

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

HYPOCRITE

HAUGHEY!

Why Fianna Fail has sold out on the cuts, on the Anglo-Irish Agreement, on NATO and neutrality. For a socialist analysis—see page 3

DAVID ALLEN

**HEALTH CUTS HURT THE
OLD THE SICK AND THE
HANDICAPPED.**

THERE IS A BETTER WAY—
Fianna Fáil



Inside: Socialists and National Sovereignty—page 8

Defend the clinics Fight for the right to choose



Socialists fight for the right of women to control their fertility

THE RECENT closure of the Open Line and of the Well Woman's abortion referral service in Dublin is a set-back in the fight for a woman's right to choose, for a woman's right to control her fertility.

This is not an isolated incident. It is part of a major attack on women's rights, an attack which is not only happening in Ireland. We see the same thing happening in Britain, the USA, Australia — all over the world.

These attacks represent an attempt by the Right to bring back the old "family" values, to push women back into the home, to make life even more difficult for unmarried mothers and to make scape-goats of gays.

It is not only abortion rights that are being attacked. There have been massive cuts in health, social, welfare, education and housing at the same time as the AIDS scare is being used to limit sexual freedom.

So why do we see the issue

of abortion as being so important? It is because without abortion, women do not have full control over their fertility and so do not have full control over their lives.

Since the sixties there have been major changes in society's attitude to women and women's rights. More sexual freedom, increased participation in life outside the home, more education, new ideas and a better standard of living — all these have meant that women want the opportunity to control their lives.

But if women are to control their lives, decide what jobs to do, where and how to live, they must be able to decide if and when to have children. This means access to legal and safe contraception, free on the health service and, when contraception fails, free abortion on demand.

Clearly, the most important thing is for women to have decent contraception which is reliable and safe.

However, because of the health

risks associated with the most reliable form of contraception — the pill — many women find that they have to use contraceptives which may fail. Anti-abortionists suggest that if abortion were legalised women would use it as a contraceptive.

This is far from the truth. No woman takes abortion lightly. But given the choice between bearing an unwanted child and abortion, many women choose abortion.

Women are never happy to have to make such decisions. But they make them because it is their own lives they are trying to control. And control of fertility is crucial to the emancipation of women.

The demand for contraception and abortion is a political issue, affecting both women and men. For it raises the political question "who decides, who controls?" It is also a class issue. In defending the abortion referral clinics and in fighting for free, legal abortion in Ireland we expose the class hypocrisy, where rich

women can slip off to England with very little trouble, but working class women have to face the panic of getting the money together fast enough to get an abortion.

So it is possible to have free abortion on demand under capitalism? Sure it's possible. But only when it suits capitalism. A reform like that can be taken away as easily as it is given, when the economic conditions change.

We are seeing it happen at the moment, where gains that were made in the seventies, during a boom period, are now being slowly eroded in a

we would control those changes. That's the difference.

That is not to say that we should not fight for reforms under capitalism. On the contrary, it is vitally important that we fight for any small gain which can be made. Which is why every socialist, women and men, should fight against the closure of the two clinics offering abortion referral. Since the closure of the two clinics, the numbers of women travelling to Britain for abortions has NOT decreased.

But women who go now, have to find a clinic for themselves and are open to exploitation by greedy doctors and clinics.

While abortion is not available in Ireland, we must fight for the right of women to have proper counselling and referral to the best and cheapest clinics available.

This battle is just one part of the fight for socialism, but an important battle.

—CREA RYDER

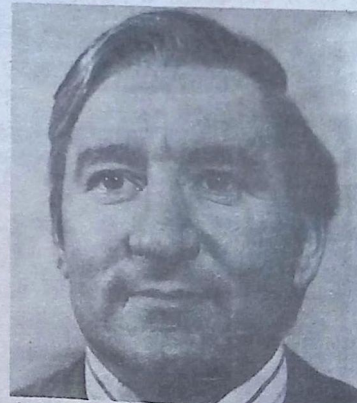
RECESSION

time of recession. And that is because we are not actually controlling our lives, and making changes when we want changes. These reforms are being handed down to us from above, by the government and the bosses. Under socialism,

Locked behind golden bars

IN 1986 there were about 1950 prisoners in Southern jails. The majority of these

were from urban working class areas, and of these the largest percentage were from the



Justice Minister Eddie Collins

most deprived working class communities.

The Minister of "Justice", Eddie Collins, revealed that the cost of maintaining a prisoner for a year in three of his prisons: St. Patrick's Shanganagh and Mountjoy was £21,700, £19,200 and £26,100 respectively.

BUILDING

This does not include the cost of building works in existing prisons, nor the cost of building new prisons which runs into millions every year.

There would be less need for prisons if only a fraction of this money was spent on improving the dreadful conditions, unemployment and bad housing that lead to crime in the first place.

CHANGING THE RULES



Sean "bugging" Doherty

ELECTION results over the last few years have given socialists very little to cheer about. One of the few bright points has been that many unpopular ministers have

failed to be re-elected or just scraped back in. This, we have been told by politicians in the past, is the essence of democracy — "if you don't like our politics you can always vote us out in the next election".

Now they want to change the rules. Former minister, Sean "bugging" Doherty proposed in a recent Dail debate that "We had to ensure that when people took proper, if unpopular, decisions they would not suffer politically as a result. It was sad to see the careers of economic Ministers being put at risk because of decisions made by them. There should be some system by which such ministers could be returned to the Dail without having to seek re-election."

SMURFITS

Howard Kilroy, one of the Smurfit Group's top executives commenting on the possibility of a slump in the US economy had this to say: "we will do what we always do in a down cycle — tighten our belt and make money."

Making money is what they

certainly have been doing. The Smurfit Group's pre-tax profits for last year were £60.1 million up 64 per cent from their previous year's profits of £36.7 million.

As they put it themselves: "It would be hard at this point to see anything preventing us from fulfilling our high expectations for the year."

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Here come the thought police

NOT CONTENT with the profits they cream from the labour of millions of workers, US companies are getting ready to control our thought processes.

Krone training — Krone for short — is required training for employees of such corporate giants as Pacific Bell (California's largest utility company); Proctor and Gamble; the Ford Motor Company and Polaroid. All these companies have signed up "New Age" Consultants who conduct employee seminars with topics like "A New Context within which to Think".

By one estimate, their programmes account for four billion dollars in corporate spending each year.

But, surprise, surprise, the programmes are encountering resistance from below. Some workers say they are little less than mind control, or that they promote values contrary to their religious beliefs. At least two workers have challenged the programmes in court, and at the end of April, California Public Utilities Commission launched an investigation into Pacific Bell's Kroneing.

The key to the New Age system is getting everyone to think the same way. Traditional theory holds that companies whose "members" agree on certain fundamental values and norms are more successful.

"Members" in this context, of course, refers to the whole spectrum of employees and management, from the Managing Director through section managers to skilled and unskilled workers.

Kroneing methods vary; some use meditation or hypnosis, while others offer corporate versions of 1960s-style encounter groups. Most emphasise positive-thinking techniques and the importance of group cohesion.

In the Pacific Bell programme workers were taught to think at all times about the "six essentials of organisational health" — expansion, freedom, identity, concentration, order and interaction.

As well as several Pacific Bell workers' complaints to the Utilities Commission that the company's Kroneing exercises were, in fact, mind-control sessions, this company has also attracted outside criticism. Public watchdog groups are angered by the utility company's intention to spend 147 million dollars on Krone training, an expense it will pass along to telephone subscribers.

Pacific Bell say the training helped initiate an innovative union contract. Management persuaded union officials that workers should give up cost-of-living increases, and cut health care costs, in exchange for a bonus and a promise of no lay-offs!

The company in question is in the process of branching out from its phone monopoly into competitive businesses. Like many other companies participating in the "training" boom, it is grasping for ways to trick its workers in its scramble for productivity.

So — beware; they are out to getcha — body and mind!
—MARGARET QUINN

WE THINK

Hypocrite Haughey!

RARELY HAS THE HYPOCRISY of a political party been revealed so quickly and so clearly and to so many people as has been the case with Fianna Fail since it came into office just four months ago. This opens up real opportunities for the Left to win away from Fianna Fail some of the section of the working class which has traditionally supported the party.

But in order to do this, the Left will have to put forward a clear-cut strategy for fighting Fianna Fail based on the class interests of those who are bearing the brunt of the betrayals and this the "official" Left has not been doing.

Simply denouncing Fianna Fail for "heartlessness" and calling for a "fairer" or more "compassionate" approach is politically useless. And it's worse than useless to denounce Fianna Fail — as the ICTU executive has done — while simultaneously sitting across the table from Government Ministers working out a new "National Plan": if the labour movement and Fianna Fail can plan ahead together, where's the point in workers making a decisive break from Fianna Failism?

Fianna Fail's change of direction since coming into office has been not so much a U-turn as going straight into reverse. Haughey said that cuts in health and education spending were cruel and unnecessary: now he's cutting deeper than the Coalition ever dared.

In opposition, Haughey denounced the Anglo-Irish Agreement as "unconstitutional", "unacceptable", and "offensive" — and argued that it had actually made the position of Northern nationalists worse. Once in office he endorsed the Agreement with uncritical enthusiasm.

Last December Haughey savaged the Coalition for wanting to sign the

Single European Act and rubbished FitzGerald for suggesting that the SEA was no threat to neutrality. Last month every Fianna Fail TD was whipped into line to campaign for a "YES" vote.

And the list goes on. This, clearly, is a right-wing, pro-imperialist anti-working class government which sailed into office on a raft of lies.

The reason Fianna Fail has behaved like this is that it has no alternative. The 26 Counties is a weak, under-developed, peripheral part of the world economy, enormously in debt to foreign banks and faced with the intractable dispute in the North — a dispute which requires friendly co-operation with Britain if it isn't to develop into a threat to the Southern state too.

On the question of the cuts, to put it with crude simplicity, the bankers are demanding their interest repayments and spending must be cut to make the necessary money available. Public sector pay must be held back for the same reason. To take the side of the Irish working class in this situation is to range yourself against the international banking system and, eventually, to contemplate a clean break with it. This cannot be done, now or ever, by a government which is committed to capitalism.

The 26 Counties itself is deeply enmeshed in the world capitalist system. The manufacturing economy is dominated by multinational investment and the effort to attract further multinational investment is still central to the state's development strategy. "Native capitalists" — Smurfit, O'Reilly, Cement Road

stone, Dunnes' etc. etc. — are increasingly looking to link up with outside interests to expand their operations overseas. There is no independent Irish capitalist class which would have an interest in breaking with capitalism internationally.

To talk in this situation — as the ICTU does — of a "national plan" to be agreed between the capitalist government and the representatives of the working class is an utter nonsense. The inevitable conclusion of such negotiations will be to subordinate the interests of the working class to the interests of capitalism.

This set of economic relationships forms part of the background, too, to the betrayal over the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the SEA. While there are other considerations involved, the inability of any Free State government, Coalition or Fianna Fail, to operate independently on the economic front is reflected in the strictly limited freedom they have in the field of foreign policy generally.

