victims of

the law. The issues of the campaign must be clearly-enough expressed – and events well-enough organised – to draw in all the possible activists. The ultimate in wasted energy was seen in the large and successful demo on 7th February, when potential supporters in the streets did not know what we were demonstrating about. The lead banner, bearing the

Events planned for International Women's Day in Dublin:

Saturday 7th March:

Picket on SPUC - watch for posters with details; All-woman vigil: 5.30 GPO; All-woman social: 8.00: SFX Hall

Saturday 21st March: 1.00pm:

Activists' Conference - venue to be announced.

Meanwhile, if you are pregnant, and want to contact an abortion clinic, numbers to phone are:

031-251 6332 (London) or; o31-671 1541 (London);

035-727 1851 BPAS (Liverpool) or the volutary Helpline in Dublin can be contacted at: 787160 or 680043

A fighting campaign in defense ofthe referral clinics is needed

formally-agreed slogan: 'Women have the Right to Know', led one woman to guess it was about access to university education; another thought it had to do with women TDs!

The main event planned for International Women's Day, on Saturday 7th March is a picket of SPUC. There should be a massive turnout of all activists—watch out

for posters announcing details. One of the most positive decisions has been the calling of an Activists' Conference;-this will be on Saturday 21 March. The emergetic involvement of all will be necessary to argue against the defeatist and anti-action mood of the present, and to prevent the conference getting bogged down in wasted discussion on structures, etc. Through this conference, an open, activist-led campaign must be built which will: which will:

which will: * Picket and show up SPUC at every move, demolishing further attacks they might choose to make; * Instigate clear, unashamed defiance of the law through mass leafleting, street-stalls and street actions with phone numbers and addresses and abortion info

addresses and abortion info displayed everywhere; * Get the unions involved in publishing phone numbers and addresses and commenciation addresses and campaign information and to get the Trades Council to follow their words with actions of

support; * Build a clear, political, militant campaign which will be open at all stages to the involvement of new stages to the involvement of new activists which can then proceed to make this vicious law unworkable.

CRAZY FEUD?

WORKERS throughout Ireland have been sickened by the INLA/IRSP feud. As claim and counter-claim follows each grisly death, the impression is reinforced oft wo groups of fanatics motivated by nothing apart from murderous hatred of

rom murderous harred of each other. Both North and South, the police forces have shown remarkably little concern. This low-level resp onse-when compared with the mercine rest response-when compared with the massive reaction to a single shot fired at a British patrol, for example-is striking. The authorities know that the main result of the feud is that people are repelled from militant republicanism. The common reaction is: if this is what the "armed struggle" leads to, we want no part of it. Whatever the immediate issues in the dispute, the general underlying issue has to do with the political ideas on which the IRSP/INLA was based. It set out in the mid-70s to be an organisation structured

organisation structured along traditional Republican lines, but more left-wing

Ines, but more left-wing than the Provos. However at no time did it try to base itself on the working class. Instead, the political wing rapidly became subservient to the military

"Politics" didn't matter much. The IRSP virtually ceased to function. What were left were

volunteers, operating as a clandestine army but with no clear political direction. The INLA's tactics and

The INLA's tactics and strategy were determined not by political ideas which had been argued out and publicly expressed, but by operational requirements and opportunities. In this situation, inevitably, "leadership" was based not on politics but on military prowess. And just as inevitably, disputes over leadership came to take the form not of political challenge but of physical attack.

torm not of political challenge but of physical attack. No small group of people no matter how highly-motivated or willing to risk imprisonment and death, can "free Ireland" or "free the working class". Only the working class itself can take on and defeat imperialism and native capitalism. A socialist organisation must BEGIN from that standpoint and then argue and organise within the working class. When you try to take short-cuts you end in a blind alley.