

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

HAUGHEY HITS THE WEAKEST

AS FIANNA Fail continues its campaign of cuts, it has become obvious that its targets are the weakest sections of society—the young, the old, the unemployed, sick and poor.

The contempt in which our rulers hold the young unemployed is well demonstrated by the arbitrary way in which they took up to £10.00 a week from AnCO trainees. Trainees between the age of fifteen and seventeen have seen their allowance go down from £30.35 a week to £20. That's a cut of £10.35.

Trainees aged between seventeen and eighteen had their allowance cut by £7.32 from £32.32 to £25, while single trainees over 18 lost £4.20 as their allowance came down from £42 to £37.80

This is a particular blow for the long-term unemployed, many of whom participated in AnCO courses only in order to bring home a couple of pounds more than they would on the dole.

Fianna Fail's willingness to attack the long-term unemployed was, of course, shown earlier this year when £10.00 a week was taken from those working on the Social Employment Scheme.

The Health cuts, too, haven't hit the whole population equally. Working class families, especially those with small children, the old and the unemployed have seen their access to health care disappear.

Old age pensioners now have to spend more than three years waiting in agony for hip replacement operations. Those with money, on the other hand, have only weeks to wait.

The closure of the North Infirmary in Cork is a good example of the way in which the weakest sections of society are the hardest hit by the cuts. That hospital is situated on the Northside of the city, which is where the majority of working class people in Cork live. There is a 65% unemployment rate and a high proportion of older people and of children.

The closure of the Infirmary means that there will be no general hospital on the Northside of the city. So in addition to the £10.00 charge, the cost of a visit to the Casualty Dept. of the nearest hospital—the Mercy—will now include two bus fares in each direction.

But as hospitals close all over the

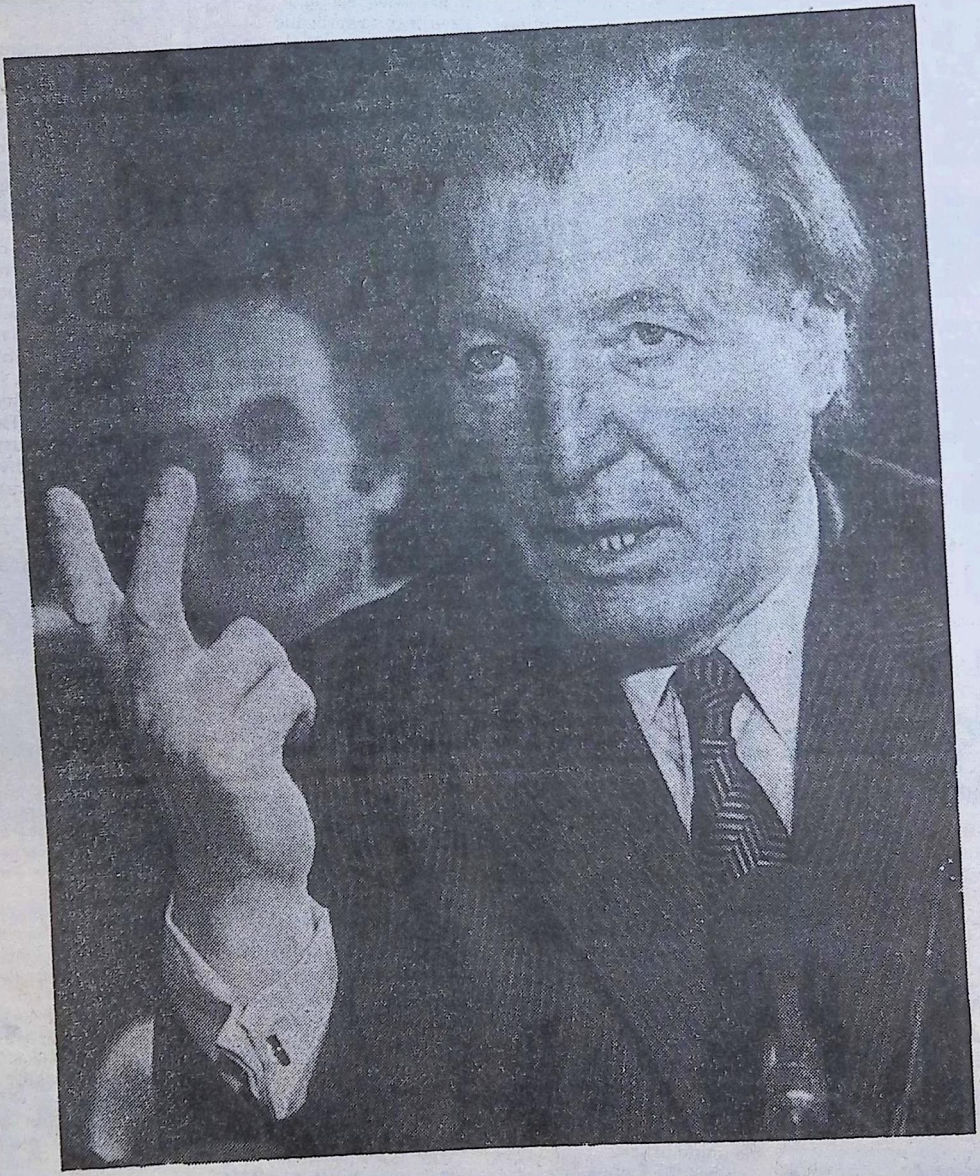
country, others are opening up—private hospitals run for the wealthy by wealthy consultants who are already earning huge salaries on the health service. Virtually every city in the country has now got a private hospital in the pipeline to ensure that the health cuts won't hurt the rich.

And the cuts haven't hurt the perks and profits of Haughey's banking and financier friends—they're having millions poured into their businesses with the development of the new docklands banking centre.

Having ensured that last spring's protests against Health

Service cuts were safely limited to a day or two of token action the trade union leaders continue to place all their hope on talks with Haughey and his ministers. Talks about implementing the cuts.

When the fightback comes it will be in spite of not because of the Trade Union leadership.

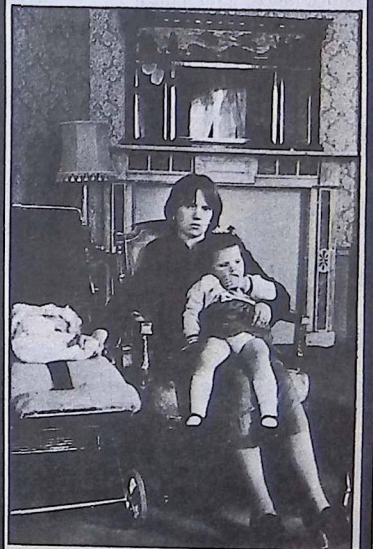


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JOHN TEELING: ASSET STRIPPER

JOHN TEELING is an Irish entrepreneur. One of those people who is going to lift the country off its knees. He may be the butt of all those begrudgers, but our John has never sat back on his backside. He has gone into business!

What's more he is a self-made man—in other words, a Christian Brothers boy made good. Didn't he go to America to learn about business and come back with a fine degree. That was enough to get him a job as a Lecturer in UCD. But no, he didn't sit back—John was bound for business and the Stock Exchange.

In 1883, a sickly Irish company called Glen Abbey was turning in another year of loss making. Teeling's business friends at the Clontarf Rugby Club let him in on a secret. Glen Abbey was selling off its subsidiaries to its local managers.

Teeling decided to make his move. He bought into Glen Abbey and got effective control of the company for £250,000. That is not to say that he put up all this money himself. No, John had some friends. People like Liam Jones. He came from a nice stockbrokers firm, Goodbody and Wilkinson.

Now as a smart lecturer in UCD Teeling has developed certain theories on business organisation. The fact that a particular company traditionally made, say clothes

was possibly of some sentimental relevance, but the key thing was to make a profit, to keep the shareholders happy. Every company had premises, some machinery and stock. It was easy to make profits by selling off these items and forget about making clothes.

These brilliant theories were applied to Glen Abbey. Glen Abbey's premises in Blackrock was half vacated and the site was re-developed for property. Glen Abbey Knitwear was sold off to a shadowy group of American Investors for the sum of £423,000. But Teeling and the parent company held on to the factory premises itself and charged the Americans £36,000 in rent each year. This became the general pattern for Glen Abbey. Its subsidiaries were sold off one by one but Teeling and the Board of Directors held onto the property and charged the new owners high rent.

From 1986, Glen Abbey was back in profit. It now took a totally different direction. 66,000 shares were bought in Conroy Petroleum, of which Teeling was already a director. Then came the big step. Teeling linked up with a London property speculator called Michael Norris. Norris bought 750,000 shares in Glen Abbey at the price of 100p a share. The stock exchange went wild. Share



prices shot through the roof. Glen Abbey shares stood at 275p a share. The entrepreneurs of the stock exchange had spotted a real shark. Glen Abbey was becoming a holding company that made raids of other companies and speculated in property and oil. And they had a big London backer!

By playing a game of sharks and shares Teeling had become a millionaire. He never did a day's work in his life (unless you want to describe talking in UCD as work). But he understood the stock exchange. A real Irish entrepreneur.

Meanwhile Paddy Moran was a shop steward at one of Teelings factories—Glen Abbey Knitwear. There had

never been any problems at the factory. Always been "good industrial relations". Many of his workmates had over 20 years experience in the factory. Then came that horrible summer in 1987. Some of the workers went to the bank to cash their holiday cheques. But they bounced. Within days they were given their redundancy notices!

Paddy Moran and his workmates had worked every day for a living. If they had a fault, it was that they showed an excessive feeling of generosity towards the interests of John Teeling and Glen Abbey.

But it was on backs of these workers that John Teeling rose to become a millionaire.

RED FACES AT DOCKLAND SCAM

WHILE HOSPITALS are being closed down, workers made redundant and AnCO allowances cut, the rich are doing quite well, thank you very much.

Dublin appears set to follow London in establishing a millionaire's paradise in its docklands area. Plans for a £400 million development are being drawn up by Taylor Woodrow, an international property company which has 250 subsidiaries in 46 countries, and has close links with the Irish Permanent Building Society.

Ironically, local, Dublin-based investment companies may not benefit significantly from the "brave new world" on their doorstep. This is because the biggest investors—the pension funds—already pay no taxes and cannot therefore gain anything new in the massive tax-breaks on offer to companies moving into the Customs House area. Meanwhile the banks and insurance companies are equally unenthusiastic about the site, as it will inevitably reduce the value of the prestige Dublin 2 and Dublin 4 properties into which they have pumped hundreds of millions, from their ill-gotten profits, over the past fifteen years.

A further disgruntled party is Irish Life—a company with an appalling record of urban vandalism and victimisation of inner-city dwellers, in Dublin. Their Georges Quay

site—just outside the 27-acre tax-free haven—is likely to become a white elephant. Bill Nowlan, Irish Life's property chief commented, "In Britain, the dereliction begins just outside the ring-fence of the docklands development,"—he should know, here in Ireland they've been responsible for much of the dereliction.

His cynical comment reflects the thinking behind these developments which are occurring in several cities under Thatcherite regimes—(Belfast is going to be next).

In London, the docks were allowed to decay and massive unemployment arose. The solution? Taxpayer's money, allegedly to redevelop these working class areas for the local community, was shamelessly used to erect massive high-tech financial institutions and other big businesses. The local community, unable to afford the rocketing rents, was driven out to continue its life of unemployment elsewhere.

One of the biggest beneficiaries in London was Rupert Murdoch who moved his newspaper empire across the river to Wapping, where he achieved some notoriety for his strike-breaking, anti-working class operations.

Whoever benefits, in the end, from the multi-million pound new "Pale" in Dublin, it certainly is not intended to be the city's working class people.

Wayward Hayward's murky past

"THE MOST serious criticism which has emerged attaches to the four months of solitary confinement to which he was subjected and the 'hearsay' nature of some of the evidence used against him. 'neither, it must be said, would it have been admissible in this country, where the innocence of a man until proven guilty remains an overriding point of law. . . .'"

So thundered the London Times last month when British Guards Officer Simon Hayward was convicted and jailed by a Swedish court of drugs trafficking offences.

Captain Hayward has been linked in British press reports to the SAS and it is claimed that he organised the shoot-to-kill ambush in February 1985 which resulted in the deaths of Strabane IRA men Charles Breslin and David and Michael Devine.

RUC intimidation of witnesses resulted in a successful cover-up of the



HAYWARD

SAS's murderous attack—the inquest returned an ambiguous verdict of "death due to gunshot wounds".

Someone should tell the London Times that the overriding point of law as concerns the Six Counties is to murder and jail militant opponents of British imperialism, utilising shoot-to-kill, years on remand, forced confessions, paid supergrass and no-jury trials.