Despite all this, it is obvious that there are many thousands of workers willing to fight back. It is on this willingness to fight that the Left must build its strategy.

Tens of thousands have marched in Dublin, Cork, Kilkenny, Limerick, Waterford and elsewhere against the health cuts. ESB workers, notwithstanding their appallingly weak leadership, were willing to strike against the wage-freeze. At least a minority in other public sector and semi-state employments have been ready for action as well. Opposition



preparation. Delegations must be sent to the major workplaces and union branch meetings. This action will lay the ground for a rank and file network of militants.

This is a strategy based on a recognition of the distinct and separate interests of the working class and on a perspective of building a revolutionary socialist party of the working class which will see fellow workers fighting for socialism in other countries, rather than capitalists fighting against socialism in this country, as the natural allies we should make common cause with.

Mitchell's mistake

LAST MONTH'S S.W. CARRIED AN article condemning the ICTU for suspending IDATU Gen. Sec. John Mitchell from its executive because he had criticised the role of the trade union movement in the Six Counties.

Since his suspension, socialists and trade unionists all over the country have been organising to defend Mitchell. It is clear that the suspension must be fought and the witch hunt stopped.

But Mitchell's own action in taking an injunction against the ICTU and using the courts against them is not the way to fight the issue. In fact it is counter-productive.

This is the season of Union conferences. Emergency motions in defence of Mitchell should be raised at every such conference. A motion of defence was being organised for the FWUI conference the weekend of 23/24th May. The pending court hearing gave the FWUI bureaucracy an easy out — the case is sub judice.

ICTU conference is at the start of July. There is a distinct danger that discussion of the issue will not be possible here either because of Mitchell's own actions.

We will never win trade union democracy by appealing to the bourgeois courts. John Mitchell should forget his injunctions and take his case to the rank and file of the trade union movement throughout the country.

Smarmy yuppie misses the mark

DUBLIN 4's Progressive Democrat TD Michael McDowell has been getting very worked up. This smarmy yuppie is against state-run creches. He said that the creche provided for AnCO workers was a "scandal" and a "rip-off".

McDowell wants it closed down because AnCO money should not end up subsidising their day-to-day domestic living expenses with public money.

Nice one Michael! Here are a few facts.

FACT 1: There is no state-run creche in this country.

FACT 2: AnCO employees pay £35 a week for the "privilege" of having a creche.

FACT 3: There has been a state subsidy of over £3 million given to the PDs plus Fianna Fail and Fine Gael to run their pro-SEA campaign.

Now there was real waste!

WORKERS PARTY

Sherlock homes in on Padre Pio

Workers Party TD Joe Sherlock (right)



THE WORKERS Party is playing funny games these days. Take Joe Sherlock, WP TD for Cork East; he is a member of the Southern Health Board and has taken a good position against the cuts. But the line on Padre Pio is more than a little confused.

A number of right wing fanatics proposed the erection of a monument to the bleeding bloke — right in the middle of Cork's Regional Hospital. It's certainly one way to make sure that the Prods and the atheists know where they are when they are sick and paying £10 for a hospital bed.

It was just the opportunity for anti-sectarian politics — you know, the kind the WP are always talking about.

Joe Sherlock voted for the monument — his vote actually decided the issue.

STRABANE

Meanwhile at the other end of the country, in Strabane, Seamus Lynch and Dessie O'Hagan were holding forth on the WP's "revolutionary socialism" and non-sectarian politics by way of asking punters to vote for local candidate, Eamon Melaugh.

A Strabane SWM member asked the obvious question of what was so revolutionary about putting an X on a ballot and ventured to suggest that support for workers in struggle — like for example striking civil servants — might be a better way of promoting the idea of workers' power.

In reply Dessie made it clear that socialism to them wasn't so much workers'

power as Workers Party power. "We are not prepared to throw ourselves into harmful industrial disputes" he said, claiming that the miners' strike in Britain had played into Thatcher's hands.

Upon our hardy SWM comrade pointing out that industrial disputes were the only time that Protestant and Catholic workers came together in struggle and should therefore be supported by anyone wanting working class unity, Melaugh replied with a rather peculiar attitude to workers' solidarity: "We are not prepared to live off other people's suffering".

The intrepid SWM-er's hand was again in the air to ask what working class people should do until the WP get into power when the chair declared the meeting closed.

Fianna Fail opens doors to tax dodgers

"WE WOULD have to accept the possibility that 'hot money' would be invested here, where its owners were trying to avoid paying tax elsewhere. The Austrian Central Bank had qualms over taking hot money and that ruled them out."

So said Michael Lafferty, a former Financial Times journalist. He was talking about Fianna Fail's proposal to set up a financial services sector in Ireland.

This is a fancy name for giving the sharks of the financial world a tax-free opportunity to speculate.

Michael had put his finger on the issue. No better place for "hot" money than the little green isle where the rich pay tax as they please!

HAIR-RAISING

THE government's new Jobsearch scheme is more disgusting than we had expected. One Waterford man, aged 55 and unemployed for several years, was given the choice of training as a hairdresser or having his dole taken away. This insulting, intimidating scheme must be fought. The unemployed are not scroungers — the REAL scroungers are the bosses who create unemployment.

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INTERNATIONAL

British General Election

ANYONE living in the land of multi-channel TV cannot but be heartily sick of Tory, Labour and Alliance politicians outdoing each other in their claims to be the most patriotic, most law and order, most reasonable political party in Britain.

The Tories are of course the most hypocritical of the lot. Eight years of Thatcher's rule has left the working class in Britain, and in the North of Ireland, reeling under her attacks on their living standards.

They claim to be the party of the family. Nearly a third of all the children in Britain live in or on the margins of poverty — about half the children in the Six Counties do.

Thatcher says the NHS is safe in her hands. One in ten hospital beds have gone. Waiting lists have never been longer. Prescription charges have risen 1,200 percent!

But the Tories are the party best able to manage the economy, aren't they? Inflation in Britain is almost twice the rate of that in France and over three times the rate in USA and West Germany.

The only things booming in Britain are the prison population and the fortunes of big business.

After eight nightmare years of Tory Party rules, we could expect a Labour Party landslide in the British election. Why is such a landslide clearly not on?

Since becoming Labour leader in 1983 Neil Kinnock

has been playing the electoral game as hard as possible. After two general election defeats he has had the majority of his party behind him.

Playing the electoral game means getting "public opinion" on your side. But in a period when working people are not fighting, when struggle against the employers is very low, winning public opinion is seen more and more as being about keeping on the right side of the press.

The Press claimed Labour's association with strikers — especially militant strikers — would cost it votes. So Kinnock attacked 'violent' miners and, later, 'undisciplined' print workers. More recently Giles Radice, the 'left wing' Labour education spokesman asked teachers to stop striking — in the interests of Labour's electoral fortunes.

ABANDONING

The Press has also, of course, constantly 'exposed' the Labour left — either *Militant's* 'marxist dogma' — or more recently the supposed 'looney' policies of the Labour Left councils that support the rights of Blacks and of gays and lesbians.

And on every occasion Kinnock has obliged — either by presenting the heads of various expelled individuals or by abandoning defence of the Councils or by attacking the Black sections. He was confid-

ent enough about the hatchet job he had done to be able to attack *Militant* even in the Party Political broadcasts.

Perhaps the best example of the power of electoralism was Kinnock's behaviour during the Zircon affair. Instead of defending the freedom of the press and the taxpayers right to know what their money's been spent on, Kinnock attacked the Tories for not being quick and efficient enough in its censorship!

The Labour manifesto, when it appeared, offered nothing to working people. Top priority is given to reduce unemployment by one million over two years. How this is going to be done remains vague. But Kinnock's insistence that the TUC should not veto the new Tory Job Training scheme (JTS) indicates that the jobless of Britain and the North of Ireland can expect more of the same if Labour is elected — useless schemes designed to camouflage the figures.

The commitment to unilaterally rid Britain of nuclear weapons within the lifetime of the next parliament is missing from the manifesto. Instead it talks of investing 'in the best up to date equipment for the British Army of the Rhine'.

Despite all the anti-gay hysteria whipped up by the AIDS scare, not one word is said in the manifesto about

gay rights.

It's small wonder then that a Labour landslide is not on the cards, small wonder that millions of British people are confused about the aims of the Labour Party and see little difference between what Labour has to offer and what the Alliance promises.

Yet it is still vital that workers in Britain vote Labour. It is still important that workers identify with class organisation, no matter how distorted and stifled the socialism within it. By voting Labour, they will be identifying with the idea that the working class has to organise politically as well as industrially.

FIGHTBACKS

But getting Labour elected is not enough. The key to changing society is not in the ballot box but in the activity of the working class itself. Despite all the problems facing the British working class, trade union organisation is still intact. The teachers, telecom workers and civil servants prove there is a willingness to fight.

But if such fightbacks are to win, a real fighting socialist alternative to the Labour Party is needed, one that can bring together the best militants and prepare now for the fight ahead, whoever wins the election.

Is the Labour Party the answer?



British Labour Leader Neil Kinnock

"THOUGH cowards flinch and traitors sneer, We'll keep the red flag flying here."

This is how, without the slightest sense of irony, the Labour leadership leads the singing of the red flag at the British Labour Party's annual conference.

However, despite the odd clenched fist raised in lonely defiance, the party has indeed seen fit to "haul the sacred emblem down" and replace it with the designer-socialist rose,

which from Kier Hardy onwards has, indeed, always "owed more to Methodism than Marxism". Or as Ramsay MacDonald assured all and sundry "with the discussion of general strikes and Bolshevism and all that kind of thing, I have nothing to do at all." I respect the constitution."

The British Labour Party is not a fighting socialist party and any confusion over its true nature arises from the contradictory nature of the layer whose political expression it is — namely the trade union bureaucracy.

This institution's position and hence its politics are contradictory because it exists to negotiate between bosses and workers. True enough on behalf of workers — but accepting that workers are wages slaves, are exploited and not in control of society and that this is how things will remain.

This dual dependence of the bureaucracy for its existence, upon the support of mass workers' organisations and the continuation of the capitalist system of exploitation results in it and the Labour Party — its political masthead — both expressing workers' needs and holding back the activity that could satisfy those needs.

FRENZIED

By now it should be obvious that revolutionaries do not share Kinnock and Co's frenzied approach to elections. On the other hand we do not go along with those who make

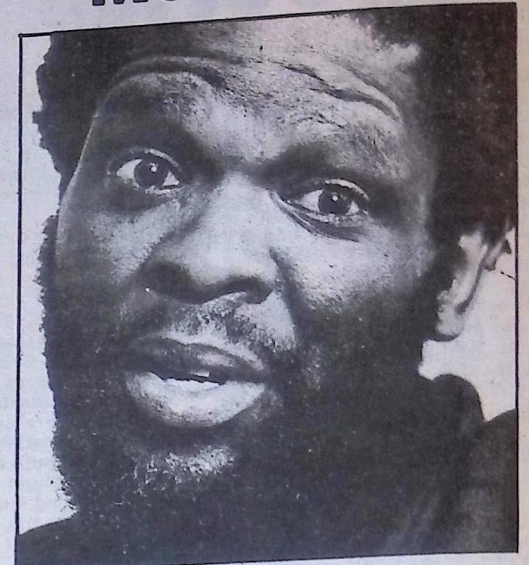
a fetish of refusing to have anything to do with elections. Lenin himself (hardly a friend of gradualism) argued that with correct tactics, participation in elections could help to win workers to socialism.

