

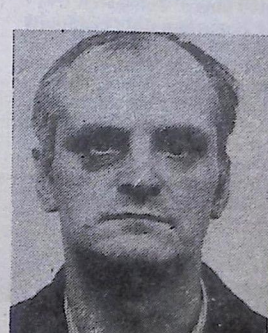
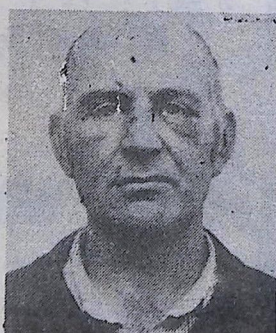
Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

**Don't trust Fianna
Fail to fight...**

'BRITISH

JUSTICE'



AIDS summit fiasco

THE AIDS "summit" in London did as much to stop aids as the recent Arms Summit did to stop the arms race. In other words, nothing.

The 150 Health Ministers who attended the Conference said they would ensure no discrimination against Aids sufferers.

Yet discrimination was implied from the start.

Princess Anne opened the Conference and said that "the real tragedy" are innocent victims. If people who catch AIDS from blood transfusions are "innocent" then presumably those who catch it from unprotected sex or dirty needles are "guilty".

HRH described AIDS as "a classic own goal that only serves to remind homo sapiens of their fallibility". Of course Princess Anne is well placed to lecture us since the Royal Family has never been prone to "promiscuity" or "deviancy".

Another gem came from the Chinese delegation. They blamed the spread of AIDS in China on the degenerate West. "Chinese law and traditional moral values prohibit homosexuality and drug abuse" they said.

The AIDS "summit" was nothing more than an excuse for ruling class hypocrites—East and West—to push Victorian values on the rest of us.

Meanwhile the Irish Medical News reported that last year two deaths from AIDS were not reported to the Department of Health. If this trend continues the disease will be harder to tackle.

AIDS is hidden, of course, for the same reason as TB was hidden in the forties—prejudice.

Then, TB sufferers were usually poor and were stigmatised. Now AIDS is associated with what the Right likes to call "perversion".

The real perversion is that ten million people worldwide have AIDS while our rulers use them as scapegoats rather than striving to find a cure.