And a few less tears should be spent over an upper-class murdering drug baron.

Trainees protest at AnCO cutbacks

WORKERS IN Kilkenny have taken some bad blows.

Recently, Padmore and Barnes closed with a couple of hundred of jobs going.

There was no fight-back from workers due to the miserable lead given by the ITGWU bureaucrats.

In KTM the militant workers have been isolated due to the back stabbing of the union official

Since the Fianna Fail government health cuts, one hospital the Auxillary (for elderly patients) has closed and at St Lukes, the Co-Hospital people are sleeping in the corridors.

But there is a glimmer of hope. On Friday 28th August, 23 young AnCO Trainees sent an open letter to the

Kilkenny People protesting against the cuts in their allowance. In the letter they said,

"The new allowances reduce our income. Most of us come from backgrounds where there is unemployment in the family. We contribute to the family income. Now AnCO are reducing this income.

"The new allowances could affect wage levels in industry. At the moment employers use allowances as a guide to wage levels when we apply for jobs."

If these young trainees combine their anger with action, then a movement can be built against the cuts.

KILKENNY SWM

...and flats to go

FOR YEARS the residents of Sherriff Street have been campaigning for better housing.

The flats and facilities in the area are possibly the worst in the city. Recently Dublin Corporation voted to demolish them. This is good news. But we must wonder at the timing. Why now? Have the Corpo become

more caring and considerate?

Or could it have something to do with the Customs House Dock site?

Maybe they want to make the place look nicer but more probably they want to limit the population of the area and stop new people coming in.

Socialist Workers Movement PUBLIC MEETINGS

Dundalk
Thursday 10th September/
Why we need a Revolutionary Socialist Party/Speaker: Kevin Wingfield/Wine Tavern, Park Street.

Derry
Monday 28th September/
Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx/Speaker: Eamonn McCann/Gweedor Bar

Kilkenny
Tuesday 15th September/
Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx/Speaker: Kieran Allen/Club House Hotel. 8pm.

Galway
Wednesday 16th September/
Why you should be a Socialist/Speaker: Mary Smith/Curran's Hotel, Eyre Square.

Belfast
Monday 21st September/The Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx/Speaker: Eamonn McCann/venue to be announced.

Bray
Tuesday 22nd September/The Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx/Speaker: Eamonn McCann/Hibernian Hotel, by Dart Station.

Dublin
Wednesday 23rd September/
The Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx/Speaker: Eamonn McCann/CIE Hall, behind Clerys.

Waterford
Thursday 24th September/
The Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx/Speaker: Eamonn McCann/Wadding Hall, Lady Lane.

Cork
Friday 25th September/The Revolutionary Ideas of Karl Marx/Speaker: Eamonn McCann/Carpenters Hall.

The Socialist Workers Movement meets every week. Branches exist in many of the major towns. Branch meetings are open to anyone who agrees with the politics of the paper, Socialist Worker. For more information, write to SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

OTHER MEETINGS
Nicaraguan Support Group in Tallaght. For Information contact Brian at the Tallaght Centre for the Unemployed in Tallaght.

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WE THINK

LABOUR CONFERENCE ILLUSION AND REALITY

LEADING MEMBERS of the Southern Labour Party have been behaving like "born again" Socialists in recent months.

Now that its Rory O'Hanlon who is closing hospitals, the ex-minister for Health, Barry Desmond is attacking the cuts, Desmond—whose last radical act was to throw billiard balls through Dublin windows in the 60s—even told the Trade Union leaders that they were "too uncritical" of Fianna Fail's redundancy plans for the Public Service.

Too right. But it was Barry Desmond who butchered the Health services in the four years before Fianna Fail came into office.

Labour leader Dick Spring has also been clenching his fist. In June he said that the days of Coalition were over and that the Labour Party must aim to "dominate the left-wing stage in Irish politics until the end of the century". But despite the rhetoric the leopard has not changed its spots. Spring after all was the man who orchestrated the scabbing operation when Cork ESB workers were on strike.

No. The Labour leaders have not been using their break from office to read Marx and Lenin. Rather, they have been using it to polish up their "left-wing" image.

Yet there are genuine socialists

in the Labour Party who believe that once out of the Coalition with Fine Gael the Party is "free" to fight for real change. They have welcomed the Report of the Commission Electoral Strategy which rejects Coalition as a short-term tactic.

This report will be discussed at Labour's Annual Conference being held in Cork at the end of September. Labour left-wingers hope that the conference will mark a "new beginning" for the Party.

BETRAYING

Yet Labour has made "new beginnings" before and each time it has ended up betraying the working class.

At its Annual Conference in 1957 the Party decided that in future it would stand on its own and aim for majority support. That did not stop the party being led by the Knights of Columbanus member, Brendan Corish.

The anti-Coalition stance was again reiterated in the 1969 election campaign but was dropped in 1970 as hope of winning a majority were beginning to fade.

In fact the Commission Report says quite clearly that Coalition is still an option. It lists three such

Who's the joker?

- 1 Opposition to Government.
- 2 Participation in Government.
- 3 External support for Government.

The report states that "no one of these options is morally superior to any other".

Staying out of Coalition is the Commission's recommendation for the present period because Coalitionism "has been synonymous with a long term decline in the Labour vote".

It follows that the leaders' left-wing rhetoric does not come from some new-found radicalism but is merely a means of trying to restore the Labour Party's votes in future elections—in order to strike a better bargain in a future Coalition.

But what if Labour were to stay out of Coalition? What if it gained enough support over a period of time and actually took power?

The experience of Labour's counterparts in other countries indicate that this would make no real difference.

In 1974 a Labour Government was elected in Britain having promised "a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families". Yet within two years Labour had introduced wage controls and cuts in public spending which left workers worse off than before

The same thing happened in France. Francois Mitterand and the Socialist Party were elected in 1981 and promised large scale nationalisation of industries and banks. But when Mitterand's reflation programme failed, Socialists did a U turn and adopted an austerity programme instead.

The French socialist government stooped to racists attack on immigrants. Today the French fascist party commands 15% of the vote as a result of racist atmosphere created and the frustration experienced under Mitterand.

ALTERNATIVE

In Greece and Spain, where there are majority socialist governments, workers have had to launch general strikes to protect their living conditions. It cannot be any other way. Reformist parties exist to offer an alternative form of capitalism. When that system is in crisis, they have to attack the interests of workers. The Parliamentary Road to Socialism therefore leads to a dead end.

There are of course, socialists who believe that the Labour Party can be won to genuine socialist politics. But again they should look at the experience of PSOE in Spain in 1976 declared itself to be "a Marxist Party, open and democratic".

Yet today in Government it attacks workers' living standards and uses riot police against those who fight back.

The Irish Labour Party cannot be changed because it is tied to electoralism. All party activity is subordinated to deciding on how to win more votes for Labour.

It is not a party that bases itself on working class struggle. That is why its branches are passive and only come alive at election time.

For this reason Labour is not the place for genuine socialists who see workers' self-activity as the way forward.

In fact electoralism pulls people to the right in the name of Party unity. Thus the left in the British Labour Party rallied behind Kinnoch at the last election even though he was selling out before the event. Whether or not you have hopes of changing the Labour Party, it ends up changing you.

Socialists in the Irish Labour Party should seriously ask themselves if it is worthwhile working to refurbish the image of a party that will eventually go back into Coalition.

It is time to look to an alternative to the cynical game of Labour's leaders who turn the rhetoric on in opposition in order to get the Merks and Perks back in government.

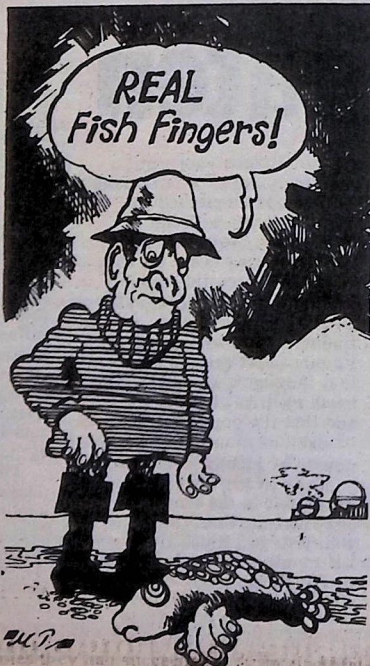
ANALYSIS



GRAFFITI

CESS-PIT OF THE WESTERN WORLD

THE IRISH Sea is causing scientists to worry. Dr Pat Boachum from Belfast's Marine Biology Station has stated that "1210 million cubic metres of sewage is dumped in the Irish Sea every year. "That's enough to cover the Isle of Man to a depth of 34 feet" he said. On top of that it is the most radio-active sea in the world. Sellafield's dumping of nuclear waste has ensured that. But now the British government are considering building yet another nuclear power station in North Wales! Wait for Haughey's next U-turn on this issue.



Veritas is a very respectable book shop in Dublin. It does a roaring trade in candles, missals, CTS pamphlets and rosary beads. But now Veritas are selling stuff "under the counter".

Can this really be? The bookshop of the Catholic Church? Yes and from now on you can actually go into the shop, sidle up to the assistant and ask for the stuff "under the counter".

The particular item in big demand is a video on AIDS done by a Catholic priest in New York. This can no longer be sold on the shelves as it might offend.

Commenting on this piece of smutty Victorian values, Fr Paul Lavelle of the Catholic Churches Aids committee said it was "Purely a marketing decision".

THE CUTS are bringing some strange results. Take the VHI scheme. This is a tax-subsidised private health insurance scheme; the middle classes pay to have the privilege of jumping the queues for hospital beds. It also gives them a chance to call on the consultant rather being treated by one of the juniors.

But now the scheme is coming "under a strain" according to a VHI spokes-

person. The cuts are driving more and more frightened elderly people into joining it.

You will now wait for up to four years for a coronary by-pass operation. Hip replacements have virtually become a thing of the past for older patients.

Before this the bulk of the clientele were "young and fairly healthy". But now the elderly are putting the scheme "under a strain". Was this what Hitler had in mind when he introduced his euthanasia programme?

STRANGE GOINGS on at the Alliance Francais. This is the centre for exporting French culture. It has a large office in Dublin where French language is taught and French films and the like are shown.

Or rather, French films that fit in with the "Irish taste". Some months ago there was an attempt to show Jean Luc Goddard's film "Hail Mary". This was the one that sent the SPUC fanatics hopping. They denounced it as "blasphemy".

But the director of the Alliance Francais intervened. He was totally opposed to showing the film. It seems that a number of right-wing students put the word around that their "Irish culture was

being offended". And the lily livered representative of La Republique agreed.

ALMOST 4,000 people have been forced off unemployment benefit because of Fianna Fail's Job Search programme. This is a type of star chamber examination where the unemployed are assessed.

Joanna was one of that 4,000. She turned up to her local labour exchange for her Job Search interview. The sprightly interviewer was very sympathetic. Was she looking for work, he asked. Joanna had two letters to show about the jobs she had sought. That's fine, said the interviewer—there is no need for me to see them.

Did she think there were any jobs around? None at all, said Joanna. Haughey's cuts of the public sector was making it impossible to find work.

The next day Joanna got a letter removing her from unemployment benefit!

WE HAVE a small fascist contingent in this country, known as the NSWPI. They are the sort of people who hand out stickers calling on you to follow Rudolph Hess

and "Become a Stormtrooper"

Our Irish fascists have friends in the police though. Last year, a young man in Limerick wrote to their address to tell them what he thought of their racist filth.

Some month later he had a visit to his door—from the Special Branch—Ireland's KGB. They were there to investigate his abusive letter.

Special Branch did not leave matters there. Among the questions they asked was "How would you like it yourself if your sister married a black?"

DUBLIN CORPORATION have sunk to a new low in their battle against the travellers. For some years, a number of travelling families have been living just off the roadside in Marrow bone Lane. There were no houses on either side of the camp.

The families moved off recently. The morning after their departure, Dublin Corporation moved in. Despite the cuts, they had arrived to "secure and landscape the site". In this case landscaping meant dumping large boulders a few feet apart.

There is one word for this type of behaviour: Harrassment.

JOHN TEELING: ASSET STRIPPER

The contra terror network—

MADE IN USA

Helen Redmond reports on the origins of the contras

THE PRIMARY contra force is the Fuerza Democratica Nicaraguense (Nicaraguan Democratic Force-FDN) which absorbed most of the members of the 15th of September Legion, formed by ex-guard officers of President Somoza shortly after his ousting in 1979.

It is well known, and the Contra gate hearings have confirmed this, that the FDN is an instrument of the United States government, and, specifically of the CIA.