Similarly, support for a Labour victory (as argued by the SWM's sister organisation in Britain, the SWP) is justified not because Labour would be any better, if given a free hand, than the Tories. They wouldn't. But because it would represent a growing desire on the part of workers to re-affirm some sort of class politics, and more importantly, to begin to fight back on the shop-floor.

Whoever wins this month's British general election, the decisions the new government makes about every economic and political question will not be determined by the "ideology" of the party, but by the limits imposed by the state of the world capitalist economy and the balance of class forces.

Revolutionaries then see a Labour victory as desirable because it would represent a victory for working class political organisation and not because Kinnockism would be the slightest bit better than Thatcherism without a fighting working class forcing concessions. This view makes us uninterested in tactical voting which would dilute the working class nature of a vote for Labour by asking workers to move rightwards and vote for Tories in Alliance clothing.

There is no doubt that as British workers leave behind the apathy that brought Thatcher to power — and may do so again — they will return



MOSES MAYEKISO, general secretary of MAWU under threat of death for treason, is being persecuted for carrying out basic trade union work.

A communique from MAWU shows that his indictment, running to 160 pages, includes his activities last spring when he travelled overseas to raise support for striking workers at BTR Sarnool.

"Plotted"

His crime was to get support for striking trade unionists in one country from their brothers and sisters in another.

Also attached to the indictment are leaflets and minutes of the Alexandra Action Com-

* Raise this resolution at your trade union:
MOSES MAYEKISO, a leading South African trade unionist, is under threat of execution.

He and four others have been charged with high treason and sedition.

Moses Mayekiso is General Secretary of one of the largest black unions in South Africa, the Metal and Allied Workers' Union.

This is the first time that a high treason charge has been laid against a senior trade union leader. If Moses hangs, or is kept indefinitely in jail, it will be a major blow to the whole trade union movement in South Africa.

Moses' case will come to court in August. A solidarity campaign by the international labour movement can force Botha to drop the charges and set Moses and his comrades free.

The Irish labour movement must play its part in stopping this atrocity to our black South African brother.

We call on the ICTU and the whole labour movement to take immediate steps to build a campaign for the release of Moses Mayekiso.

The struggles by black trade unionists in South Africa have been an inspiration to us all. Don't let them hang Moses Mayekiso.

(or come for the first time) in droves to the Labour Party, and its reformist politics.

But that is a necessary process if the class that holds the future in its hands is to cast aside the bullshit of the high priests of class collaboration.

For it is by experiencing reformism in practice that it becomes easier to reject reformism in theory.

Thus by allying ourselves with the most class conscious workers in desiring a Labour victory we bring closer the day of their grasping marxism with both hands.

The lessons to be drawn

mittee about creche facilities and the development of alternative education in Moses' home town of Alexandra. For this they are saying he "plotted to overthrow the authority of the state".

Moses has developed a gastric ulcer since he had been in prison.

Usually prisoners awaiting trial are allowed access to books and food from outside, but in Moses' case it has been withheld.

This is an issue which must concern every trade union organisation in Ireland.

Trade unionists should now be passing resolutions in protest at the death threat to this workers' leader.

from the failure will only be learned if there is a serious revolutionary party within the class drawing those lessons. Otherwise disillusionment with reformism can give way to a rightward swing.

That is why it is essential that support for a Labour victory should not cramp the independent, critical position of revolutionary marxists and why socialists in the British Labour Party should think seriously about joining the SWP where people are proud to openly support gay and black rights as well as workers' struggle.

—JOSHUA CLARKE

IN THE early 1920s China was a semi-colonial country split into "spheres of influence" with the Japanese in the north and the British further south. Alliances with various gangster warlords increased their influence.

In the south a weak government, the Kuomintang (KMT), ruled from Canton. The KMT was "bourgeois nationalist". It wanted a unified China, free from the influence of foreign capitalists and the warlords.

Even well-off Chinese had good reason to hate the situation. In Shanghai, the hub of British influence, the public parks were closed to "Dogs and Chinamen". The poorest British soldier could go and sit in the park, a Chinese millionaire could not.

But despite left sounding rhetoric the KMT was not a socialist organisation. The elusive "three principles" of its leader, Sun Yat Sen, were nationalism, democracy and socialism.

Precisely what these meant was never stated. Moreover, to achieve them the KMT was prepared to do deals with the imperial powers and the warlords.

There was, however, a small, genuinely socialist organisation—the Chinese Communist Party, formed in 1921.

Socialists and nationalists shared an interest in throwing off the shackles of the warlords and the imperialists. But there the similarities ended. What, then, was to be the attitude of socialists to the KMT?

In 1923, despite the misgivings of the Chinese communist leaders, the Communist Party was instructed by the Moscow based Communist International to join the KMT.

It did so in 1924 under the condition laid down by Sun Yat Sen and his successor, Chiang Kai Shek, that there would be no dissent.

Throughout the next year the CP's influence grew rapidly as the country was wracked with revolt.

It started at the end of May when the British-led police in Shanghai shot and killed 12 demonstrators. One account goes:

"The effect was swift and tumultuous. Shanghai, the great foreign stronghold with its Western banks and mills and its foreign areas, was paralysed by a general strike. Even servants left foreign homes." Four hundred thousand workers struck.

Soon the revolt spread to other major cities. In Nanking, Wuhan and Peking workers and students flooded onto the streets. At Hankou on 11 June British soldiers fired on a demonstration, killing eight and wounding 12.

The greatest revolt was at Canton. Chinese seamen employed by British shipping companies walked out on 18 June. On 23 June British and French machine gunners opened fire and killed 52 students and workers.

A boycott of British goods and a general strike were immediately declared. Nearby Hong Kong, the fortress of Britain in China, was totally immobilised.

The Communist Party was in the vanguard of these struggles, much to the alarm of the KMT. CP leaders, sensing a coming confrontation, even a civil war with the KMT, asked Moscow if they could untie their hands by leaving the KMT. They were told to stay put.

The deal between Chiang Kai



THE DEFEAT of the Chinese revolution 60 years ago was bloody and vicious

CHINA STOOD at the crossroads 60 years ago. Workers and peasants seized power in the towns and the countryside. It seemed socialism was set to achieve its first major victory since the Russian Revolution ten years earlier.

But, as **DUNCAN BLACKIE** shows, it was not to be. Stalin's Communist International engineered one of the most spectacular defeats the working class has ever suffered.

Shek and Moscow was top priority, not the interests of the working class.

Stalin wanted to defend Russia's eastern flank. He turned to the KMT because the CP was judged too weak to do the job.

The KMT, in turn, was too weak to throw off the warlords by itself. For this it needed left credibility and a modern army, both of which could be furnished by Moscow. Russian military advisors were soon installed in the KMT headquarters.

Stalin's ideological justification for the deal came from the head of the Communist International, Bukharin. He argued that the task of the coming revolution in China was national liberation, not socialism. He argued for a "bloc of four classes": peasants, workers, petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie.

The Chinese CP's fears were quickly confirmed. Early in 1926 Chiang Kai Shek launched his first military coup in Canton. The first to be rounded up were local CP leaders and leaders of the strikes that were still taking place. The strike wave in the north was broken by an alliance between the KMT and local bosses.

Communists were banned from KMT headquarters and the KMT demanded a list of CP members who had joined its ranks. The Chinese communist leader, Chen, complained they were having to "do coolie service" to the KMT. But, under

pressure from Stalin, he still went along with it.

A new phase in the struggle started as Chiang launched a military expedition against warlords in the north. It sparked off a new wave of uprisings. In the cities workers rose up and overthrew the old rulers.

The CP played a leading role in the fighting, and in forming trade unions. These soon grew to be 1.2 million strong in an industrial working class of 3.5 million.

But, much as the KMT needed the peasants and workers to win, it also feared mass action. In the liberated areas it forbade strikes and demonstrations and it suppressed unions. Punitive expeditions were sent against the peasants' uprisings.

Again the CP leaders asked to break from the KMT to give them room to manoeuvre, to develop working class organisations and prepare for an open clash with Chiang.

Again they were told "no". Bukharin insisted that the commercial industrial bourgeoisie was "at present playing an objectively revolutionary role".

The CP once more went along with the instruction. Its leaders predicted a left swing in the KMT, which soon seemed to come true. The Canton

government was reconstituted in November. Chiang's main left rival Wang Ching Wei came to the fore. Two Communists became government ministers.

The inevitable showdown had, however, only been delayed. In the spring of 1927 Chiang's troops advanced on Shanghai—the "Petrograd of China".

Workers led by the CP took over the city. Every street and every factory was in their control. Pickets roamed the town in an expression of working class power.

It was the greatest working class rising in Asian history, completely destroying Stalin's argument that the working class was too weak to seize power.

But, under instructions from Moscow, workers laid down their arms and surrendered the city to Chiang. As Chiang's troops sharpened their knives outside the city workers were told that all was well.

Chiang's intentions should have been known. Peasant and worker leaders were being assassinated in "liberated" zones. Chiang had even talked with Japanese-allied warlords about forming an "anti-red front".

On 12 April Chiang struck. It was a bloodbath. The scale of the slaughter matched the massive scale of the workers' struggle. Up to 30,000 workers were slaughtered. Every semblance of working class and Communist Party organisation was systematically dismembered.

Chiang had set out to prove to the imperial powers that capitalism would be safe in his hands.

Moscow was slow to understand the catastrophe. On 18 April the eastern secretariat of the Communist International invited Trotsky to join others in autographing a photo of Chiang.

Stalin had recently said, "We would use the Chinese bourgeoisie and then throw it away like a squeezed lemon." Trotsky ridiculed the speech, which was never made public, saying, "a few days later the 'squeezed lemon' seized power".

At last, but too late, the alliance with Chiang was at an end. He had used the working class, ably delivered up by the CP, to achieve his ends. Now he spat it out.

Stalin's policy had been an unmitigated disaster. It was the end of the Communist Party as a working class, socialist organisation.

Russian foreign policy in 1927 determined the path of the Chinese Communist Party. But the ideas that justified that course have as strong a pull as ever. They are taken as socialist orthodoxy by the majority



CHIANG KAI SHEK—the nationalist leader who led the counter-revolution

of socialists and left republicans in Ireland.

They argue it is not possible to fight for socialism until national independence is won—this is the stages theory—nationalist politics now, class politics later. So many socialists ignore the limitations of republican politics and, abandoning independent organisation, join Sinn Fein.

But every application of this "stages theory" has led to catastrophe. The left in the Philippines is currently paralysed by it. The Iranian Revolution swung against the working class because of it.

In Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mozambique the working class has paid for its leaders insistence on restricting the struggle to one for national independence by suffering attacks on living standards and trade union organisation.

Gerry Adams and other Sinn Fein leaders continue to call for electoral pacts with the SDLP, to see Fianna Fail as a potential ally and to insist that "class politics is not on the agenda" until after the Brits are gone.