DAVE McDONAGH

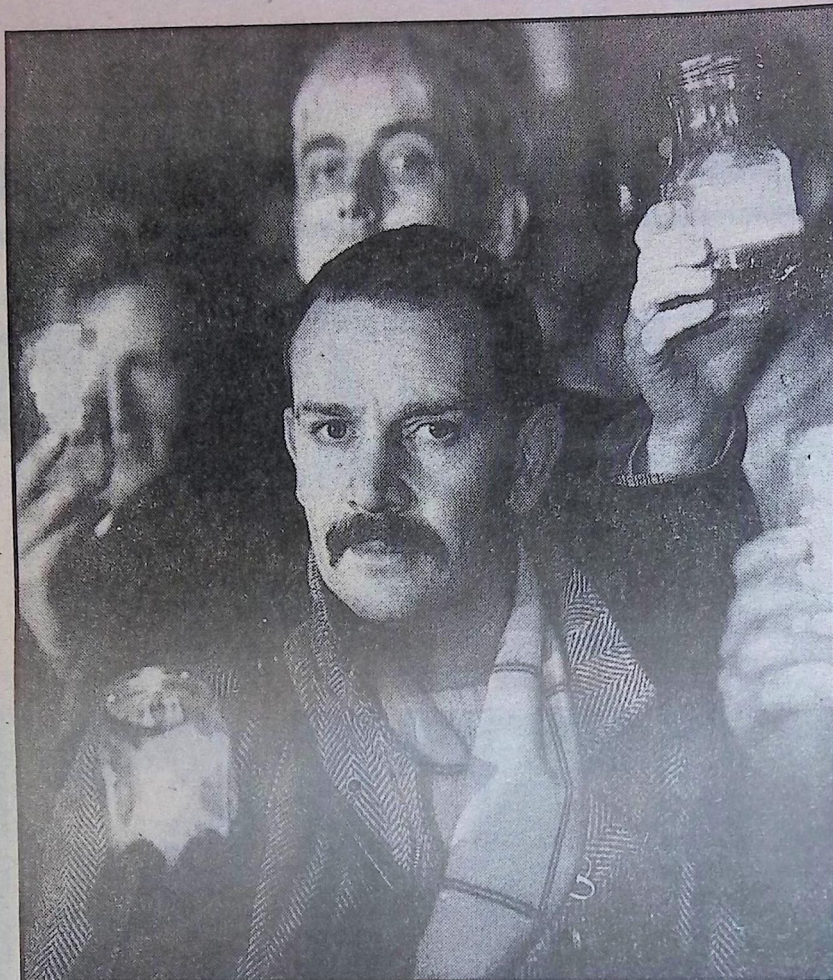
Jobsearch: the real dole fraud

IN APRIL last year the Minister for Social Welfare, Michael Woods embarked on the Jobsearch programme. The stated aim of Jobsearch was to help long-term dole claimants find work.

But the findings of a survey conducted by Dublin Unemployed Centres show a different picture. The majority of the 225 people they surveyed who were called to an interview or course found the interview humiliating. They also found the course inadequate and boring.

Imagine yourself a trained carpenter, hairdresser or electrician taking on a Jobsearch course to learn how to make a phone call.

Phillip Boxberger, co-editor of the Bru, the monthly publication of the Larkin Unemployment Centre rightly dubbed Jobsearch as an



EEC says 'grow less' as millions face starvation

SUBSIDISING WASTE—this has become the deliberate policy of the EEC. In early February, EEC agriculture Ministers will meet to discuss a plan to encourage farmers to leave their land fallow.

Irish Agriculture Minister, Michael Kennedy is enthusiastic about the plan. He simply wants a higher subsidy paid by the EEC to the farmers.

Meanwhile EEC bureaucrats are devising other schemes to take land out of food production. Their aim is to create land recreation zones for those who want to shoot birds or trek through long

grass. Yet in Ethiopia and Mozambique the spectre of famine stalks the land. These countries have been given vast sums in emergency famine relief. But for every famine £1 of famine relief sent to Africa in 1985, the West took back £2 in interest and debt repayments.

The deliberate policy of dear food and subsidised waste is thus an obscenity. The EEC's plan follows schemes in America for destroying food. In Vermont, for example, a rich agricultural state, 10% of the dairy herd has been destroyed as a result of state subsidies.

Profits before patients in Linnerick hospitals scandal

BARRINGTON'S Hospital in Limerick is the biggest casualty and out-patients' hospital outside of Jervis Street in Dublin.

In the past six years £340,000 has been spent in updating the equipment at Barrington's.

Yet at the end of March the hospital is due to close.

St John's Hospital is expected to take over casualty treatment for the region. Yet St John's needs huge improvements to cope with this.

So why close Barrington's and leave St John's open? The reason is profit.

In the past year St John's has made £1 million from private patients. More than half the hospital's beds are used by people who can afford to pay.

Those who cannot pay rely on Barrington's. There, only six percent of patients are paying customers.

The majority of people in Limerick depend on a free health service. That's why over 20,000 marched against the closure and over 70,000 signed a petition.



The government and the Health Board favour St Johns. Along with Limerick's Bishop Newman they are on the side

Quotes of the month

"There seems to be an underlying assumption in this country that make the rich work harder you pay them more; to make the poor work harder you pay them less".
Sean Healy—Conference of Major Religious Superiors.

"People in the upper echelons of society died of 'weak chests', while it was only those in the lower middle and working classes who died of tuberculosis".
Dr. James Walsh—Assistant Chief Medical Officer of the Dept of Health commenting on the reporting of deaths from TB when it was rife. Similar hypocrisy seems to exist in the reporting of AIDs deaths.

FF budget giveaway to the wealthy

FIANNA FAIL is preparing for a General Election.

Last January's budget was a clear signal. A small amount of tax relief was given to the PAYE earners. A extra £4 was put on long term unemployment assistance but the number of unemployed will continue to climb with 9,000 redundancies in the public sector. A proposal by civil servants to put a tax on property was shelved lest it frighten off middle class voters.

But the key carrots were held out for the super-rich.

Irish companies such as Smurfit and McNerny who have invested heavily abroad can now repatriate their profits tax free.