The FDN's leaders—namely Calero and Bermudez—were chosen by the CIA. The organisation is completely dependent on the United States government. If that support were eliminated the contras would not only be incapable of conducting any military or para-military activities against Nicaragua, but would most likely cease to exist.

During the Contragate hearings, the US Congress has affirmed over and over again that it will continue to aid the contras. All the fuss is not over whether or not to fund this gang of killers. The arguments centre around who lied to Congress and why.

The FDN is largely a "peasant army" which is led almost exclusively by ex-national guardsmen—forty-six of the forty-eight positions in the FDN military leadership are controlled by these men.

These positions include the strategic commander, the regional command coordinator, all five members of the general staff, four out of five central commanders, five out of six regional commanders, and all thirty task-force commanders. The State Department has acknowledged that the military leadership is dominated by former members of Somoza's National Guard, who had a reputation for viciously putting down any opposition to Somoza and routinely terrorizing the Nicaraguan people by torture, rape and murder.

With the leadership under control the contras needed to recruit "foot soldiers". According to Edgar Chamorro, a former member of the civilian directorate of the FDN, the contras had several ways of doing this. Some Nicaraguans joined the force voluntarily, either because of dissatisfaction with the Nicaraguan government, family ties with the leaders of the force, promises of food, clothing, boots and weapons, or a combination of these reasons. However Chamorro asserted in a sworn affidavit presented to the International Court of Justice (World Court): "Many members of the force were recruited forcibly. FDN units would arrive at an

undefended village, assemble all the residents in the town square and then proceed to kill—in full view of the others—persons suspected of working for the Nicaraguan government or the FSLN, including police, local militia members, health workers, teachers and farmers from cooperatives.

"In this atmosphere, it was not difficult to persuade those able-bodied men left alive to return with the FDN units to their base camps in Honduras and enlist in the force. This was, unfortunately a widespread practice that accounted for many recruits."

Chamorro was a communications officer whose job was to improve the image of the FDN forces. He found this increasingly difficult because it was standard practice for the FDN to kill prisoners and suspected Sandinista supporters. He was told that the only way to defeat the Sandinistas was to use the tactics of killing, kidnapping, robbing and torturing.

These tactics were reflected in an operations manual prepared for the contras by a CIA agent. The manual, entitled "Psychological Operations in Guerilla Warfare",

advocated "explicit and implicit terror" against the civilian population, including assassination of government employees and sympathisers.

The atrocities that have been perpetrated on the civilian population, have been well documented, in numerous independent press accounts (Christian Science Monitor, New York Times), and human rights organisations such as Amnesty International and America Watch. In 1984 alone, 98 adult

education teachers were killed and 171 kidnapped by contra forces. Contra attacks on Nicaragua's port, the burning of granaries, warehouses, farms, factories and fields, the mining of harbours and the destruction of hospitals and schools caused an estimated \$200 million worth of damage in 1984. The loss of life and the destruction of important crops (the contras target coffee and tobacco) continue to escalate as the war drags on.

Despite overwhelming evidence that the contras are a disgusting gang of thugs and killers, the United States continues to lie and cover up for them—under the guise of "stopping the communist insurgency in Latin America and keeping the world safe for democracy".

The Arias Plan

ON AUGUST 5th, the Sandinista government signed the Arias Plan. This was an agreement between the five countries in Central America—El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica and Nicaragua—to promote stability in the region.

The agreement calls on both the contras and the FLMN/FDR guerrillas in El Salvador to accept a ceasefire. It urges them to take part in elections in their countries. Nicaragua agreed to stop giving aid to the guerrillas of El Salvador.

The fact that Nicaragua signed an agreement with dictators of Central America shows the nationalist approach of the Sandinistas. For the "hands off" policy equates the guerrillas of El Salvador with the contra thugs. It is a major boost for the US backed Duarte regime who can now paint the FLMN/FDR as wreckers.

A guerilla spokesperson in El Salvador put the matter gingerly, "most of the benefits of the agreement will go to the Sandinistas, but for us it has been very little".

An "Irish Times" Editorial commented, "Duarte has wrong-footed the anti-government forces quite dramatically in the eyes of the outside world. By signing the agreement he will be seen internationally as participating in the most interesting promotion of peace in the area for years—and at the same time made a gesture of independence of the United States".

The Arias Agreement shows the need for left wingers to remain critical of Sandinistas while defending the revolution against Reagan.



Adolfo Calero (left) walks with Retired Gen. John Singlaub

THE DEFEATED COUP attempt in the Philippines at the end of last month demonstrates how fragile the regime of Mrs Corazon Aquino remains.

Eighteen months ago masses of Filipinos rose up against the hated butcher, the US-backed Marcos. The depth of the agitation caused the army to fracture with decisive layers of the officer corps abandoning Marcos.

In frantic telephone conversations US officials told Marcos that the game was up and arranged for his hasty departure to exile in Hawaii.

But despite the illusions that masses of Filipinos held that Aquino's victory promised hope of fundamental change, the basic realities of life in the Philippines remain unchanged.

Galloping inflation has raised the price of the most meagre subsistence to over \$ dollars a day while the minimum wage—on which many thousands depend—is no more than half this figure.

The hated murderers and

PHILIPPINES:

Fresh coups threaten

torturers within the army remain—despite promises to the contrary—in place, with no sign of being brought to justice.

Aquino herself comes from one of the wealthiest families in the Philippines and has followed the example of Marcos's "crony practise" and has been busily rewarding her relatives with official jobs and contracts.

The world slump combined with years of corruption, have left the economy broken and debt-ridden. The IMF has demanded "austerity measures" in return for financial backing. This means that the already impoverished workers and peasants are being made to pay for the crisis.

On August 14 Aquino imposed a swingeing 15 per cent increase in the price of fuel. This rise would be

immediately translated into another hike in the crippling cost of living.

A general strike was called by the left wing inclined New Nationalist Movement. But such was the depth of feeling even the traditionally right-wing Trade Union Congress of the Philippines was forced to back the call.

The strike was supported by thousands of transport workers and even government workers. Aquino tried to defuse the action by halving the fuel price rise.

Strikers rejected this offer and stepped up the action. Troops fired on demonstrators killing at least two and arrested hundreds of strikers.

At this point a group of right-wing officers in the army around Col. Gregorio Honasan made their move. Accusing the government

of weakness in the face of strikers, not being tough enough on guerrillas of the New People's Army and corruption, they staged a coup attempt. This was the most serious attempt in a long list of army take-over bids over the last eighteen months.

Fighting continued for several days before troops loyal to Aquino restored order.

Ironically in 1986 Honasan was one of the army officers of the "army reform movement" which declared for Aquino and against Marcos during the "People Power" days.

Quite clearly, the ruling class in the Philippines is split and jittery. Having traditionally depended heavily on the army and its repression to safeguard its interests they were unwilling to pay the

price of Marcos's corruption and unpopularity when masses of Filipinos threatened to settle accounts with him.

However, Aquino who needs the army every bit as much as Marcos did, and having ridden to office on the back of "People Power" is finding it hard to convince Filipinos that their job is done, that they must knuckle to the harsh realities of class rule and that the populist phrases of eighteen months ago are now to be pickled in aspic.

Many of her erstwhile supporters in the army and elsewhere are doubtful of her ability to pull it off. Hence last month's attempted coup.

For the moment, the US still sees Aquino as its best bet in defending its interests in the area. This explains the hasty announcement of increased US aid in the after-

math of the coup attempt.

However the left, despite the widespread dissatisfaction with the Aquino regime and the willingness of large numbers of workers to struggle for change, do not appear able to offer any solutions.

From the Philippines Communist Party and New People's Army to the oppositional New Nationalist Movement all see the struggle in terms of stages. All classes must unite to end the influence of the US and encourage nationalist-inclined "democratic" forces to emerge. Only later will the question of capitalism or socialism come onto the agenda.

This leaves the situation dangerously exposed. Unless a movement emerges on an explicitly working class basis with a perspective of working class power, the political instability will continue and a successful "strong-man" military-backed coup cannot be ruled out.

—KEVIN WINGFIELD

The family : A haven or a hell ?

THE PROBLEM of the sexual and physical abuse of children in the family has been the focus of intense media attention over recent months. Thousands of column inches and hours of TV coverage have screamed with outrage at the monstrous parents, negligent social workers and over zealous doctors.

Yet one question is seldom—if ever asked. Why does it happen?

It is not asked because to answer that question means pointing the finger at an institution that the media and all the politicians from soft left to hard right regard as sacrosanct; that institution on which the 26 Counties' Constitution bestows a special status as the primary unit of society, namely the family.

We do not know and cannot know how many children are being abused within their own families. As with rape, all statistics are suspect since they can only measure reported offences and many victims never break their silence.

WIDESPREAD

What is beyond doubt is that the problem is far more widespread than was previously realised and probably still more widespread than has emerged of late.

In particular it is too widespread to be explained in the way the media likes to explain such things: as isolated outrages perpetrated by individual evil maniacs, quite different from "normal", "decent" people.

On the contrary, the extent of child abuse in the family shows clearly that this is a social problem with social roots which can be traced to the structure of the family itself.

According to the myth cultivated by the Church, the education system, the media and the politicians, the family is both a supremely natural institution and the bedrock of a good society. Yet in the light of recent revelations it stands exposed as all too often a place of violence, brutality, misery and oppression.

It is not just a question of child abuse. It is within the bounds of the family also that women are most often battered, raped, murdered and subjected to psychological violence. As with child abuse, there is much debate about the extent of such violence and about what can be done to help the women who suffer in these ways. But as with child abuse, the question is never asked—Why does it happen?

To face these facts in their brutal totality is to question the family. Our rulers do not want this to happen—the material and ideological need of the ruling class for the family is too great. However a critique of the present form of the family has always been an important part of the Marxist critique of capitalism as a whole and of the oppression of women in particular.

To understand why the family can be the scene of so much horror we have to start with its economic role under capitalism. This is different for different classes.

The ruling class family reproduces the bourgeoisie as a class, maintaining its stability and unity and ensuring the inheritance of its property and privileges. Thus, the primary role of ruling class women today is to provide "legitimate" heirs to the wealth and power of their class. That's why Lady Di had to have a virginity test before she could become Princess Di.

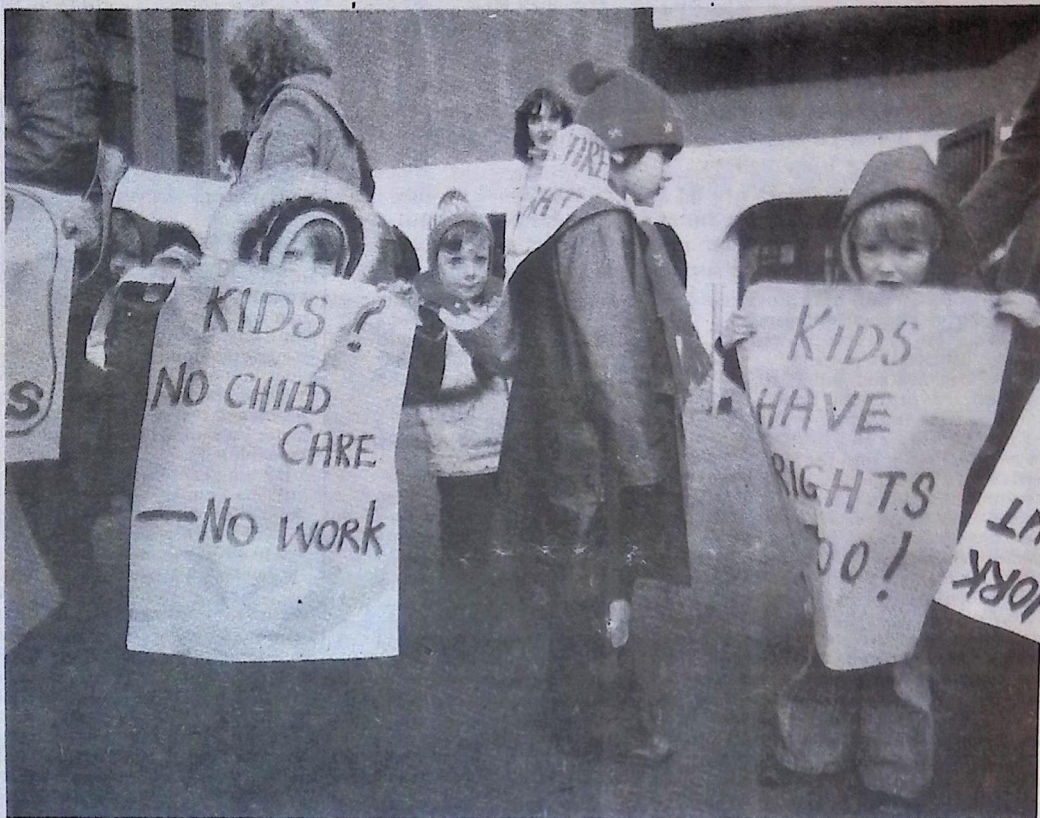
The working class family, on the other hand ensures that the next generation of workers will be born and reared at the least possible cost to the system. Dependence on the unpaid domestic labour of women means that the full responsibility for feeding, clothing and educating each child is left to the family. The state helps little with the miserly children's/family allowance while usually taking it back through health service charges, the abolition of school meals etc.