The Russian Revolution showed the possibility and necessity of the working class fighting both for socialism and national liberation at the same time. That needs a workers' political organisation independent of the republican movement.

China showed what failure to build such an organisation can mean. Why not help to ensure that we don't repeat the Chinese experience by helping the SWM to build an independent socialist party.

WHY THE PRESS DISTORTS

Editing out the workers

ONE OF the biggest problems revolutionary socialists have is trying to convince working class people that it is possible for them to change the world: that they don't have to accept a system in which a relatively small number of people live rich and comfortable lives while great masses struggle for bare necessities, in which a tiny group controls the economic and political system while the vast majority have almost no influence at all.

The bulk of the population, including the bulk of the working class, take the present system for granted. One of the main reasons for this is that, day in and day out, the newspapers tell them that the way things are organised at the moment is natural and that only cranks and extremists argue for a different arrangement altogether.

For a start, the newspapers very rarely talk about the present system.

the capitalist system, in explicit terms: indeed, the phrase "the capitalist system" hardly ever crops up. So much so that when socialists use the phrase it comes across to many people as a piece of jargon, an irritating and off-putting cliché.

This is a measure of how successful the capitalist propaganda machine has been. It has managed to convince a majority of those who are oppressed and exploited by the system that the system really has nothing to do with it, that capitalism isn't really a system at all, but rather is the natural order of things.

The success of this propaganda effort is absolutely vital to capitalism. If and when a majority of working class people see through the propaganda and understand not only that capitalism is the cause of oppression and exploitation in this world but understand also that they themselves, seriously organised, have the power to overthrow capitalism and replace it with a system based on the needs of human beings, whenever the bulk of the working class sees the world like this, capitalism will be in deep trouble.

Of course, the media on their own couldn't hoodwink so many people for so much of the time. The schools, the churches, the inculcation of "traditional values" within the family all play a part. But the media and the newspapers particularly, provide a good example of the way capitalism controls the ideas which are prevalent in society — precisely because newspapers make so much of their "objectivity".

It is worth noting just how influential the press is. Although many people take much of what they read with a pinch of salt, it remains true that we get a great deal of our knowledge and understanding of what is happening in the world from newspapers (and radio and television).

All of the newspapers, British and Irish, national and local give us a picture of the world from the perspective of the ruling class.

This is shown in all sorts of mundane ways. For example, it is quite startling just how much of the space in newspapers is given over to the sayings and doings of, in general terms, "establishment" figures. In the trashy tabloids pop music and screen stars loom large. In the "qualities" intellectual stars tend to stalk the pages. Politicians and captains of industry crowd in everywhere. In Britain (and sometimes Ireland) the Royals are covered with almost irrational obsession. And so on. A large majority of the people whose activities are chronicled in the newspapers come from a small minority of the population. The history of the present time, as recorded in the newspapers, is the history of an elite. This in itself is a great distortion of the truth.

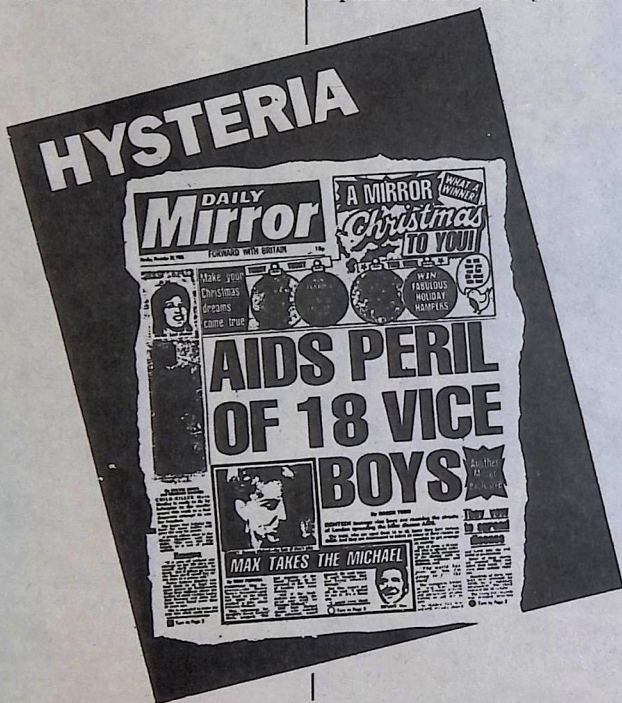
When working class people appear they tend to appear as a vague mass, their opinions conveyed through some "spokesperson" who in many cases will be himself (and it is usually himself) a member of the elite: the top trade union leaders, for example, who have long lost touch with any working class roots they ever had. "Ordinary" people hardly ever speak directly through the newspapers.

The stories in which ordinary individuals "star" are most often crime stories or "human interest" yarns: sob stories and so forth.

In short, the first and most effective way the papers damage the interests of the working class is by editing the working class out;



The Sunday Press fabricates story of plot to kill Pope



Sensationalism Daily Mirror style

Public opinion

MANY ON the left put a high priority on trying to influence the way particular issues or campaigns are reported in the press.

Any time a campaigning group is being formed these days, one of the first items on the agenda is the appointment of a PRO and suggestions on how to get favourable publicity.

Of course it is absolutely correct that the Left should be as professional as possible in pushing its message, and should lose no opportunity to gain favourable mention. Competent press relations and judicious lobbying of sympathetic journalists are no more than common sense.

What is absolutely wrong is to put such a high priority on press relations that this consideration comes close to determining the tactics and strategy for struggle. The press is not a neutral element, to be swayed towards this side or that depending on the professionalism of the approach.

The attitude of the press will crucially be determined by how each paper's bosses see the interests of their class in relation to the issue involved. It's usually not as crude as the owner ordering the editor to order the journalists to take a specified line (although that happens frequently, too, on British tabloids and on Independent Newspapers in Dublin, for example). But a paper will naturally, automatically, align itself towards an issue in a way which will at least not be against the interests/ideas of the owners. No amount of clever PR work will have more than a very marginal effect on this.

More important: to stress the importance of good relations with the press is to imply that "public opinion" is vital. Of course, other things being equal, it's better to have "public opinion" for you than against you. But far more struggles have been lost by those involved behaving "responsibly" so as not to alienate public opinion than have been won by successful courting of mass popularity.

Public opinion was overwhelmingly on the side of the Dunnes Stores strikers. But they lost. If IDATU had ignored the treacherous ITGWU and ICTU bosses and campaigned over their heads for solidarity action at the Docks and for an all-out blockade of Dunnes, the strikers would have lost a lot of public sympathy, been denounced as "irresponsible" etc in the press. But they might have hit Ben Dunne hard enough to force a victory. There are dozens of other examples.

Public opinion is almost unanimously opposed to the present levels of unemployment, North and South. So what? An outright challenge to the capitalist system by workers in employment demanding the diversion of money away from the bankers and towards a programme of public works could certainly bring the jobless total down. Such a tactic would be denounced in violent terms in every Irish newspaper and public opinion would be whipped up against it. But it might work.

Hard battles are not decided by the volume of cheering from the side-lines. Those — and there are many of them, particularly around Dublin — who argue that press approval and public applause are as important as battering down the enemy's defences by the best means available, are not serious about winning.

Opposing all strikes

WHEN WORKERS are passive, when they aren't terribly involved in whatever controversies or struggles are going on around them, they tend to believe what they read.

It's when they are pitched into battle that they see most clearly they're being told lies.

For example: few Northern Catholic workers will take on trust what they read about events in the Six Counties. They know that the picture painted doesn't conform to their own experience, that it's distorted in such a way as to make those oppressing them look good and those reacting to oppression look bad.

It's the same with strikes. Even workers who will nod in agreement when they read that somebody else's strike is "unnecessary" and "irresponsible" will be indignant

when they read the same things about their own struggle. The fierce hostility of the entire Southern press to the ESB strikers last month is a case in point.

All the major newspapers oppose all strikes. There is no recorded case in recent years (and possibly none ever) of an Irish national newspaper supporting a strike.

CHALLENGE

A particular newspaper may from time to time express support for a struggle for this or that reform (although it's hard to think of important examples). But never do they support strikes.

The reason is that going on strike is the most direct challenge any group of workers can make to the system. When workers try to assert a degree of control over their conditions of employment they are

challenging the central prerogative of the capitalist class: its control of the economy.

Thus in a situation where a group of striking workers badly need another group to come out in support of them (miners needing the railwaymen, for example) you never read about "hope of the strike spreading . . ." You always read: "danger of the strike spreading . . ."

More than any other sort of story, strike reports are written from the employers' point of view.

(In a perverse way, this is evidence for the Marxist contention that the economic struggle waged at the point of production is absolutely central to the fight against all oppression.)

Thus newspapers do not simply record what happens in struggle. They participate in struggle, ever and always on the side of the ruling class, and most clearly on the side of the ruling class when it's a clear-cut conflict between capital and labour.

REPORTS THE TRUTH

Eye to the main chance

MANY JOURNALISTS start out with quite "radical" ideas and quickly become standard-issue hacks.

One reason is that any journalist who wants to "get on" in a national paper learns quickly that you don't do this by being "awkward".

It isn't that you have to tell lies (although on some papers, like the "Sun", a willingness to put your name to bare-faced lies is a requirement of the job). It's just that you have to be careful not to cause trouble.

Few journalists will suggest or submit a story which they know won't be printed. What would be the point? So a process of selection operates automatically to filter out whatever is "unacceptable". For example, if you work for the Irish Independent you don't suggest a series of stories contrasting the fabulous wealth of the Smurfit

family with the grinding poverty of a family in Tallaght. After a couple of weeks on the paper you'd just know that this would be silly.

Again, you learn quickly that the same standards are not applied to every story. For example, if you're working in Belfast for a Dublin or London paper and you chance on a story that the IRA is extorting money from frightened business-people in the city you'll know that you can phone it straight up to the copy-taker and there'll be no questions asked.

If, however, you happen on a story that the RUC is torturing prisoners in Castlereagh you'll know the news-desk will call you back immediately, asking about the source of the story, whether witnesses can be produced, whether these witnesses would be willing to give evidence on oath in a possible libel action. Signed affidavits would be demanded before publication. The story would have to be put to the RUC and the denial carried. In other words, such a story would be a real hassle. And the

average journalist wants as little hassle on the job as anybody else. So the story will have much less chance of seeing the light of day than the IRA extortion story. And thus the news coming out of Belfast will be a distortion of the truth.

(This exact set of circumstances arose in Belfast in 1978-79.)

In such ways, and by learning the lingo ("danger/hope of strike spreading" etc) the bright-eyed journo intent on exposing social evil can rather speedily become just another cynic going through the motions and earning the ultimate accolade; "a real pro".

Newspapers are what they are. Individual journalists, no matter how sincere, cannot change them. Those who do recognise what a cynical, dishonest business it is, and want to deploy their journalistic skills on behalf of the exploited, should involve themselves in the production of an opposition, socialist press, rather than confide their discontent meaninglessly to sour complaints in the public bar.