REFRESHED

It is also the working class family which refreshes the supply of labour power for capital—which keeps adults ready and able to work, feeding them, looking after them when they are sick etc. And the reason the average family is able to do all these things is that the woman sees it as her "duty".

Because of these obvious advantages to capitalism, there has developed an ideology of the family expressed in those familiar sayings "Home is where the heart is", "nil aon tinteain mar do thinteain fein". And the family itself plays an important role in passing on that ideology. So the idea that women are supposed to be passive, dependent and emotional comes through loud and clear from the mother's role in the family. And while the girls are learning that lesson, the boys are trained to be active, independent, protective—all the things that they are supposed to be.

One of the ideas which is most encouraged by the ideology of the family is that sex belongs only in the family set up—or at least where there is the possibility of creating a family. That's why women are not



supposed to have sex unless a relationship is "serious".

Because the ideology of the family is so powerful under capitalism, anyone who doesn't conform to that ideology—who doesn't marry or raise a family—is marked out as a deviant. So the oppression of gay men and lesbians is a by-product of the oppression of women and a direct product of the ideology of the family.

The combination of the material reality of the family and this all pervasive ideology and the frequent contradictions between the two can turn the family into a cauldron of tension, oppression and violence. In the working class family the contradictions, the pressures and their consequences are most intense.

Young working class women and men rush into marriage as a way of getting away from home—only to find themselves caught in a new trap. Setting up even the humblest home costs more than most people expect; with the arrival of children, money becomes desperately short.

The husband feels guilty at not being the "good provider" he reads about in magazines and sees on TV. The wife is either wearing herself out rushing from job to home and kids or she is isolated in the home, tied totally to the children. Either way, she knows she ought to be living happily ever after. But she's not.

HUMILIATED

The husband treated like dirt at work, or even worse humiliated by unemployment, has only the family in which to assert his authority and "prove" the manhood he has been brought up to guard.

The woman is resentful but has no outlet for her feelings beside complaining to friends. Their sex life deteriorates, tensions mount. Children are increasingly vulnerable.

In this situation the children can seem like an everlasting irritant, the cause of all problems—which often seemed to coincide with their arrival and they are the easiest and most obvious target for the outlet of

violent frustrations.

Alternatively, of course, they can come to embody their parents' lost hopes and ambitions—pushed on to do whatever the parents themselves never did, extensions of their parents lives lacking all independence.

And of course children do lack independence. Physically, economically and emotionally they need their parents. They belong to their parents just as the wife "belongs" to the husband and the husband "belongs" to the wife—they are all each other's property, all living in each other's pockets, all huddled together for warmth in a cold, cold world.

DISASTER

The isolated nuclear family, so pleasant and lovable in the storybooks, is a disaster waiting to happen, like an overloaded Townsend Thoresen ferry in high seas. Of course, the disaster doesn't always happen. Most of the time most people battle through, not without cost, not without suffering, not without much hidden pain, but without the absolute catastrophe of a murdered wife, a tortured baby or a raped child. But if they do muddle through it is due to their resilience and strength and courage, not to the family as an institution.

So what is to be done? Smash the family? Tear the children from their parents, the babies from their mothers' breasts? Of course not. Sometimes in very extreme cases, the family has to be broken up to protect abused children or women. But this is not a general solution, because the family—despite all its horror and oppressiveness—not only serves capitalism but also meets a very real human need.

For most of us, our family is where we find love, affection, loyalty and sexual fulfillment in a world where all these are rare items. For many women, the family is the only place they can find security and a sense of self-worth.

Happily the family, like most

institutions, is not unchanging.

Quite the opposite. A quick look at history shows us that the family in, say, feudal times was very different to the family of the industrial revolution, which in turn was very different to the family of today. And at all these periods "family life" for the peasant or worker was very different indeed from that of the lord or factory owner.

This is because changes in the system by which goods are produced affect every aspect of human existence—including relations between men and women or adults and children.

A fundamental transformation in the way in which goods are produced and society is run cannot but bring with it a transformation in human relations. If such a transformed society were socialist it would set about creating the institutions which meet the needs—physical and emotional—of men women and children.

The basis could be laid for another, far more fundamental change in the family through the socialisation of housework and childcare—the provision of properly run, free creches, nurseries and playgroups, cheap restaurants and communal kitchens and much more.

Such facilities would create the framework of caring social and human relations in which the burden of domestic labour and childcare is shared by the whole community so that husbands and wives, parents and children are no longer roped together in relationships they can no longer bear or cope with. The family as we know it would, in fact, be abolished.

Until such a total transformation of society takes place, socialists support every and all the reforms which would allow working class people to cope better under capitalism and make life more bearable for working class women—higher wages, proper childcare facilities, free legal and safe contraception and abortion on demand etc.

But as long as capitalism exists, the family will remain one of the most dangerous—as well as the warmest and most loving—places for women and children.

Superpowers fuel the Gulf

FOR TWO months now, Reagan and the other major powers have been gambling with turning the Gulf War into an international slaughter. There have been many dark mutterings about 'World War Three'.

The Gulf war has continued for over seven years and more than one million people have died because both Washington and Moscow have preferred instability in the region to victory for either the Iranian or Iraqi regimes.

Here, GORETTI HORGAN looks at the background to the Iran-Iraq War, explains why the superpowers have played both sides against the other and asks should socialists choose between the two regimes and should we support one side or the other?

THE SUPERPOWERS have provided arms and occasional encouragement to both sides in the Iran-Iraq war, cynically stirring the pot and allowing Baghdad and Tehran to send hundreds of thousands of young workers and peasants to their deaths. But Reagan and Gorbachev are not the first to turn the Gulf of Persia into a battleground for economic and political power. The leaders of the oil-rich Gulf states have long been courted by, and courted, the superpowers as they jostled for profit and influence in this vital area.

For a generation, the Shah of Iran was the hired thug used by the major powers to defend their interests in the region. The Iranian revolution of 1979 ended all that. The war between Iran and its neighbour is a struggle about who will dominate the gulf while neither superpower feels their interests will be served by a clear cut victory.

The superpowers' intense interest in Iran is the result of two things—oil and geography. Not only is Iran rich with oil fields, its coast also runs the length of the Persian Gulf, through which 60 percent of the West's oil passes.

The list of countries with which Iran shares a border demonstrates its strategic importance—Russia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey and Iraq, (see map).

The British arrived in Iran at the start of the century when the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (now BP) struck oil in the south of the country. Profits from Iranian oil were massive: anti-British demonstrations in the wake of the 1917 Russian Revolution led to the British agreeing to Reza Khan's

armed coup as a way of protecting their oil interests. Khan declared himself Shah in 1925, founding the brutal dynasty that was only swept away when his son was defeated by the 1979 revolution. In 1953 the US—by then the major imperial power—organised a coup which left the Shah as absolute ruler.

Five US companies controlled 40 percent of the oil industry. Of the rest, BP kept 40 percent, the Shah 50 percent and the remaining 10 percent went to smaller oil companies.

The US was quick to support its new investments. Between 1953 and 1956 some \$250 million were pumped into the Shah's state. The Shah's army rose from 120,000 men to 200,000 and his military budget grew from \$80 million to 183 million in a decade. As the OPEC sponsored oil price rise of the 1970s filled the Shah's coffers he became the world's largest importer of armaments.

RUTHLESS

In 1973 Tehran became the Middle Eastern headquarters of the CIA. There were 24,000 US "military advisors" in Iran and this number was projected to rise to 60,000 in 1980. The Shah became a loyal policeman for the West's interests. Western multi-nationals made super-profits from the ruthless oppression and exploitation of Iranian workers, enforced by the Shah's brutal army and hated secret police, Savak.

This cosy little relationship was

abruptly cut short by the 1979 revolution. The insurrectionary general strike spearheaded by the oil workers deprived the US and other Western powers of military support in the Gulf.

Only four years after the fall of Saigon, it couldn't have come at a worse time for America's rulers. In the same year the Somoza regime in Nicaragua fell, Russia invaded Afghanistan and a year later Zimbabwe won its independence.

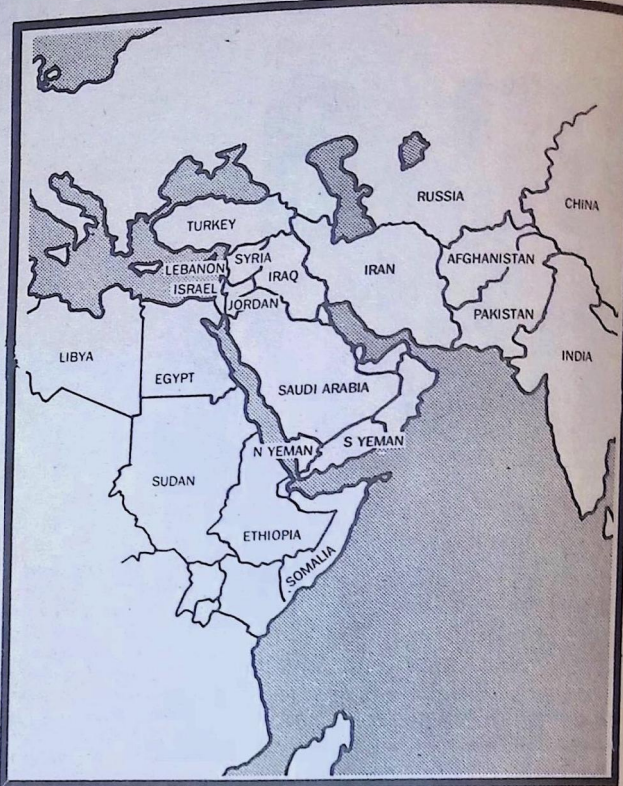
But it wasn't only the British and the Americans who were dismayed at the Shah's hasty departure. Russia lost its access to cheap Iranian gas and prestige building contracts. Neither were the Americans alone in fearing that the doctrines of Islamic fundamentalism might destabilise their allies in the region and threaten Israel, the major bulwark of US imperialism in the Middle East. Russia feared the same thing, not only in Afghanistan, but also among the Muslim population within her own borders.

The outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980 was in fact a godsend for the superpowers.

Reagan, though, has a special reason for wanting to "show Iran who's the boss". Behind the war-mongering which has brought the region to the brink of mass slaughter, lies Reagan's desperation to shake off the effects of the Iran-Contra arms scandal. He wants to show he's not "soft" on the Iranians and that he is still capable of protecting the interests of American capitalism in the region.

So why did the war start? Iraq's ruler, Saddam Hussain had long wanted to challenge Iran for dominance in the Gulf region. But the power of Hussain's Baath Party rests on a very narrow base. The ruling clique are drawn from Hussain's extended family.

Hussain is a Sunni Arab; in Iraq Sunni Arabs occupy 56 percent of senior government positions, yet they are only 2 million out of a population of 13 million. 52 percent of the populations are Shia Muslims as are the majority of Muslims in Iran. A further pole of opposition to Hussain's regime are the Kurds in the North of the country who demand national liberation. Most importantly, there is a large



industrial working class. The Baathists have developed an intensely repressive regime to keep down these workers, as well as the Shia Muslims and the Kurds.

The failure then, of the Shah of Iran's huge apparatus of repression to crush a mass movement in which industrial workers played a key role horrified the Iraqi rulers. With the threat of Kurdish rebellion in the north and a growing Shia opposition mobilising in the south, Hussain decided to pre-empt any attempt to spread the Iranian revolution and invaded.

CONFUSION

When Hussain launched his attack on Iran he hoped that the confusion of the revolution would give him a quick victory. In fact, Iraq gave Khomeini just the excuse he needed to smash the remnants of workers' organisations and to consolidate the rule of the reactionary Islamic clergy. Until the war the clergy were still struggling to defeat the traditions of the revolution. The Iraqi invasion gave them the means to finish off their opponents. Anyone who opposed them was a traitor, betraying the revolution to the invaders.

The majority of the Left collapsed in a torrent of fanatical Iranian nationalism as Khomeini launched a jihad (holy war); only later did it turn against the regime. The mullahs used the war to defeat the workers' women's and national liberation movements and to introduce repressive Islamic laws.

Hussain's hope of a quick victory turned into a seven year bloodbath. The Iranian regime has defended itself by using the only resource in which it is superior to Iraq—people. Iran has a population of 40 million, as opposed to Iraq's 14 million. So it has sent hundreds of thousands of young men to certain death against superior Iraqi weaponry. The superpowers are happy to see this carnage continue. Indeed they encourage it.

The war has cut both Iran and Iraq's oil production to a fraction of its former level—but with the fallen price of oil the superpowers see that as a gain rather than a loss.

Iran not only has West Germany, Japan, Britain and Italy as its best

trading partners but has also received millions of dollars worth of arms from 17 countries including Russia, America, Britain, Israel and France. And who is arming Iraq? Many of the same people: America, Russia, France and Britain. Such is the hypocrisy of the rulers of the world.

The present anti-Iranian media hype which blames Iran for every incident in the Gulf—even those which effect Iran's own allies—is another example of the same hypocrisy. It was actually Iraq who started the "tanker war", not Iran. All Iran's oil exports go out by sea; Iraq started to attack tankers carrying Iranian oil. But because Iraq's oil is exported by pipeline, the Iranians have no similar target. Instead they retaliated against the ships of Iraq's ally, Kuwait. This then gave America, Russia, Britain, France and anyone else who wanted to play at war the chance to get involved by offering the protection of their flag to any tankers being attacked (by Iran).

The whole dangerous adventure is designed to provoke Iran. This is not to say the Iranians are correct, just that they are more interested in the land war with Iraq and, while they may threaten revenge on America, would probably prefer not to get involved in an all-out sea war given the tiny size of their navy. Reagan and the others were banking on that to give them a cheap, bloodless propaganda victory at sea.

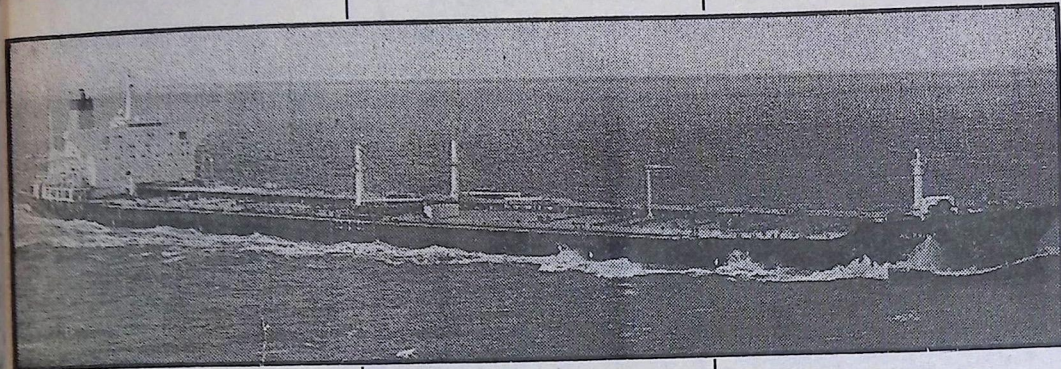
The "guerilla" tactics of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards in their little patrol boats has called their bluff somewhat and Reagan had again to call in his faithful European allies to come to his rescue with minesweepers. Every day now, events in the Gulf seem to edge closer and closer to catastrophe.

In the meantime the superpowers back first one side then the other—just enough to guarantee that no one emerges as a powerful victor capable of denying them the profits which they take from the region. The war has kept the two major regional powers from further extending their own influence, especially in the oil-rich lower Gulf. When the war finally ends, the superpowers hope that the weakness of the war-torn economies will turn Iran and Iraq into even more dependent pawns of one or the other power.



The Iranian oilworkers spearheaded the agitation that brought down the Shah in 1979.

Self war



IRAN, IRAQ

The left's failure

IT HAS become increasingly obvious that the superpowers, while preferring to see no clear victory in the Iran/Iraq War, would prefer Iraq to win because it is more 'reliable' and 'stable'. Does this mean that socialists should be on the side of Iran?

Not at all. There is, in fact, little for socialists to choose between Iraq and Iran. A look at the recent history of the two countries will help to illustrate this fact.

The present leadership of the Iraqi Baath ('Resurrection') Party came to power ten years after the nationalist coup, led by Col Karim Kassem, which had toppled the British-supported monarch Faisal II. The coup was a simple military takeover, rather like Nasser's in Egypt, but it had been preceded by years of opposition activity in which Iraqi workers and the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) played prominent roles.

Iraq was one of the first Arab countries to develop an industrial sector based on the oil industry and on the military machine built up by the British during World War II. By 1954 industrial workers numbered 130,000 with more than 40 percent in establishments of over 100 workers—a far higher concentration of the working class than in any other country in the region.

There were important strikes for union recognition among oil and tobacco workers throughout the 40s and 50s. As the trade union movement grew—by the end of the 1950s over a quarter million workers were organised—so too did the influence of the ICP. In fact, some Iraqi oppositionists still argue that by 1959 the ICP was strong enough to make a serious bid for power. But a sudden turn-around of policy, dictated by Moscow's desire to minimise Cold War confrontation with the US, brought the party to support the nationalist government of Kassem.

The military government did not want communist support and, sensing its opportunity, initiated a campaign of anti-communist repression. Still the party followed Moscow's line, refusing to use its real industrial strength to fight back and causing further confusion on the left.

In 1963 Kassem was overthrown in a coup organised by nationalist army officers and the Baath Party. Purges and mass murders of communist and trade union activists followed—an estimated 5,000 were killed.

The Iraqi working class has never recovered from the wounds of 1963. When the Baath Party ousted the softer nationalists in 1968, there was no hint of workers' opposition.

The Baath has maintained tight control over Iraqi politics ever since.

During the period of Baathist control Iraq has continued to develop rapidly. By the start of the 1980s, there were almost a million workers in mining, construction, manufacturing and transport, against a million peasants and a further million workers in services.

But the rapid growth in the number of industrial workers has not been accompanied by a rise in the level of struggle. The Baathists developed an intensely repressive regime that has maintained pressure on workers and on Iraq's main religious and national oppositions—the Shia Muslims of the south and Kurds of the north.

The atmosphere of terror created by this level of repression has been an important factor in limiting workers' opposition. But even more so has been the nature and antics of the Communist Party. While the party never recovered the influence it had in the early 60s, it nevertheless retained a lot of support as the only coherent opposition. Yet in 1973 it agreed to join the Baath in a 'Progressive National Front' government.

SUBDUED

This allowed the Baathists to concentrate their energies on a military campaign against the Kurdish guerrillas. When in 1976 the Kurds were, for the time being, subdued, the Baath turned on the ICP arresting and executing leading activists. By 1979 when the revolution erupted in Iran, the ICP was again underground with thousands of members and supporters imprisoned.

The revolution that defeated the Shah in Iran was a workers' revolution without a revolutionary workers' leadership. The left in Iran had much the same weaknesses as that in Iraq and the result has been catastrophic for the Iranian working class.

The revolution was spearheaded by a general strike. In industry after industry workers' councils—Shuras—were formed. These workers did not struggle out of religious commitment to Islam—although many workers, like workers in Solidarity in Poland, expressed their aspirations in religious terms. They fought out of a commitment to equality (including equality for women), democracy and workers' control.

For six months after the Shah's overthrow workers throughout Iran experimented with workers' control,

throwing out managers and forming democratic workplace committees in order to intervene directly in the process of production.

Sadly the movement of workers' councils was crushed by Khomeini's regime. Islamic Associations and spy networks were formed in factories to destroy the Shuras and one-man management was re-imposed. This went hand in hand with Khomeini's smashing of the left, destruction of the women's movement and massive repression of religious and national minorities.

Khomeini's victory was not inevitable. Far from it. The failure of the revolution in Iran can to a large extent be laid at the door of the left which failed to oppose the nationalism and the religious ideas of the Islamic clergy.

The Iranian left was dominated by the ideas of Stalinism. It believed that the revolution had to come about in stages and that this stage could only achieve parliamentary democracy. The left's consequent neglect of workers' struggles and the very real democracy which was emerging in the factories, meant that it lacked the means to unite the struggle of the national minorities and of women and was taken in by the clergy's use of anti-imperialism.

Time and again, the Islamic clergy have acted in a manner of which Fianna Fail would be proud, using anti-imperialism to outflank the left. Their first success was in 1970 when Islamic students occupied the USA Embassy in Tehran. Khomeini organised huge demonstrations against American imperialism and claimed that anyone who stood against this virulent nationalism was aiding Washington.

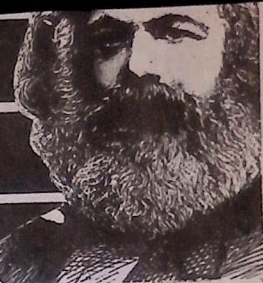
Women opposing Islamic laws were US agents; workers resisting the new Islamic 'komitehs' that were replacing the genuine workers' councils were aiding the enemy, as were the Kurds and other national minorities who were fighting the government.

With the Iraqi invasion of Iran in 1980, Khomeini's regime was again able to whip up religious and nationalist fervour to finally purge the left and to institute a reactionary regime whose populist anti-imperialism is a good disguise for its willingness to deal with America and the rest of the West!

For socialists, the Gulf War is a sorry spectacle. But the brutal and deeply anti-working class regimes of Iran and Iraq will sooner or later see an upsurge in the workers' movements again. The question is, will the left learn the lessons of Iran and take the firm stand against nationalism and religion which is needed if those regimes are to be demolished.

JOHN M

Teach yourself Marxism



A COUPLE of weeks ago in Moscow a group of 800 Crimean Tartars staged a sit-down protest over their longstanding national grievances.

Stalin had labelled the entire Crimean Tartar people treacherous and deported them all to central Asia with terrible loss of life.

Now a group of Latvians want to hold a public ceremony commemorating the victims—themselves and many others—of the Molotov-Ribbentrop (or Hitler-Stalin) Pact of 1939.

These protests, at first sight insignificant compared to the demonstrations, riots, mass strikes and armed rebellion occurring in many parts of the world, are in fact very important in a society where no public opposition or protest has been tolerated for 60 years.

Expectation

In particular they focus attention on how far Gorbachev's Glasnost process can go.

The hope that the Stalinist bureaucracy would one day reform itself out of existence and that Russia would be peacefully transformed from above into a socialist democracy is not new.

In the 1930s Otto Baur, the Austrian Social Democratic theoretician, held the view that, as Russia became a developed industrial society, so it would inevitably democratise itself. In the 1950s Isaac Deutscher, the influential biographer of Stalin and Trotsky, argued a similar case.

Indeed, after the death of Stalin in 1953 and especially after Khrushchev's speech to the 20th Party Congress in 1956, in which he denounced the crimes of Stalin, expectation of bureaucratic self reform was widespread, from American sociologists to Russian dissidents.

All these hopes came to nothing however.

First Khrushchev showed his true face by ruthlessly crushing the Hungarian revolution in the autumn of 1956, then he batted down the hatches again inside Russia and finally he was unceremoniously removed by Brezhnev, who inaugurated a long period of conservative inertia.

Now with Gorbachev these hopes are flourishing again. Round the world declining and demoralised Communist Parties and many non-Communist left reformists too are hoping desperately that he will revive their ailing fortunes by renewing Russia as a pole of socialist attraction.

In the face of these illusions—and they are illusions—revolutionary Marxists must say flatly that the possibility of

Russia: reform or revolution

Gorbachev achieving self-liquidation of the bureaucracy and instituting socialist democracy is nil.

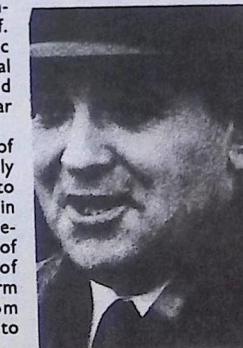
Those who dream of such a possibility and those like Deutscher, who hoped for it in the past, base themselves not only on a false estimation of the current situation but on a fundamentally mistaken view of the nature of Soviet society.

They see it as consisting of a bureaucratic caste resting on a basically sound socialist economic foundation. In fact the Soviet 'elite' is not just a collection of bureaucratic individuals who have unfortunately acquired authoritarian and undemocratic habits.

It is a social class rooted in de facto possession and control of the means of production and driven by the need to accumulate capital.

It is the ruling class in Russia and Gorbachev is its chosen representative.

Ruling classes do not dissolve themselves or reform themselves out of



GORBACHEV: limited liberalisation

existence or place themselves under the effective democratic control of the classes they exploit.