Tony O'Reilly, boss of Heinz and Independent Newspapers with one of his chums

Depending on the bosses

THE NEWSPAPER industry is just that — an industry. Its primary function is to generate profit for the owners. Any other function which workers in an individual paper might have in mind — to "inform" or "educate" or "entertain" — is secondary.

Only massively-rich people can afford to run newspapers. The News on Sunday, launched in Britain at the end of April, is already in trouble because it had "only" £9 million start-up money. The soft-Left ideas it had at the outset have now been ditched as the price for an injection of a further £3 million from a "friendly" capitalist.

Even newspapers started up by people who are not themselves super-rich and which manage to survive do so at the expense of agreeing not to challenge the

interests of the super-rich. The Sunday Tribune, for example, launched on a tidal wave of blather about "radical journalism", has quickly become the house magazine of Dublin Yuppiedom, nervously "progressive" on issues like divorce, hysterically supportive of cuts in public spending and incoherent with rage against ESB strikers.

PREJUDICE

This reflects not just the natural prejudices of those who control the newspapers. It reflects, too, the fact that of all the thousands of different commodities produced for the market-place, newspapers are uniquely dependent on the goodwill of the capitalist class as a whole. The reason is that — "fringe" publications apart — all newspapers are entirely dependent on advertising.

The "Small" ads and entertainment ads have their place, but most advertising revenue is in the gift of major enterprises which, therefore, no newspaper can afford to alienate.

Moreover, the owners of newspapers will almost invariably be involved also in ownership of other industries as well. O'Reilly in Ireland Murdoch and Maxwell in Britain are the most obvious examples.

Newspapers do not stand outside the capitalist system. They are securely integrated part of the capitalist system. The newspaper industry cannot be "used" to undermine capitalism, any more than the soap powder industry, say, or tobacco manufacture.

The fight for a free press, therefore, for newspapers which can afford to tell the truth, must be seen as part of the fight to destroy the system which needs for its own survival continuously to distort the truth.

IT'S A CLASSIC

Lenin; 'The State and Revolution'

ONE OF the main differences between revolutionary socialists and people who are reformists, republican or anarchists is our attitude to the state. Much has been written on the question, yet today Lenin's book "The State and Revolution" written seventy years ago in August and September 1917, is as relevant and important as it was then.

Lenin defines clearly what the state is: it is the essence of political power. It never represents the people "as a whole", but is always an instrument through which one class maintains its rule over other classes. It is a product of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms. To maintain power it uses armies, the police, the judiciary, the prisons and the civil service.

These institutions have to be paid for, so it is the class which controls the economy which controls the state.

This means that the old Social Democratic and Labour view that by winning a majority in parliament the state can be taken over and used for socialist purposes is a dream.

Faced with a reforming government whose policies challenge capitalist priorities, the state machine — acting together with big business — has immense resources of obstruction and pressure.

Should the government resist those pressures the state can resort to direct force as the Chilean state did when Allende's government was overthrown by a coup in 1973.

The working class cannot take over the bourgeois state — we have to smash it. This means disbanding the police, sacking the judges, breaking the ruling class army by winning the rank-and-file over to workers, and removing the bureaucratic ministries of the old state apparatus with a new apparatus arising directly from working class struggles.

That was the central conclusion of Lenin's book and the central difference between revolutionary socialists and the Provos who don't see the need to overthrow the Southern state. They continually reassure Fianna Fail and caution their own supporters that they do not want or need to attack the southern state — that normal politics i.e. the politics of reform, is sufficient in the Twenty Six Counties.

To reach his conclusion Lenin quotes from Marx's classic "Civil War in France" when he wrote about the Paris Commune of 1871.

For a period of barely two months the workers of Paris took direct control. The standing army and police were suppressed — the population as a whole was armed; all officials were made subject to election and recall, and all public service was to be performed at the average working wage.

This was designed to involve the people of Paris in active participation in public affairs.

The democracy of the Commune was radically different from that of even the most "democratic" of bourgeois republics. It laid the basis for the inclusion of the mass of the population in the running of their own affairs.

But to do this the Commune had to impose its will on other hostile classes. The Commune substituted the dictatorship of the working class for the dictatorship of the ruling class. It had to smash the old state. Now that the working class had become the ruling class, it had, like previous ruling classes to oppress its class opponents — the bourgeoisie. It needed a state of its own. To dispense with that, as the anarchists argue, is to renounce in advance the possibility of success.

CO-OPERATION

While workers need a state to oppress their class enemy, they no longer need a state to ensure economic exploitation. Their direct control over production means that a start can be made on production for need rather than production for profit.

So this was no longer a state in the proper sense, but one that would "wither away", to use Engels' words, as the need to oppress its opponents faded and exploitation of labour by capital was replaced by social co-operation.

But Lenin insisted that even this is not the final point of development. For democracy (the rule of the majority) itself becomes superfluous. It becomes superfluous when the control that a majority necessarily exercises in order to run society on the basis of equality becomes an automatic habit. At that point real communism will be possible as human beings go beyond even habit and operate on the basis of "from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs". There will be no classes, no states, people will at last be free.

Lenin shows exactly how workers' power arising out of the smashing of the old state, can organise the first steps towards socialism — and eventually to communism.

Despite the lean times we are living in, every strike gives us an inkling of the power of workers' struggle, its ability to dictate its will over the bosses and the police, its capacity to draw workers into active democratic control over their existence.

The message of Lenin's "State and Revolution" can be bettered only by the "interruption" referred to in the incomplete ending to the pamphlet — the active experience of revolution itself.

—J. SPRAY

* Lenin: "The State and Revolution" is available from; SWM PO Box 1648 Dublin 8, price 70p

ANALYSIS

Why socialists don't defend national sovereignty

THE REFERENDUM campaign on the Single European Act brought to light the most objectionable aspects of Irish politics — both Right and Left.

The power of the most influential right wing groups in the country was thrown behind the campaign for the Act. Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, the PDs, the Federated Union of Employers, the Irish Farmers Association and the entire national press — all threatened dire consequences if the Act was not approved. Not only would there be economic chaos but — worse than that — the EEC would think we were 'Bad Europeans'. They threatened and cajoled, demanded and begged that we do 'the right thing' and vote YES.

Most of the Irish left opposed such drivel. The COSAIN campaign in particular argued that the real issue was the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. The SEA amounts to the political integration of the EEC around the military structures of NATO. It was therefore essential that anyone who identified with the anti-war movement internationally should oppose the Act.

If these points had been hammered home clearly and decisively, then the Left could have made some gains. These might not have been reflected in voting figures but an organised pole of attraction for the Left might have been built, as one had been in Spain during the referendum on NATO there. Unfortunately this never happened. It didn't happen because of the nationalist politics which dominated the anti-SEA campaign.

The major campaign against the Act was the Constitutional Rights Campaign. Its leading figures were straight nationalists but the campaign nonetheless won the affiliation of a number of unions, including the ITGWU. On the ground, left wingers, particularly Sinn Fein members, made up the bulk of activists.

The joint chairperson of this campaign was Mary McAleese. She argued that the SEA should be opposed because it would open the door to abortion and divorce in Ireland. There was not much surprising in this. McAleese was a spokesperson for the Bishops during the New Ireland Forum. What WAS surprising was that none of the leading left wingers in the campaign told her where to get off.

One early fundraiser for the CRC was John O'Reilly, a leading member of the Pro-Life Amendment Campaign, a long-standing anti-abortion activist and a founder of Family Solidarity. Family Solidarity members were active in the campaign on the ground in many areas, especially the rural districts. Far from making any attempt to organise separately from these disgustingly right-wing people, some left wingers ignored their anti-abortion, anti-divorce hysteria — in the hope that they might bring more votes.

As a result, the general argument shifted from a focus on NATO to a defence of "our" constitution. This extract from a campaign leaflet was typical:

Our constitution guarantees the fundamental rights and democratic values of the Irish people. We are being asked to change it to suit the SEA. Why not change the SEA instead?

The Free State constitution outlaws divorce, protects the rights of private property, enshrines the most vicious

sectarian and anti-woman clauses. Yet trade unionists and socialists let themselves be conned into defending it.

There is a reason for this strange behaviour. It has to do with a terrible confusion at the heart of much left wing thought in Ireland. Over the last decade, the sectarian horrors of Northern Ireland have brought many on the left correctly to identify with the fight against the Six County state. This has meant standing shoulder to shoulder with the most militant representatives of Irish nationalism, Sinn Fein and the IRA.

Some theorists have translated this experience into the very crude conclusion that Irish nationalism itself must always play a progressive role. They argue that the left must take over the banner of nationalism from the traitors who currently hold it in Fianna Fail. They argue that the Irish left should do with Irish nationalism what the Sandinistas had done with the Nicaraguan nationalist movement. And they argue that the important task now for the left is to champion the causes of 'national sovereignty' and 'national independence'.

To see why this position is wrong, we need to look at the Marxist approach to nationalism and the nation state. Contrary to myth, Marxists have never lumped together all national struggles and judged them purely in terms of their rhetoric. Instead we look behind the banners to determine what sort of material conditions have produced the movement and how its victory and defeat will affect the class struggle.

Scotland, for example, has a strong nationalist movement. But marxists do not side with Scottish nationalists. The reason for this is simple. Scotland does not suffer national oppression. If it does, where are the signs of it? Where are the Scottish equivalents of H Blocks, the RUC, the shoot-to-kill policies? The oppression of working class Scots in the Gorbals or in Easterhouse is more akin to Toxteth or Brixton than to the Bogside or Ardoyne. Scottish nationalism is a diversion from the real necessity for working class unity and socialism — in this it differs fundamentally from Ireland where the fight against national oppression is a necessary part of the struggle for socialism.

The Croatian national independence movement is not supported by socialists either, but for different reasons. Croatia (now in Yugoslavia) has sought independence for over a century. But nationalism there has always been bound up with the far Right and even fascism. Thus during the Second World War, Utashi, Croatia's nationalist movement — together with the Catholic Church under Cardinal Stepinac — allied with the fascists and sent thousands to their deaths in the Nazi concentration camps.

DISCRIMINATION

In the case of Northern Ireland the issue is quite clear. Northern Catholics have been discriminated against and oppressed for decades. Every official survey shows that the levels of discrimination are rising rather than decreasing. Thus, proportionately, there are more Catholics unemployed today than there were at the start of 'the troubles'.

It is also evident that this oppression cannot be tackled by the Northern state. In fact, the state is the problem. It has been so structured — with an Orange police force, judiciary and para military forces — to organise the entire state on sectarian lines. It has attempted to win a section of the Protestant working class to actively support that state through the promise of marginal privileges.

The question of which banner Northern Catholics fight under is secondary to the need to fight such oppression. No one who is a socialist — and therefore an internationalist — would withhold support from the black working class of South

Africa simply because they back the nationalist ANC. So it should be with the North. It is necessary to take a stand on the side of those fighting the state. This is not just a matter of being for justice for the oppressed. It is also, in the case of the North, the only way to achieve working class unity. You will never have any real or lasting class unity as long as the facts of discrimination and the role of the Northern Ireland are ignored.