The whole of history teaches us this, and if Gorbachev had any such project in mind his feet wouldn't touch the ground. But of course this is not Gorbachev's project. His aim is a much more limited liberalisation leaving the basic state and class structure intact.

And his motivation is neither liberal nor democratic. It is to revitalise the flagging Russian economy, which has been steadily falling behind in its competitive struggle with the rest of world capitalism.

This in turn requires a certain 'opening up' to remove longstanding inef-

ficient rigidities and mobilise support to combat the deeply entrenched and corrupt old guard which established itself during the Brezhnev era.

Nevertheless, immense obstacles stand in the way of even this much more modest reforming enterprise.

First there is the resistance of the old guard itself. It will bide its time frustrating initiatives where it can and waiting for the reformers to get themselves into difficulties. Then it will move back onto the offensive.

Dangerous

Second, there is the fact that in an entirely state run, state owned economy like Russia even limited political democracy is far more dangerous to the ruling class than in the private capitalist west.

Where, as in Ireland, there is a separation of political and economic power, governments can come and go while the real power remains in the boardrooms of the banks and big companies.

In Russia the concentration of all political and economic power in the hands of the state and the party makes it, in a sense, more vulnerable.

Third, there is Gorbachev's need to accompany political opening up with an economic tightening of the belt—through price rises and possibly unemployment.

This is a dangerous combination. Gorbachev may hope that political reform may sweeten the pill of economic sacrifice. It may also provide room for the expression of economic discontent.

Finally, there is the fact that Russia today resembles a pressure cooker on which the lid has been screwed down tight. Inside are a mass of grievances—political, economic, social and national—long denied an outlet.

Any lifting of the lid and there is the possibility of an explosion from below.

Which brings us back to the protests of the Crimean Tartars and the Latvians. Minor in themselves, they are symptomatic of enormous contradictions in the state of Russia.

These contradictions will have to explode into revolution if Russia is really to become a socialist democracy again.

RUSSIA 1917:

The July Days

BY JULY 1917, people felt that the Russian revolution had not satisfied their needs for bread, peace and land. The revolution continued in a state of permanent and deepening crisis.

The Provisional Government agitated from the middle of May against Austria. They tried to send the revolutionary regiments to the front and these in turn moved into open revolt. In June, the Provisional Government threatened the anarchists with eviction from their Headquarters. The anarchists appealed to the workers and soldiers for support and thousands went on strike.

The Bolsheviks called a demonstration for the 10th June—but the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet banned it. The Central Committee of the Bolsheviks retreated under criticism from the left. Soon afterwards, the Menshevik and Social Revolutionary leaders of the Soviet called a demonstration for the 18th June under the slogans of "Universal Peace", "Democratic republic", hoping to upstage the Bolsheviks.

The demonstration was enormous. 400,000 workers, soldiers and sailors marched on the

Against the policy of the Bolshevik Central Committee, the Bolshevik Military Organisation formed the revolt. The went from regiment to regiment, factory to factory, and to the Kronstadt garrison demanding support. Their argument was that "There was no point in waiting, now is the time to seize power".

streets of Petrograd. But the majority of slogans came as a surprise to the organisers. "Down with the Duma", "Down with the capitalist ministers", "All power to the Soviets" shouted thousands.

These were the Bolshevik slogans prepared for their demo—June 18th had become a demonstration within a demonstration and the mass of the working class showed who they followed, the Bolsheviks.

Yet the rise in influence of the Bolshevik Party was very uneven. Amongst the workers of Petrograd their support was greatest. In June they had a majority on the Factory Committees, in the Soviets and the Trade Unions. Away from Petrograd their support decreased.

Lenin now saw the most important task as patiently explaining to the masses the need to pass onto the second stage of the revolution which would "place power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest sections of the peasantry".

The demonstration of June 18th had said everything that could be said without an uprising, it was necessary to avoid adventurism. . . "organise and organise, educate and educate".

But events moved rapidly. Kerensky, head of the Provisional Government, wishing to appeal to the ruling class and unite the people behind some national purpose, launched a long-awaited military offensive against Germany and Austria. On June 30th he issued orders to transfer to the front large numbers of men and guns from the Machine gunners regiment.

Rumours abounded that the regiment was to be disbanded. The soldiers were enraged and initiated a massive demonstration on the 2nd of July. Against the policy of the Bolshevik Central Committee, the Bolshevik Military Organisation formed the revolt. They went from regiment to regiment, factory to factory, and to the Kronstadt garrison demanding support. Their argument was that there was "no point in waiting, now is the time to seize power". A Bolshevik machine gunner arguing against them said sarcastically, "it is impossible to work out where the Bolshevik ends and the Anarchist begins".

Again, Lenin was sharply clear, "if we were now able to seize power, it is

Soviets, "Take power you sonofabitch when it is given you".

The July days sharpened all the tactical skill of Bolsheviks in sticking with the militant minority, but also heading off insurrection until the majority had been won over. To have followed the militant mood and gone for a seizure of power would have been a disaster. But neither could the Bolsheviks have disowned the movement otherwise they would have betrayed the working class. Mistakes are inevitable, but revolutionary socialists must remain with the masses so that they can explain and try to rectify the situation, and strive for the victory of class consciousness over spontaneity.



In the aftermath of the July demonstration the Bolsheviks were slandered and persecuted. Lenin was accused of being a German spy. The moderate socialist leadership of the Soviets summoned troops to Petrograd to disarm and disband the revolutionary regiments and the workers.

The Provisional Government approved acts of tyranny and violence against the Bolsheviks and introduced the death penalty at the front. The troops wrecked the plant of Pravda, the Bolsheviks paper—built out of collections from the workers. Hundreds of Bolsheviks were arrested and a number of workers killed. Vigilantes roamed the city. The only safe areas were in the working class districts. An order was given to arrest leading Bolsheviks and Trotsky.

Kerensky appointed Kornilov the arch-reactionary Commander in Chief of the Russian Army. During this period of reaction factory managers were able to clamp down on the workers. They closed down factory committees and locked out workers.

Against the advice of the Soviet and of Trotsky—who was imprisoned—Lenin and Zinoviev went into hiding. Lenin explained it, "Now they will shoot us—for them it is the best moment".

The tragic experience of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht who were brutally killed after the failed Berlin uprising in 1918 suggests that Lenin was correct. He remained in hiding until the day of the October insurrection.

The influx of new recruits to the Bolshevik party was checked, soldiers kept their distance and the mood of workers was very depressed. But the July days hit the Soviets even harder; it

was essentially a life and death struggle. The party and the trade unions would retain their roles in different periods but "the soviet could survive only on the basis of the revolutionary situation and would disappear along with it". The slogan "All Power to the Soviets" seemed shattered.

However the compromisers of the Petrograd Soviet EC faced a problem. They wished to ingratiate themselves with the right wing, yet at the same time were afraid of them. They saw that the ruling class Kadets and the generals wanted to sweep away both the Bolsheviks and the Soviets. As a result they botched the suppression of the Bolsheviks.

So by the middle of August it was again possible for the Bolsheviks to organise a mass general strike in Moscow to coincide with the State Conference which they boycotted. Whilst Kerensky and Kornilov debated about state power outside there were no street cars, and the restaurants and coffee houses were shut!

The conditions existing under Dual Power were leading the country towards Civil War. The defeats at the front fuelled the confidence of the right wing. On 21st August Riga fell to the Germans, later it was said that Riga had been surrendered on purpose without resistance or defence in order to wipe out the Bolsheviks and supporters. The

The Bolsheviks used Kerensky "as a gun rest to shoot Kornilov". An alliance not to support Kerensky's government but to expose it. They organised under the slogans "arrest Milinikov", "arm the Petrograd workers", "dissolve the Duma", "legalise the transfer of land to the peasants".

workers and soldiers suspected that the counter-revolutionary forces would even sacrifice Petrograd so as to destroy the Soviets and wipe out the revolutionary Baltic fleet.

Thus Kerensky plotted with Kornilov to bring military rule to Petrograd. Kornilov—commander in chief of the armed forces, and Kerensky, head of the provisional government, needed each other and were using each other for their own ends. Kornilov desired to become a pure dictator representing the interests of finance, capital and the landlords. He accepted Kerensky as a "hostage of democracy". Kerensky wanted to become the dictator of the capitalists and also the petty bourgeoisie—he needed Kornilov as an ally and wielder of real power because Kornilov controlled the army.

Kerensky realised as Kornilov approached Petrograd he himself was under threat. He issued orders for Kornilov to be removed from command—but Kornilov continued to march against Petrograd. Kerensky, therefore, called on

workers to support him against his former ally.

The Bolsheviks did not hesitate for a moment. They led the fightback against Kornilov. But they conducted the war in a revolutionary way, drawing in the masses. The Putilov works became the centre of resistance, workers were organised into fighting companies and cannon were built. The Bolsheviks formed an alliance with "gaolers and slanderers" to fight Kornilov: they used Kerensky "as a gun rest to shoot Kornilov". An alliance not to support Kerensky's governments but to expose it. They organised under slogans "arrest Milinikov", "arm the Petrograd workers" "dissolve the Duma", "legalise the transfer of land to the peasants".

Railway workers tore up and barricaded the tracks, they sent Kornilov's regiments in the wrong direction, they isolated the centre of the conspiracy preventing movement both towards and away from it. The Postal and telegraph clerks delayed telegrams and orders. The generals discovered that transport and communication were no longer technical questions but political ones.

Revolutionary soldiers went out to fraternise with Kornilov's men—Kornilov and the officers became isolated from the soldiers. The coup collapsed after four days.

The masses had learnt from the

attempted Kornilov coup not to put trust in Kerensky, that it was not a question of defending the government but of defending the revolution. After the coup the Soviets gained new life, everywhere Bolshevik resolutions gained majority support.

The events in July and during the Kornilov coup demonstrated the tactical flexibility of the Bolsheviks. They show why in practice a party is needed.

Because it was only the shared political understanding of the world, the experience of working together as revolutionaries over the years, that gave the Bolsheviks the flexibility to implement the tactical changes.

Without the Bolshevik restraining influence in July, the most militant section of the working class in Petrograd would have been massacred. Without willingness to establish a united front with Kerensky against Kornilov, the revolution would never have revived sufficiently to smash Kornilov and swamp Kerensky.





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JAMES CONNOLLY : MARXIST AND REPUBLICAN ?	KIERAN ALLEN	HOW DID HITLER COME TO POWER	JOSH CLARKE
CAN MUSIC ROCK THE SYSTEM ?	CHRIS DEAN (Ex - Redskins)	ROSA LUXEMBURG	JIM BLAKE
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND	EAMON McCANN	ANTONIO GRAMSCI ITALIAN REVOLUTIONARY	MARNIE HOLBOROW

SUNDAY

THEORIES ON THE CLASS NATURE OF EASTERN EUROPE	JACKIE SPRAIGUE MICHAEL DAVITT AND THE LAND LEAGUE	BELFAST - THE STRUGGLES OF THE UNEMPLOYED IN THE 1930's.	LINDA MOORE WILL SOCIALIST REVOLUTION LIBERATE WOMEN
WILLIE CUMMING	SEAN O'CASEY	MARY SMITH	TROTSKY'S MARXISM
PAUL O'BRIEN	ALEXANDRA KOLLONTAI	DUNCAN HALLAS	THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT MAY 1968 - 1987
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REVIEWS

Revolutionary Rehearsals

Reviewed by
DECLAN O'GORMAN

Revolutionary Rehearsals.
Edited by Colin Barker

IN JANUARY 1968, Andre Gorz, one of France's best known Marxist theorists wrote that "in the foreseeable future" there would be "no crisis of European capitalism so dramatic as to drive the mass of workers to revolutionary general strikes or armed insurrections in support of their vital interests".

In May of the same year, over 9 million of his countrymen and women rocked the foundations of European capitalism, by staging the biggest ever general strike in the history of the world.

At the present time, the idea that widespread workers' action is out of the question, has gained some currency.

Socialism, we are told is "old hat" and the rise and rise of Thatcherism is somehow used as evidence of this historical inaccuracy.

"Revolutionary Rehearsals" a book by five authors, all members of the British SWP, outlines five important instances in the past twenty years, when true socialist revolution might have been—and was almost—realised.

These were, France 1968, Chile 1970-73, Portugal 1975, Iran 1979 and Poland 1980.

But while the book is a stirring reminder that working class activity can explode at any time and utterly change the face of nations in a few days, it is equally a sad chronicle of the failure of the existing left-wing and so-called "socialist" organisations to provide proper leadership, guiding the insurgent workers to capitalise on the gains of their revolutionary activity and carry through the revolution to the setting up of a truly democratic workers state.