This does not mean that socialists support the nationalist politics of the oppressed group. Quite the contrary, the all-class nationalist politics of Sinn Fein make it unable to lead the struggle to victory. Nationalism pulls it back to looking for allies in Fianna Fail, the SDLP and the Church hierarchy who inevitably sell it out. Against this, socialists argue that the only real ally that Northern Catholics have is the working class movement — North and South — which has an interest in fighting both states in Ireland.

COMBATTING

It can be difficult to understand how Marxists can support the struggle against oppression at the same time as combatting the nationalist politics that is in the leadership of the struggle. But this was precisely the method that Lenin and the Bolsheviks championed. In order to combat chauvinist ideas inside the Russian working class, Lenin fought hard to give all the oppressed nations inside Russia the right to secede from the Empire. But he combined this stance with a vigorous attack on nationalist politics. He wrote: Marxism cannot be reconciled with nationalism, be it even of the 'most just', 'purest', 'most refined and civilised brand'. In place of all nationalism Marxism advances internationalism, the amalgamation of all nations in the higher unity, a unity that is growing before our eyes with every mile of railway line that is built... and every workers association that is formed....

Combat all national oppression? Yes, of course. Fight FOR any kind of national development, FOR 'national culture in general?..... Of course not!

In other words, marxists fight national oppression because we want to break the grip which nationalism has on the working class and which stands in the way of working class unity and international socialism.

One of the central myths of nationalist politics is the belief in national sovereignty: that each government is independent and sovereign in its own country just like the feudal monarchs of the past; that the government is in control of the nation's destiny.

All sorts of political forces can be found to defend the case for national sovereignty. On the right, the concept is necessary to bolster the argument that "The people" are really in charge of what happens within the boundaries of their own nation state. On the left, national sovereignty is vital for those who believe that socialism can be achieved through parliament. If what they believe to be the agency of change, the old state machine itself, is not independent and open to control by left wing TDs, then clearly there would be no point in the parliamentary exercise. This is why, ironically, both the Workers Party and Sinn Fein find themselves on the same side on this issue.

Yet it is a gigantic hoax. In every country in the world national governments are less and less in control of their own affairs. Russia — the second most powerful state in the world — is a good example. Russia has huge problems in the world economy. The lower levels of productivity in Russia compared to its great rival the USA, the huge burden of arms spending on this weaker economy, the decline in its exports due to the fall in oil prices, these are the factors which



Is this the way to fight?

have forced Gorbachev to embark on his policy of 'openness' and democracy.

It wasn't that a sovereign government decided in its wisdom to take a more humanitarian approach to its population. It was forced by outside pressures to find a way of involving the mass of its population in a new battle for production. The same could even be said of America. Reagan may rant and rave about Japanese penetration in the US economy, but little he can do about it. Japanese capital is now well entrenched on the New York stock exchange. US capital has long sought out Japanese 'partners' who are anxious to find an opening into the American economy behind any tariff barriers. Reagan and his government are no longer in control of the great colossus that is US capitalism.

DISAPPEARED

In general then, real power in society no longer rests in the chambers of parliament but in the boardrooms of big business. It is the boardrooms which set the agenda for national governments. This applies to major industrial powers as well as states like the 26 Counties.

But talk of 'national sovereignty' in 26 County Ireland is even more of a farce. Since 1980, billions have disappeared from the Irish economy through mysterious 'black holes'. Yet the Irish state did not have a high enough level of statistical information to even discover the disappearance until three years after the pattern was established. To imagine that such a government is 'sovereign' is beyond belief.

No government whatever its politics could act any more independently. Today 40% of Irish manufacturing employment is in the hands of foreign firms. Increasingly, the bigger native capitalist firms such as Smurfit, Waterford Glass, Cement Roadstone etc. have become deeply integrated into the world economy. All of them respond not to the demands of an Irish parliament but to desperate targets set by the rat race that is the world economy.

The harsh truth is that this soft nationalist politics owes more than it knows to the now almost forgotten politics of Eamonn De Valera. It was Dev who set out to build 'national sovereignty' on its only possible basis — an 'independent national economy'. But despite initial success it was a dismal failure. De Valera's protectionist Ireland led to massive emigration, a defeated workforce, higher prices and rotten low wages. It also led, ironically, despite the rhetoric, to a great dependence on the British markets.

Revolutionary socialists therefore do not defend our state, our constitution, our sovereignty.

Instead, we stand for working class internationalism. This has nothing to do with the 'Let's be good Europeans' approach of supporters of the EEC. It arises from the practical experience of Irish workers. When the strikers at Packard had to fight the giant multinational General Motors, they knew immediately that international solidarity was vital. The struggle for a workers republic in Ireland raises the question of internationalism — not, despite the illusion-mongers who make so much 'Left' sounding noise, of nationalism.

— KIERAN ALLEN

EAMONN McCANN

Job markets that go bump in the night

JOHN HUME denounced the Provos as "utter hypocrites" after an IRA bomb destroyed the Job Market office in Derry city centre on the 18th of last month. Hume's point was that the Provo bomb damaged Derry's chances of attracting new employment.

Claiming responsibility, the IRA alleged that the Job Market had been used by the British Army to spy on young nationalists. The office was only about twenty yards from the mouth of William Street, the main entrance to the Bogside.

Both the Hume and IRA statements speak volumes about the politics of the parties concerned.

Hume's pronouncement was the latest in a long line trying to pin responsibility for appalling unemployment among his constituents on the Provos. Hume knows well that the jobless figures for Derry, and for the North generally, were disastrously high before the Provo campaign was ever launched. And that the major factor pushing the figures up since has been the crisis in the British capitalist economy, aggravated since 1979 by the Thatcherite policy of let-the-weak-go-to-the-wall.

Hume lets Thatcher off the hook — and "excuses" his own abject failure to lead a fight against unemployment — by rushing into print at every opportunity blaming the Provos for the crisis. (Who or what does Hume think has sent the jobless figures through the roof in Liverpool, Newcastle, the west Midlands, central Scotland?)

But the Provos, too, avoid the issue.

Bombing Job Market Centres is hardly the most effective way of fighting against unemployment. But the Centres are deeply offensive to the unemployed. They are brightly-lit, garishly-designed facades, intended to hide the ugly reality of mass joblessness and growing poverty in working class areas of the North.

The Centre in Derry had only recently moved from the Crown Buildings, a couple of hundred yards away. The intention was to mount a city-centre show of activity about unemployment. But the main "activity" was the operation of the entirely fraudulent "Job Search '87" project, under which Job Market officials scurry around allegedly locating unfilled jobs and bringing these to the attention of school-leavers.

CONCRETE-AND-GLASS

This in a city with an official male unemployment rate of forty per cent and adjacent to a district, the Bogside/Brandywell, where a recent survey showed that fewer than one tenth of the adult population had full-time employment of any sort!

The Job Market Centre was a concrete-and-glass insult to thousands of people who passed it every day.

But this wasn't the reason the Provos blew it up. This aspect of the Centre's existence didn't even rate a mention in the IRA statement. Instead, the action was explained in an absolutely traditional nationalist context, as an episode in the age-old British-Irish struggle, not a mention of the economic significance of the place or of what it told us about the class realities of life in the Six Counties under Thatcher.

If they'd wanted, the class argument against the Centre could have been raised as well as the allegation that it was being used by the Brits as a vantage point for spying.

But the Provos didn't even include it as an afterthought. Which tells us quite a lot about the priority they put on the class aspects of the liberation they fight for.

SWM NEWS

MARXISM IN IRELAND 87

LAST YEAR over 200 people turned up to the meetings at "Marxism in Ireland".

This year it will be bigger and better.

At the end of September, *Marxism in Ireland '87* takes place. There will be meetings and debates, films and music.

It is a must for every serious socialist looking for analysis on Marxist politics in Ireland today.

Send for the full brochure and details of dates and venue to: SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

"Vote Sinn Fein — but build a socialist alternative"; speaker: **EAMONN McCANN**

Derry: June 8th, Gweedor Bar, 8.00 pm
Belfast: Conway Mill, June 10th, 8.00 pm

"Fianna Fail and the Cuts"

Dublin 17th June, CIE Hall, 8.00 pm

For more details of the Socialist Workers Movement, its meetings, activities, publications and policies write to: SWM PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

Phil Flynn must go!

SINN FEIN SHOULD EXPEL Phil Flynn forthwith.

Sinn Fein member and former party vice-president, Flynn is General Secretary of the Local Govt. and Public Services Union.

At the Union's conference in Dundalk he threw his weight against those who wanted a militant against the health cuts. And, shamefully, he spoke for the "right" of Health Cuts Minister O'Hanlon to address delegates.

Flynn's "explanation" was that nothing must be allowed to threaten the talks between the Government and ICTU bosses on a new "National Plan".

At the previous meeting of the ICTU executive, Flynn not only supported but seconded the motion suspending IDATU chief John Mitchell for having denounced the Northern Irish unions for their lack of action against sectarianism and

discrimination. He has since been bad-mouthing Mitchell as a "splitter" and "poacher" in union circles.

So much for free speech in the working class movement!

How come a member of a "revolutionary" party behaves like this? Part of the answer is that Sinn Feiners do not operate as revolutionaries in the unions. When Flynn himself was under pressure a few years back he was able to boast that he had never "brought my politics into the union".

That was acceptable to Sinn Fein, because SF sees activity within the organised working class movement as a sort of optional, unimportant "extra" and this in turn is because SF doesn't take class politics seriously.

If they want to be taken even half-seriously as socialists of any sort they should expel Phil Flynn without further ado.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

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

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

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

Capitalism cannot be patched up or reformed—it must be overthrown. That cannot be achieved through parliament as the Workers Party and the Labour Party argue. The real power in this society lies in the boardroom of big business. The structures of the present parliament, courts, army and police are designed to protect the interests of the ruling class against the workers. At most parliament can be used for propaganda against the system—it cannot be the instrument by which workers destroy the power of the rich. We therefore stand for a workers' revolution which produces a different and more democratic society—one based on councils of delegates from workplaces and areas who are democratically elected answerable to assemblies and subject to recall at any time.

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

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

AGAINST PARTITION

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

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

We stand for:

- The immediate withdrawal of the British Army
- The disbandment of the RUC and UDR
- No to extradition and collaboration on border security

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

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

AGAINST ALL OPPRESSION

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

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

THE UNIONS

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

We stand for:

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

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

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

THE PARTY

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



JOIN US!

I would like more details about the Socialist Workers Movement

NAME

ADDRESS

Send to SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

REVIEWS

The Future Socialist Society

WHAT WILL things be like after the Revolution? How will we deal with such a problem under socialism?

The future socialist society, a publication of the Socialist Workers Party, our sister organisation in Britain, asks and answers these questions often asked by people. The pamphlet is no utopian piece of socialist ideology. But is thoroughly pragmatic and bases its answers on the historical experiences of workers in the many countries where they have, albeit temporarily, taken economic and political power during their struggles.

John Molyneux rightly states that we cannot foretell the exact way in which a future socialist society will be

run anymore than we can predict the date of such a revolution, but rather shows what can be achieved under socialism.

Ten topics are covered in the pamphlet ranging from the conquest of power to the eventual withering away of the state. We can examine some of these in general. The pamphlet sets out certain occurrences which have been a feature of most workers' uprisings and revolutions.

One of the first and most important is the abolition of a standing army and police force and its replacement with a workers' militia elected by other workers in the community.

The militias will probably be on a rota basis to involve

the maximum amount of workers and to ensure that the militias cannot become an independent force and will be firmly under the control of workers' councils which will become the real basis of power in the new state.

DEMOCRACY

These workers' councils or soviets will involve workers in the day-to-day running of society and will be the ultimate form of democracy, not the token form under the present, capitalist, system.

We cannot state exactly how the soviets will operate but past experience of the soviets in Russia and through

to the "cordones" in Chile shows us that they will involve the maximum number of workers and will ensure by the power of instant recall of elected officials that workers will enjoy, that those elected cannot abuse the power vested in them by their fellow workers.

This question of political power will also entail the capturing of economic power. This will come through nationalisation which will differ radically from the nationalisations of the present time. Basically, they will come from below as workers occupy the factories, banks, land, etc.

There will be no compensation for the former parasitic owners as the intention will be to smash their economic power

for all time. The nationalisations will be directly under workers' control and it is through the soviets that workers will decide what is to be produced in order to satisfy the material needs of the workers and not the present basis where commodities are produced solely for profit by price on the market. Production will be for need not profit.

To defend the gains of the revolution, the revolution itself must spread. As John points out, this is not just our internationalist duty but essential to the continuation of the revolution.

The spreading of the revolution is not an impossible dream. The 1917 Revolution sparked off many conflicts between workers and the ruling classes: the Kaiser was deposed in Germany, Soviet governments appeared in Hungary and Finland. The Sultan of Turkey was overthrown, factories were occupied in Italy and America.

The workers of the world were inspired by the events of October 1917 and sought to imitate the actions of their Russian brothers and sisters.

However, the weakness or absence of revolutionary parties in these countries coupled with the treachery of reformist social democratic parties ensured that the ruling classes at the time were able to contain the movements.

The liberation of women will be another result of the successful revolution. Simply, since revolution will depend on the majority of the working class consciously overthrowing the old system, women, who are half of the working class will play a vital and leading

role in the fight. The liberation of women will not come about overnight. But we can see what immediate steps can be taken to remove all discrimination against women: the introduction of equal pay and job opportunities; free access to abortion and contraception, divorce on demand. Coupled with a vigorous anti-sexist campaign of education, women will be liberated from their present second-class position in society.

As with these gains for women, a campaign to remove the old stereotypes of the strong man and the weak woman in the supposed heterosexual norm will liberate gay men and lesbians from the old prejudices and harassment and create a society where expressing sexual identity is no longer something to wear like a ball and chain in the role playing crap.

Racism, one of the most obscene features of capitalist society, will also be vigorously attacked and die out as a the social conditions will not exist for its filth to continue. Racism will become a historical relic as absurd as the persecution of witches.

The ideas of revolutionary socialism offer the only alternative to the barbarism of capitalism with its needless wars, famines, racism, sexism, etc. This pamphlet shows what can be achieved and I would urge all those interested in socialist ideas to buy this as an antidote to the scaremongering and propaganda perpetuated by a minority whose interests are best served by maintaining the status quo.

BRENDAN O'DONOHUE

U2-FALSE PROPHETS?



JOSHUA TREE, U2's new lp.

"I don't believe in painted roses or bleeding hearts While bullets rape the night of the merciful."

* Answers on a postcard, please to Socialist Worker, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

U2 ARE a Dublin-based band who have made a huge amount of money from talking — or singing — in riddles. They have also produced a number of superb rock and roll songs, and their success, no doubt, is due to a combination of both of these factors.

Time magazine summed up their latest work, "The Joshua Tree", as "an album full of oblique speculation and spiritual voyaging".

Oblique is good. After reading the lyric sheet several times and listening intently to the songs, I still could not say what any single song is about.

Time — who probably got closer to the band for their article than we at Socialist Worker did — reports that "Bullet the Blue Sky", for example, is to do with Bobo's experience of a mortar attack on a distant hill during his

El Salvador visit.

Somewhere else, I read that "Running to Stand Still" is about drug addiction in Ballymun, "Red Hill Mining Town" about the plight of British miners, and so on.

But if I didn't have Joe Ambrose and BP Fallon to fill me in on the background, I wouldn't have worked any of this out from the mere lyrics alone.

U2 are deliberately vague and evasive in their social observation. They call this mysticism. Unless a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of Bono.

MYSTIC

Socialists are notoriously wanting in mystic appreciation it being the case that they reject the idea of the Other Being. So it is doubly frustrating to think you are about to hear a song about death squads or drug barons or freedom fighters only to be told that "Jacob wrestled the angel and the angel was overcome."

Nevertheless, this is good album. Not a great album. Certainly not the classic some writers have tried to make it

out to be. It is a clever album. It draws musically from several sources: Lou Reed, Van Morrison, Cream, Bob Dylan, The Who, to name but a few. (One friend of mine goes so far as to hear Johnny Logan behind 'I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For'.)

Several of the songs have a tantalising "who does that remind you of?" feeling. But all have the distinctive and brilliantly simple playing of the Edge. Bono's singing, once a raucous, energetic, pop-punk simplicity, now ranges from the measured build-up on "With or Without You" to the gentle lyricism on "Running to Stand Still" to the appalling Lou Reed-style waffle he semi-speaks at the end of 'Bullet the Blue Sky'.

U2 in other words, now have something for everyone. But in developing this universal saleability, they have produced an album lacking in guts and often bland and uninspired. Often, not always. "Running to Stand Still" is a good song. "one Tree Hill" is as good as anything U2 have ever done.

Their Croke Park concerts will undoubtedly be great

Bono: appalling Lou Reed-style waffle

success. They have a huge following at home and their live shows are legendary. I only hope the man himself will not embarrass us all, as he did last time round, by dedicating a song to the people who couldn't afford tickets for the concert. That is one kind of reality that no amount of mystic riddle-speaking will ever address.

And here is the basic problem with U2. Whether they themselves wished it or not, their image-makers have sold them to us as latter-day prophets who will elevate us from our squalid reality with litanies of biblical names and soaring guitar riffs.

But when the concerts are over and the congregation filters out of Croke Park, where are they left?

Last time round they arrived in the city centre to find the streets full of aggressive, frustrated young folk, fed up waiting for RTE's laser show to save them.

We are all looking for gods and gurus to lead us from poverty — when the only way out is through uniting and fighting.

—DECLAN GORMAN

SUFFERING IN SILENCE

HARD LINES 3 is Faber's latest collection of modern poetry and prose. Here various writers portray all the misery of life under capitalism.

In "Morning" the poet notices the "gentleness of secretaries" before they start work and are "no longer available to themselves" Karl Marx called it wage slavery and the character in "Stolen Day" tries to break the chains and wanders off into the sunshine because she is "too spiritual for the office".

We see the things which people are driven to under the system. There is the "videodrome" whose fixation with video nasties is laughed off among mates in the pub. There is the "Food Girl" who is told by the media that she is too fat and who goes on grotesque eating binges in between starvation diets.

There are many more pieces which reflect suffering. But unfortunately, that is all they reflect. In Hard Lines 3 there is no struggle against the system apart from the desperate struggle of individuals

In a poem called "North" we read of the death of Northern England with mass unemployment and poverty. But nowhere is there a mention of the miners' strike or the Wapping dispute.

The Irish writers here don't even mention the struggle against the Orange state.

In "Blue Peter" we are told that the "world is dirty and dying".

Go ahead and buy the book but remember this: as long as there's a working class with the power to change things the world doesn't have to die.

*Hard Lines 3, Faber and Faber, £3.75 — DAVE McDONAGH

ISRAEL: THE HIJACK STATE

By John Rose

The story of the creation of the state of Israel—a state set up, supposedly, to provide a homeland for the Jewish people. Yet in reality it was no more than a colonial-settler state. It was created by the removal of the Palestinian people from their land and today plays the role of a watchdog for US imperialism in the Middle East.

£1.15 incl post

JOHN ROSE

ISRAEL: THE HIJACK STATE

AMERICA'S WITNESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

AN INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS PAMPHLET

FIGHT THE HEALTH CUTS

THERE HAS been an outbreak of sheer anger against Fianna Fail's health cuts. All across the country, thousands of nurses and hospital staff have stopped work to demonstrate. They have won the support of community groups and other trade unionists. Already the first small cracks in Fianna Fail have begun to appear. Politicians who are running scared for their seats are screaming "Don't close our hospitals — the cuts in the rest of the country are plenty".

But still "Dr Death" O'Hanlon sits it out. He knows that he has the full backing of Fine Gael and the Progressive Democrats. For once all the right-wing parties of the country are openly united. His aim is to stall until the anger dies out.

This is why he pretends to show concern. He listens to deputations. He sets up special commissions — but the programme of cuts will go through, if we don't stop him. ***If we are to win, we need to be clear about two points.** Firstly, *there are no local solutions.* In the past you could lobby and push to stop a ward in a local hospital from being closed down. But this time the fight has to be on a national basis. A number of Fianna Fail politicians are trying to play a double game on the issue. They are for the cuts in the Dail, but when it comes down to their local hospital they say they want an exception. There is no point

listening to these crooks. The only hope we have is of sticking together. This time it really does mean "an injury to one is an injury to all."

Secondly, *industrial action is the way to win.* Strike action is what has always terrified them. Hospital workers have tremendous power. When the last Coalition forced the Health Boards to bring in charges for out-patient visits, the refusal of LGPSU members was enough to stop it.

Unfortunately, a number of union leaders have already begun to lose their nerve. They say that lobbying is better than industrial action. At the recent LGPSU conference, they tried to say that cuts would only be fought by "political action rather than industrial action." But there are two types of politics. The first is where you plead from a position of weakness. The other is where you demand from a position of strength.

We should remember the tax protests. After a few days of action against the unfair tax system, the ICTU called off the action and advised workers to get out petitions and lobby the TDs. They had the cheek to tell us that this was "political action". We lost hands down! *We need to build on the determination that has been shown in the strikes and demonstrations. We need to: Escalate the action:*

The experience of the one-day limited action from other workers has been dismal. The ESB workers tried it — they beaten. In the long run it is seen to go nowhere and demoralisation



Hospital protests across the country

sets in. One-day actions can be very useful in building up confidence and breathing life back into the unions. But to go forward we need to step up the action.

Refuse to collect the £10

levy:

No hospital workers should collect this levy. The working class of this country already pay through the nose in taxes for their health service. Why should they pay again?

There are some who will argue that if the levy is not collected, the cuts will get worse. It is the wrong way of looking at it. The cuts *will* get even worse if we don't stand up to O'Hanlon. Next year they will be back for more if they see the hospitals as a soft target. If Fianna Fail get

through the £10 charge, they will take it as a sign of weakness and will not make the slightest concession on any other front.

Organise for solidarity action:

We need the support of other workers. They are directly affected by the cuts — the rich will get into the private clinics in the Mater and Blackrock. It is possible to win support including industrial action if enough pressure is built up.