The tale of France is particularly exciting. Those of us too young to really remember, are often under the impression that the 1968 events were nothing more than a wild student holiday of demonstrations, barricades and street-fighting, and hippy flower-power.

In fact the student agitation—which may have had its lighter side—was a serious effort to challenge the State itself and it resulted in bloodshed and death when the police showed their true colours in resisting it. But most significantly, it sparked off a mass general strike which brought one of Europe's major capitalist powers to a standstill. It saw (the almost dictatorial figure

of) de Gaulle fleeing to Germany only to be sent back by his military advisor General Massu; which saw worker occupation and takeover of whole industries and whole cities, most notably Nantes where workers took over the administration and policing of the town for over a week.

Ian Birchall, who wrote the France section of the book, is careful not to over-romanticize or exaggerate the extent of the "revolution", but he makes clear that revolutionary structures existed on a wide scale and the potential was there—as observers never believed it could be in a Western

INDEPENDENT

"democracy"—to stage a full socialist revolution. In the end the movement was utterly sold out by the CGT trade unions and the PCF (Communist Party) who did all in their power to dismantle the independent workers' councils, playing into the hands of de Gaulle's right-wing supporters who engaged in thuggery and murder as well as rigged strike ballots and the falsification of news to crush the movement.

If the French example is exciting because it happened "on our doorstep", in a "modern Western democracy" somewhat like our own, Iran is no less relevant despite its geographic and apparent cultural distance from us.

The recent escalation of the Gulf War has seen an equal interest in the gutter media presentation of Iran as a backward nation of primitive fanatics, led by a hairy mullah who somehow represents the "true image" of the Arab civilisation.

In fact, what is too readily forgotten in the current climate of Iran-bashing, is that the Iranian revolution was a spectacular overthrow of an appalling American-puppet regime by socialist militant workers who flexed their industrial muscle.

It was only because of the



IRAN, 1979—one recent Revolutionary Rehearsal

Revolutionary Rehearsals, edited by Colin Barker is available from; SWM PO Box 1648, Dublin 8. Price £6 post free.

failure of the left-wing parties to offer leadership in the eight month vacuum which followed the Shah's departure, that allowed Khomeini to establish his reactionary rule.

The Iran section of the book by Maryam Poya, traces the rise of the working class militancy right up to the 1978-79 period when "Every few days a new section of the workforce came out on strike or joined street demonstrations and protests".

Radio and Communication workers, railway workers, atomic energy workers, steel workers, dockers and seamen and oil workers combined to bring down the old order establishing in its place a system of Shoras or workers councils, not unlike the Soviets of the early days of the Russian revolution.

During the post-revolutionary void, Khomeini very cleverly began to split the left. Both the Mojahedin and the Fedayeen were indecisive in their attitude to the women's movement all-owing

Khomeini—who had been installed as a figurehead—to introduce the first of his repressive Islamic laws, the banning of women from public life and the compulsory wearing of the veil. Again the left stood by, while Iran's Kurdish minority was bombed by the Islamic nationalists. By the time of the Islamic occupation of the US Embassy on November 4, the Shoras were being dismantled as "un-Islamic" and, in their fatal decision to support Khomeini's grand "anti-imperialist" embassy gesture the left organisations paved the way for the terrible counter-revolutionary reaction which was to follow.

Those revolutionaries who argued against Khomeini were murdered in their thousands. A few managed to escape. The Shoras were replaced by Khomeini's right-wing in-factory Islamic councils.

The section on Poland is equally as important. It showed that even within the

"socialist" bloc workers organisations and struggle can bring regimes tumbling down.

The example of Chile is significant in that it shows the limits of a parliamentary road to socialism. While the workers were attempting to stride ahead, Allende's constitutional approach held them back and ultimately led to disaster.

And of course Portugal, which shows the bankruptcy and hypocrisy of Social Democracy throughout Europe.

These were exciting periods in each of these countries. Each saw a massive rise in workers militancy and organisation.

The message of "Revolutionary Rehearsals"—an exciting and very readable book—is that workers' revolutions can happen—they have happened—but they will be betrayed by the so-called "soft socialists", if the revolutionary politics are not there to capitalise on the revolutionary gains.

Not doing fine

Paul Cleary and the Partisans,
"Impossible" mini album

PAUL CLEARY'S decision to pull out of "Self Aid" was a small yet refreshing indication that rock music has not yet totally succumbed to the greed for publicity and that it still has a political message to put across.

Cleary has been around now for ten years or so. He enjoyed a huge following in Ireland during his time with the Blades who sadly called it a day last year. After the split he went on to form the Partisans with guitarist Conor Brady.

At the beginning of '87 the band reformed with Damien Mc Goona and Tony Smyth taking the place of Steve Cooney formerly of Stockton's Wing and Clannad's Paul Moran. The new line-up released their first album in July called "Impossible" which in a way sums up a lot of the political sentiment of the album.

It opens up with "I'm doing fine" a pure pop melody with the narrator undergoing the type of macho self delusion which anybody who has ever had their heart used as a trampoline is prone to after exceeding the alcohol limit, a trend repeated in the uptempo "Sooner or later". These two songs aside however, the album's four remaining tracks show a more marked political stance than has been evident in Cleary's lyrics to date.

"Partisan", "Dublin City Town", "Big City" and the title track "Impossible" are as evocative of their time and place (working class Dublin in the here and now) as it is possible for songs to be.

In "Partisan" Cleary seems to be defending his own political viewpoint against

somebody who can't understand why the working class still persist in fighting the system, hence the line "Why so partisan". Not a pleasant situation for anybody on the left to be in. I know recently in Derry I had a bunch of religious lunatics harrasing me while on a paper sale, asking why "you haven't found your true self in Jesus Christ?" This is a very hard question to answer in more than two words (the second of which is "off") which was all I could come out with at the time.

"Dublin City Town" you may well think from the title is your usual boring old sentimental song about Dublin, far from it. Rather it's a personal statement from Cleary about the destruction of Dublin by the building of office blocks and car parks.

The title track is possibly the bleakest song Cleary has ever written. Even in earlier songs like "Downmarket" there seemed to be some measure of optimism. Here however there seems to be no way out.

This isn't to say that the politics of the album are totally defeatist; but it does seem that for Cleary there is no way out, no way for the masses to achieve their dreams. At least the Redskins had "Keep on keeping on" and Billy Bragg had "There's power in a union". Cleary however only gives us "Impossible".

Socialists know that rock music can't really change the material conditions in which we live, that will always be down to working class activity

But it would be nice to hear a bit more optimism from the Partisans. It seems that until the working class actually seize power that will be "Impossible"

—CHRIS McCAY

Of armalites and ballot boxes

Broadening the Battlefield
by Liam Clarke

THIS IS THE second book to appear this year which deals with the H—Blocks (the other was David Beresford's "Ten Men Dead"). It is an attempt to trace the influence of the Hunger strikes on the tactical development of the Provos and the branching out into electoral politics by Sinn Fein. The book is interesting in that it attempts to show how the Hunger strikes forced a major change in Republican thinking and also in the British and constitutional Nationalist reaction:

"The Provisionals, who had done so much to initiate all this change, were, as ever, unable to reap the rewards. In their unremitting efforts to force a crisis in nationalism they had instead forced the mainstream to get its act together. The Agreement (Anglo-Irish) was the fruit of pressure on Britain in which they had played a part, but instead of dividing their enemies they had succeeded,

for the time being at least, in uniting them. Seeking to force the SDLP into a corner they had instead pushed it through the door onto open ground where it had more room to manoeuvre than ever".

The book gives a clear picture of the tactics involved in the adoption of the anti-abstentionist policy in the South. The dropping of a woman's right to choose was one element as was the toning down of the socialist rhetoric. Clarke claims to notice the disappearance of mentions of socialism in the speeches of Gerry Adams.

He also points to the precarious position Adams and his fellow urban northerners have placed themselves in. The emphasis on an electoral strategy went hand in hand with a reduction of armed activity in the centres of Belfast and Derry.

This produced a strain within the movement. Other sources of contention were finance: should the hard-earned money be used to back an electoral campaign or to

buy arms?

Clarke claims also that shortage of funds is due partly to the new respectable constitutional image necessary to win votes in local elections in the North.

Clarke sees war psychology as being important "in order to maximise support among nationalists". "A major escalation of sectarian tension and state repression would... ease the ballot and armalite contradiction, allowing them to be more widely accepted as complimentary aspects of a fight for communal survival".

He goes on to analyse and conclude: "For the Provos, force was the first resort and electoral politics only arose when force was seen to flounder. For this reason it could command the support of only a small and fluctuating minority, yet because it was the uniting factor in the movement it could not be rationally debated, much less abandoned, without crippling repercussions".

Clarke's book makes some good points in its analysis of Provo strategy and of the shifts in the movement. He follows the pendulum as it swings back and forth between physical force and electoralism. But once again he argues on their terms. He does not discuss an alternative. A strategy based on the working class doesn't enter into his argument. This is not just a quibble. There are people within the Republican Movement who see themselves as socialists. Reading through a book like this which charts the developments of the Republican movement over the last 7 years it is noticeable how irrelevant arguments about socialism are to the overall strategy, despite certain people in the movement.

This is not just Liam Clarke's failing in that he doesn't create this perspective but is the failing of the Republican Movement itself. Socialism through republicanism is not on the agenda.

EAMONN McCANN

The threats they keep quiet about

THE PROVOS' threat last month to oil company executives and tanker drivers drew the usual expressions of outrage from the Northern Ireland Office, the Dublin government, the national press etc. etc. And the top leaders of the trade union movement in the North reacted in exactly the same way.

In a joint statement, Terry Carlin, the ICTU's Northern officer, and John Freeman, regional secretary of the ATGWU, which represents tanker drivers, condemned "these threats against workers going about their legitimate business". Carlin went on to say that "These threats are as despicable and indefensible as the callous murder of Michael Power (the Catholic taxi-driver killed by the UDA).

There are two points to be made immediately about the union bosses' statements. The first is that they are very selective about which "threats against workers going about their legitimate business" which they choose to condemn.

In the fortnight before the issuing of the Provos' threat, Catholic working class families in the Springfield Road area of West Belfast were put under siege on two successive weekends by Loyalist mobs which had murder in mind. The stark terror which these families suffered didn't merit a mention by the North's union leaders.

In the same fortnight large forces of British Army and RUC personnel put Catholic areas of Derry under virtual house arrest. Doors were smashed in, furniture and fittings ripped apart, people assaulted and injured in their own kitchens and living rooms. These people, too were going about their legitimate business—watching television, washing the dishes, whatever. But again, not a whisper of protest from the union.

This is not to be wondered at. As Socialist Worker has repeatedly pointed out, the Northern Committee of the ICTU has never issued a straightforward condemnation of any action by the security forces. The Northern Committee is possibly the only trade union body of its kind in all Europe which didn't condemn either internment without trial or Bloody Sunday.

Clearly, it isn't any old "threat against workers going about their legitimate business" which distresses Messrs. Carlin and Freeman. The record shows that they are moved to make public protest only when such threats are issued by forces opposed to the state.

It is also interesting that Mr Carlin didn't condemn the killing of Michael Power until four days after the event when he had the threat against tanker drivers with which to "balance" it.

The Northern Committee of the ICTU is for all intents and purposes a branch office of the Northern Ireland Office, its specific mandate being to represent the interests of the British Government inside the working class movement.

The second point is that there is a politically important difference between the Provos threatening workers who service the British security forces and the murder of Michael Power. Michael Power was shot dead because of his religion. There is no political "balance" to be struck between this and the targeting of people because of their relationship with the repressive forces of the state.

Only consistent pacifists, those who on principle condemn all killing, whatever the reason, have any political or moral right to equate the incidents. There are very few consistent pacifists in Ireland, North or South. Certainly, they don't include Terry Carlin or John Freeman.

None of this means that socialists should approve of the Provo tactic. The Socialist Workers Movement doesn't.

We agree that the British State forces represent an interest which is implacably hostile to the interests of all Irish workers: Irish workers would therefore be following their own interests if they were to reject the rotten politics of Carlin and Freeman and refuse to assist the security forces.

If the Provos were to urge workers to "black" the Brits, and to demand official union backing if this put them in confrontation with their companies, there would be the possibility at least of campaigning within the union movement for anti imperialist politics and against the Carlins and the Freemans.

But this isn't the Provo approach, because the Provos, despite all the Left rhetoric, don't see the struggle in class terms.

There is a crying need for revolutionary socialist leadership.