During the nurses strike in Britain in 1981-82 against the cuts and privatisation, they sent out pickets to the miners and to the dockers. These pickets were respected.

In Poland, when the Solidarnosc union was built, they wrote into their programme that

other workers must support the fight of the health workers.

We can win that type of solidarity here too. But it must be prepared for. Delegations should be sent to the major workplace and union branch meetings. They should argue the case clearly and patiently. They should go to the local Trades Councils and look for industrial action from other workers.

Organise the rank-and-file

Union organisation in the hospitals has been weak. But we need to bring every worker into the campaign if we are to win. We need regular mass meetings in the hospitals. We need to elect anti-cuts committees that will involve everyone in delegation work and explaining our case. We shouldn't just leave it up to those at the top of the union to do all the organising for us.



The lessons that must be learnt

THE ESB strike gave us a glimpse of the power workers have to cripple capitalism and ultimately to change society.

The deal which ended the strike brought us back to the reality of trade union officials selling out their members and throwing away the strike weapon.

After two days on strike the workers went back, without being consulted, having failed to break the 3 per cent pay

norm with the door wide open to fresh attacks on working conditions.

The failure to break the pay norm is a set-back for other public sector workers and if they are to recover from this the lessons of the ESB strike must be taken to heart.

Firstly, the bureaucrats were clearly in control of the action rather than the workers themselves. The workers were

marched out like a stage army and used as a mere backdrop to the negotiations of Tinkler and Co.

In future this passivity must be avoided. Regular mass meetings and a strike committee accountable to the rank-and-file are vital in any dispute. Every proposal by management must be brought back to the strikers for a decision.

Secondly, all-out action is needed for victory. If the three-day strike had been completed at ESB there would have been a four-day gap in which the momentum would have been weakened. ESB management realise the importance of this momentum which is why they've insisted on a thirty-day "cooling-off" period in future disputes.

Thirdly, there is the question of solidarity from other workers. The media conducted a vicious campaign against the ESB workers. This could have been fought if delegations of strikers had gone around to other workplaces to argue their case.

A link-up between the strikers and health workers fighting the cuts would have posed big problems for the Haughey government.

Solidarity is now vital for the health workers themselves. If they step up their fight it would be tremendous to see ESB workers moving in support of them.

IN BRIEF

Solidarity

DURING THE Packards strike the General Motors management attempted to shift production of cables normally produced in Tallaght to other countries. One of those was Germany.

The Opel works in Bochum which mainly produces the Kadett car, is part of the GM concern and Packard produced predominantly for here.

Ten Irish supervisors were transferred to the GM factory in Reinshaben, Bochum-Linden. Forty students were employed on a six week contract to do the work normally done in Dublin. This work was approved by the works council of the IG Metall union in the plant.

The information about this work was passed on from Dublin to the GOG (group of oppositional trade unionists), many of whom are excluded from membership of the large IG Metall union.

By means of an open letter and a leaflet handed out at the Reinshaben plant it was possible to stop this strike breaking work.

The IG Metall works council sent the Irish supervisors packing and it was agreed that the students would not continue with the work in solidarity with the strike in Dublin. They

had not been told at the start the nature of the work they would be doing.

Unfortunately, the strike was broken before this blacking could have any effect.

Cuts protest

DUBLIN — More than 15,000 health workers march to the Dail on 21st May in protest at the government's cuts. This followed two-hour stoppages at Baggot Street, St. James' and several other Dublin hospitals. These actions demonstrate the anger felt at the cuts but all-out action must now be built in order to win the fight.

Nurses picket

LIMERICK — The fight against health cuts began on Monday May 11 when health officials met at St Camillus Hospital to discuss the cuts.

Angry nurses picketed the meeting and chanted anti-cuts slogans.

At one stage gardai were called to clear the gates when nurses refused to allow cars to pass.

Cuts proposed include closing 64 geriatric beds in St Camillus; closing two wards at the Regional Hospital Raheen

and the laying off of up to 538 staff.

On Saturday May 16 a protest march was held.

What is needed now is a tough campaign to stop the cuts coupled with the slogan of "Make the Rich Pay!" It's their mess, so let them clean it up! BRIAN HANLEY

Union backtracks

LGPSU Conference — The leadership of the LGPSU have backtracked on the issue of the £10 outpatients' charge. On the opening day of the recent conference in Dundalk a motion was carried urging but not instructing members not to collect the money. On day two left-wingers managed to change this decision to one of instruction. But the bureaucrats turned around on day three and had a motion carried instructing members not to collect the charge but only until negotiations were had on administering the collection procedure.

If the campaign against the cuts is to succeed, activists must fight hard against such manoeuvres by the officials. Only determined action — including outright refusal to collect the £10 charge — can defeat the cuts.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

VOTE SINN FEIN...

THE GENERAL ELECTION campaign in the Six Counties has been, in effect, a referendum on the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The unionists with their 'Right a Grave Wrong' slogan have seen it as yet another opportunity for Ulster to say NO to ending sectarianism and discrimination against Catholics

For nationalists, especially those in the working class areas, the Agreement has also been seen as the key issue. The SDLP concentrate on reducing the Sinn Fein vote and on trying to win Gerry Adams' seat in West Belfast. After all, that's what the Agreement is about — the incorporation of the bulk of the nationalist working class into the political system in the North and thus isolating Sinn Fein and the IRA.

It hasn't worked of course. It hasn't worked because the Agreement has been all stek and no carrot for the nationalist working class. Repression has been stepped up; there has been a marked increase in the number of Army and RUC patrols. The level of harassment against young working class Catholics is as high as ever and the bias in the Courts as obvious.

After the IRA's success with Judge Maurice Gibson and his wife, the Army and RUC did a good job of 'alienating' a lot of nationalists but nothing like the numbers they pushed towards Sinn Fein by their

behaviour at republican funerals. Thousands of those who took to the Belfast streets in protest at the Marley family being prevented from burying their father had not been involved in political activity since the hunger strikes. The funerals showed them the reality of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

Similarly, the Loughall ambush proved that the shoot-to-kill policy will still be operated any time the British government needs it to placate the loyalists.

More fundamentally, the British, SDLP, and Free State government have been unable to do anything to lower the level of the discrimination against working class Catholics — which was at the root of the Civil Rights Movement nearly twenty years ago and which today continues to underlie 'Catholic alienation'.

Thus, in Derry today a Catholic male is three times more likely to be unemployed than his Protestant fellow worker. Report after report is issued by the Fair Employment Agency detailing high levels of discrimination against Catholics in every area of employment — manufacturing industries, engineering, banks, building societies. Even the civil service where the British government could, in theory, ensure equal opportunities discriminates against Catholics.

Similarly, discrimination continues in other ways — housing, the location of new industry, the loca-

tion of hospitals, shopping and leisure facilities etc.

Against all this, the SDLP's hype about the 'advances' made under the Agreement — like the Flags and

Emblems Act and recognition of the Irish language — rings hollow. These trivial reforms make no difference whatsoever to the lives of working class Catholics. The public order

legislation which went with them — banning mass pickets and requiring seven days notice for all marches, including trade union demonstrations — will have a far greater impact.



BUT BUILD A SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

A high vote for Sinn Fein in the general election represents a kick in the teeth for Thatcher, Kinnock and the rest of the British ruling class. It gives a clear message to the SDLP and Fianna Fail that they can't fool all of the working class all of the time.

A vote for Sinn Fein is a vote against British imperialism, against sectarianism and discrimination and against 'moderate' or 'constitutional' politics. For these reasons anyone who considers themselves socialist should use their vote to indicate that the Six County state must go.

But that cannot be the end of it for socialists. A vote for Sinn Fein today holds far less hope for mass activity on the streets than it did when Bobby Sands was elected or even than in the 1983 Assembly elections. A vote for Sinn Fein today is very much a passive vote, promising little more than continued passive support for the small number of republican activists who are

trying to change things — whether through electoral or military activity.

Sinn Fein has encouraged that passivity. It has refused to become involved in establishing a broad-based campaign which would oppose the Anglo Irish Agreement from the nationalist side. The Republican strategy has been not to mobilise the mass of nationalist workers but to persist in the drains-and-gutters-we'll-sort-out-your-dole agitation which they hope will win votes, accompanied by an intensified military campaign.

Gerry Adams in his book *The Politics of Irish Freedom*, made the point that he believes Sinn Fein and the SDLP to be on the same side. Never does this become more obvious than during an election campaign when the emphasis is put not on the class differences between Sinn Fein and the SDLP but on the idea that Sinn Fein does what the SDLP does in a more radical, more efficient, more sincere way.

John Hume is always looking for

more investment for nationalist areas. Sinn Fein are looking for a lot more. The SDLP advocates 'fair employment practices'; Sinn Fein support the — in N. Ireland terms — very radical McBride principles. The SDLP thinks that government grants should go to 'respectable' community groups; Sinn Fein thinks they should go to 'radical' groups as well. Only in relation to the armed struggle is there any fundamental difference between the two parties. Sinn Fein recognise this fact every day of the week in their work on local councils where they are careful not to meet the SDLP head-on on basic class issues.

The open wrangling is reserved for arguments about proposed marks of respect for this dead UDR man or that IRA volunteer.

The reason for this refusal by Sinn Fein to differentiate itself from

the SDLP on clear class grounds is that Sinn Fein continues to see itself as first and foremost a movement for national independence, not for workers' power. So it can't involve itself in a coherent and vigorous way with specifically working class struggles because if it did, it would risk the 'unity' so important to nationalist movements. Such involvement would also cut across the interests of some of its own, mainly Southern, petit bourgeois supporters and even members: it would undermine its own 'national' ideology which has to hold the 'nation' supreme above any single class within it.

Trapped inside that ideology Sinn Fein cannot attack the SDLP on clear class lines — but can only condemn them for not being sufficiently militant in their nationalism.

This is why Sinn Fein argues that class politics cannot begin until after the border has been removed. Yet only socialism holds out any hope of ending the cycle of violent sectarianism in the North. Only a socialist movement could simultaneously challenge both Irish states. And it is only by challenging both that a solution outside the Six County framework can be found.

A strong socialist movement can be built in this country — but only

if it is based on working class struggle. In the course of struggle, the majority of workers can quickly change their ideas. Harland and Wolff workers — infamous for their sectarianism and loud in shouts of NO — last month told Unionist MPs to break their boycott of Westminster in order to save shipyard jobs. This unexpected demand is a good indication of the potential for class interests to overcome the sectarianism on which the Six County state is built.

But if this is ever to happen, the working class needs a party that can give a lead when workers go into struggle. We need a party that can show us how to fight and win — but which will also connect the industrial with the political struggle.

A real socialist alternative will never be built by concentrating on elections or on armed struggle. Both these strategies give working class people the idea that socialism can be 'given' to us by the Party with the right politics. It can't. Working class people ourselves must make our own revolution, must take our own freedom. That is the basis of marxism.

A revolutionary socialist organisation which bases itself on the day to day struggles of workers in the factories, offices, schools and hospitals can begin to make working class people see that we ourselves have the power to smash the rotten states North and South, to get rid of capitalism (and with it the Brits) and to run society ourselves for ourselves. — GORETTI HORGAN