Workers sacked in bus strike

AS ANY mother with children shopping and a push chair can tell you, conductors are an absolute necessity on any bus. Only those soft-padded airy-fairy capitalist politicians who never themselves travel on buses would dare argue, as one Fianna Fáiler did, that conductors on buses are "unnecessary workers".

In the current Bus Eireann strike over driver-only buses the company has threatened to lay off 562 workers in Cork, Waterford, Limerick and Galway. Yet union officials are falling over themselves to do a deal with management. What should be a fight to defend jobs is being turned into a dispute over how a 33 1/3% bonus should be paid out to drivers operating without a conductor.

As we go to press, over 160 workers have been sacked.

The strike can be won by workers organising their own local strike committees to see that things get done in their own areas and then linking up nationally to co-ordinate the strike.

Cork

BUS EIREANN has sacked 60 workers in Cork out of a total of 250. Yet one ITGWU official stated on Cork local radio that, "If this keeps up inevitably we will have to capitulate and it would fare very badly for labour relations for the future".

Not one mention of fighting on, not to mention spreading the strike.

It is clearly no use relying on the full-time officials. Solidarity should be sought. Irish steel workers should be contacted and picket lines visited at ISPC and Classic Windows.

As on Bus Eireann striker told Socialist Worker, "Management don't want negotiation. What they want is to force through changes on their own terms. The Labour Court granted us a 5% pay rise but management and



government have refused to pay. Yet when the Labour Court finds in favour of management on the issue of driver-only buses we are expected to take it lying down. But the time for talking is over. It's time now to take action. Labour Courts are useless to workers today".

Limerick

THE UNION'S response to Bus Eireann's attempts to force strikers back to work has been ridiculous. Not attempt has been made to explain the strikers' position or win support from other workers.

Yet these workers are being bombarded with the usual press propaganda about "the irresponsibility of the strikers" etc. If no attempt is made to challenge this then support will not be won from other workers and the strike will almost certainly be defeated.

Waterford

IN WATERFORD the strike is solid. However, pickets have not been placed since the first week of the strike. This leaves the strikers open to passivity and makes a compromise much more likely.

Attempts must be made to involve all of the strikers in activity, starting with regular picketing.

NEW ROSS DOCKYARD DEFEAT

A DISPUTE occurred at New Ross docks recently when businessman Noel O'Brien tried to use non-union labour at his new import/export wharf.

O'Brien won a High Court action against the Harbour Commissioners and Stafford's Stewarding Co., which allowed him to continue his scabbing operation.

Local ITGWU dockers were granted an official picket when the first ship was brought in to be unloaded. O'Brien was again helped out by his High Court buddies who gave him an injunction against the pickets.

The union's response was to withdraw the official sanction and the pickets were lifted giving O'Brien a clear victory.

O'Brien's victory makes it easier for similar scabbing operations to go ahead in Waterford Port.

All is not lost. Despite competition between dockers—with ports undercutting each other in prices and staffing levels—Waterford dockers DID offer support to the New Ross strikers.

This basic solidarity is the key to stopping O'Brien and his friends from smashing workers' resistance on the docks.

Our picture shows Glass workers marching to Waterford Garda Station in protest against attacks on Dawn Meats strikers in May.

Glass vote to fight

WE REPORTED last month that Waterford Glass were looking for 750 redundancies and changes in work practices. Management have now threatened to put the factory on week on/week off working if their proposals are not accepted.

This will be dangerous and divisive. The shop stewards must stop relying on the union consultants investigating the plans and must prepare the membership for resistance.

Workers at Waterford Glass have voted overwhelmingly to reject the company's proposal for redundancy.

They have also given the shop steward's committee full powers to organise resistance.

Loyalism in crisis

continued from page 12

Robert McCartney's "Campaign for Equal Citizenship" more seriously.

This crisis in Loyalism has not resulted from "poor leadership" or "mistakes" or from the treachery of British governments—the most common explanation offered by loyalists themselves. It reflects a far more fundamental fact—that the economic base on which Loyalism was built has been steadily eroded away.

"Ulster Loyalism" traditionally reflected the interests of the Protestant rich... the landlords, linen magnates, engineering bosses etc. They were closely connected with big business across the water, a relationship reflected at the political level in the close links between the British Conservative and Ulster Unionist parties. They secured the support of the Protestant masses by giving them advantages over the Catholics

and by promoting the intense communal consciousness which remains the hallmark of Loyalist politics and which is most clearly expressed in the Orange institutions.

(Naturally, any semblance of class consciousness was a challenge to this. A person who thinks of him or herself primarily as a worker will tend to identify with other workers, of whatever religion. The thrust of loyalism has been to invite Protestant workers to identify with other Protestants, of whatever class. Thus Loyalism has always hated socialism at least as heartily as it hated Home Rule.)

What has happened to Loyalism is that the local Protestant ruling class no longer wields decisive power.

Multinationals have virtually replaced the old "backbone-of-Ulster" Protestant businessmen. And with the more recent decline in multinational investment the British government itself has become increasingly

important as direct employer or as the provider of vital orders to local business.

It is clear from this that Loyalism cannot win back the power it once had. There is never going to be a Stormont-style government again. Quite simply, there is no foundation on which it could be constructed. The disarray of Loyalism is now a permanent condition.

Why then, is the ideology so persistent? Why does it still command the support of a definite majority of Northern Protestants, including a majority of Protestant workers?

One reason (it's not the only one) is that the major anti-Loyalist forces do not themselves approach Loyalism on a class basis. The SDLP and Sinn Féin have many disagreements but on one aspect of contemporary politics they are essentially at one.

Both the SDLP and Sinn Féin set out to represent "the nationalist community". The arguments between them on the councils, for example, are usually about which party represents "the nationalist

community" best.

Neither claims to represent the interests of a section of society defined to include anyone currently in the Loyalist camp.

This is not to suggest that a large party based on a class approach to politics and appealing specifically to workers would automatically or easily attract Protestant workers away from Loyalism. Communal consciousness in the North is extremely intense. Almost certainly it will require major class battles, particularly in the South, to create polarisation along class lines within either or both Northern communities.

It nevertheless remains true also that the "communal" approach to politics does not challenge, but rather fits into, the political pattern of which Loyalism is a part. The Loyalist parties, which have nothing whatever to offer, are effectively given a "free run" at the Protestant population.

However long it takes, only a movement of and for the working class and organised on a clear anti-imperialist basis, can hold out real hope of destroying Loyalism.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

Fight extradition, Fight Fianna Fail

THE EXTRADITION Act, which Fianna Fail was so opposed to in opposition, is due to be ratified on 1st December as Haughey executes yet another of his infamous U-turns.

The reasons Haughey opposed the Act were that the system of "justice" in Britain and the Six Counties does not inspire confidence. The cases of the Birmingham Six, Guildford Four and the Maquire family were cited as examples of how innocent Irish people could end up being scapegoats for the anti-Irish hysteria which usually follows an IRA bombing campaign.

The Supergrass trials, when many people spent years "on remand" only to be released when the informer's evidence collapsed, were advanced as examples of the problems with the Northern legal system. There was much talk of the "lack of confidence" of the nationalist population in the Diplock Courts.

Nothing has changed in Britain or the North since Haughey came to power. Even if they do decide to have three judges sit in the Diplock Courts, it still won't make the legal system more just. Nor does the permission granted to the Birmingham Six to go to the Court of Appeal, or the police enquiry into the case of the Guildford Four, mean that Irish people can now expect justice in Britain. A look at the figures for arrests under the Prevention of Terrorism Acts tells a different story. In the first six months of this year, there were twice as many arrests as in the same period in 1986.

It would seem that in the eyes of the British police, being Irish is still enough to make you guilty.

Nor do the provisions of the Extradition Act protect in any way against the "guilty until proven innocent" approach of the police in general and of the RUC in particular.

The Act does not require any prima facie evidence—in other words, the RUC don't have to produce even a shred of evidence in a Southern

Court. The Act does, however allow the RUC to interrogate their victims once they've got them in the North. This means that they can extradite on a trumped-up charge for which they have no evidence and extract a "confession" by their well-known interrogator methods.

Furthermore, the Act is retrospective which means that over 600 people now living in the South can be handed over to the RUC for activities in which they were involved 10-15 years ago.

Opposition to the Extradition Act should not be confined to those who defend the activities of the IRA. Every trade unionist, all workers who want to defend their rights, must oppose Extradition because history has shown us that repressive legislation almost always used in the long run, against workers.

The Forcible Entry Act is a good example. The trade union movement was assured that it was intended only to deal with squatters. But it has been used time and again to evict and even imprison workers who have occupied to defend their jobs.

From the Clondalkin Mills workers, through Ranks to the Abbey Meats workers who occupied the Agra Plant in Cork at the end of June—that piece of repressive legislation has come in very handy for the ruling class.

Even the Offences Against the State Act, which was introduced specifically to deal with paramilitaries, was used to arrest striking ESB linesmen in Cork, none of whom had any connection with any paramilitary group.

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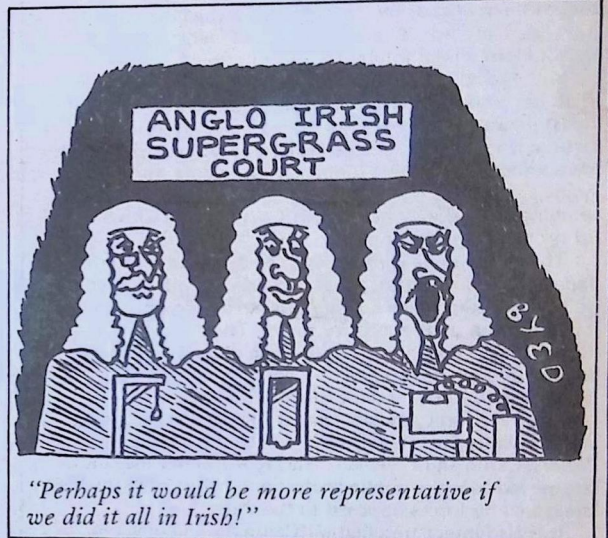
In recent years, ruling classes all over the world have moved towards ever greater co-operation. The idea of political asylum had for centuries recognised that people should not be sent to certain death or imprisonment because of actions carried out in pursuance of their political beliefs. Now this ideal has all but disappeared as the world ruling class move to protect their common interests in the face of the resistance of anti-imperialist and workers movements.

Thus, Tamils are deported from England to certain death in Sri Lanka and thousands of Latin American dissidents have to shelter in Churches in the US to avoid being sent back to Guatemala, El Salvador or Chile or some other regime which would, on their return, ensure their death or "disappearance".

The Free State's Extradition Act represents the Irish ruling class' contribution to the international solidarity of their class. And therefore, it is against the interests of our class.

It is because this is what the Extradition Act represents that there is absolutely no point in looking towards any section of Fianna Fail to fight it.

Yet that is precisely the course that the Campaign Against Extradition, which Sinn Fein is initiating, plans to take. This is defended on the basis that it is the "grass roots" of FF which will be appealed to. But the "grass roots" have made it clear—by their lack of action against the health cuts for example—that Fianna Fail is a ruling class party from top to



bottom.

So the "grass roots" of Fianna Fail have as little interest in opposing Extradition as has Haughey.

For fifteen years now, Republican initiated campaign campaigns from anti-internment through to the H-Block campaign have been looking

to the "grass roots" of FF for support. This support has never been forthcoming. It will not be on this occasion either.

It is time to learn the lesson of those campaigns: namely that a fight against Extradition is a fight against Fianna Fail.



Politically in total disarray

Loyalism in crisis

SPEAKING IN Portsmouth in England last month Paisley's pint-sized deputy Peter Robinson declared that the Unionist parties would be prepared to talk about a new deal for the North if the Anglo-Irish Agreement were "put into Limbo".

This caused a flurry of excitement among some political journalists anxious to discover whether it represented a "new line" and, if so, whether it was more or less extreme than the previous demand that the Agreement be "suspended" as a condition for talks.

Meanwhile, of course, Paisley and Molyneux are talking to the Northern Ireland Office—but since these are "talks about talks" they apparently don't count.

At the same time the council boycott campaign has collapsed into chaos and the threat to defy re-routing orders during the marching season didn't materialise.

All of this indicates that, politically, the Loyalists are in total disarray, with no clear perspective for the future.

Opposition to the Anglo-Irish Agreement has not weakened, but there hasn't been an inch of progress towards the cherished objective of a return to the old Stormont system.

In this situation the ultra-right murder gangs of the UDA and the UDF have moved back towards the centre-stage, capitalising on the widespread frustration with the futility of the Paisley-Molyneux approach, while sections of the middle-class have begun to toy with the idea of taking

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