Corporation Profits Tax— which already yields very low

levels— has been reduced to 43%.

In Manufacturing it stays at a measly 10%.

The bosses have traditionally been able to write off the costs of wear and tear against the tax. This has now been reduced from 100% to 50%. But in two areas favoured by multi-nationals—Shannon and the International Financial Services Centre—they continue to get 10% tax relief on the write offs.

House buyers who purchase houses over £50,000 will get a saving of £600 as stamp duty has been decreased.

Builders of luxury apartments are to get new tax relief.

Fianna Fail is out to look after its wealthy backers. What a pity, then to see the drivell from the ICTU, Phil Flynn ex-Sinn Fein member and now aspiring ICTU President, said he was "not unhappy with the budget. The ICTU delude themselves that the National Plan has given them influence on government policy. But as this budget shows, it only gives some responsibility for the anti-working class attacks of F.F.

of the privileged few. They want a profitable health service where curing the sick comes second.

Fighting their logic means supporting the campaign to retain Barrington's Hospital.

—DAVE McDONAGH

WE THINK

SMOKE OUT CUTS

DUBLIN CORPORATION are out to smash the firefighters' strike. Their determination is not because they've got something against firefighters in particular. It is because they know that a win for the strikers in this dispute would put new heart and new fight into other Corporation and public sector workers all over the country. Victory for the firefighters could spark off revived resistance to the cuts, just as the success of the nurses' strike in Manchester led to nurses all over Britain taking action.

The firefighters strike in Dublin, despite what the media would have us believe, is not an attempt by a group of selfish workers to better their own wages and conditions. On the contrary, it is a strike which was undertaken to protect the people of Dublin by ensuring that they have the Fire Service required by a city its size. Such a fire service is vital if tragedies like the Stardust are to be avoided and if children aren't going to burn to death in their beds.

Dublin already has about 200 fewer firefighters than it needs to match European cities of a similar size. Now the number has been reduced by a further 16 through the public sector cuts. The Corporation wants others to cover for these posts, despite the massive under-staffing already in operation. The firefighters said Enough! They were being asked to put their own lives and the lives of the public still further in danger. As responsible workers, they had no choice but to refuse.

COURAGEOUS

Such a courageous and unselfish stand should surely be supported by all who call themselves socialists. But what has been the response of the Dail parties who claim to represent the interests of the working class? The four Dublin Labour Party TDs issued a joint statement which said, quite correctly, that government policy would be responsible for any tragedies caused by the strike. They could not, however, bring themselves to express support for the

strike nor to encourage others to support it.

The Workers Party, didn't even go so far as to blame the government. Instead, they called on Dublin Corporation to ask the Fianna Fail Minister for Labour, Bertie Ahern, to refer the dispute to the Labour Court. No mention of the government policies which made the strike necessary. No condemnation of the use of army scabs. No taking the side of the striking workers. In fact, the Workers Party statement could just as easily have come from Fine Gael or from the Federated Union of Employers.

Both the Labour Party and the Workers Party refused this opportunity to put themselves clearly on the side of the working class.

The firefighters' strike offers another opportunity which should not have been refused.

Since the H Block campaign, the struggle against repression has been seen as an issue affecting republicans only—it has been virtually impossible to broaden that. Now the same army that was used to harass socialists and republicans during the National



Search, the same army that protects the Border is being used to scab on firefighters. This presents an ideal chance to link the anti-imperialist struggle to that of workers against the Fianna Fail cuts.

The success of the firefighters strike is vital if Fianna Fail's strategy of cuts and of

driving down living standards is to be stopped. But winning the strike depends on spreading the strike to other parts of Dublin Corporation, especially to areas like rubbish collection. If rubbish wasn't being collected, the Army would be expected to scab there too, thus stretching them and putting the strikers in a stronger position.

No singing over Cork library cuts

A minor controversy arose in Cork during the first week in January due to the reduction in the opening hours of the Music Department of Cork City Library. Since January 5th, the Music Department is closed during the mornings from Tuesday to Friday, and it is open on Saturday from 10.00-1.00 and 2.00-5.30. The entire library is closed every Monday. This represents a reduction in opening hours of 12 hours per week. It is particularly hard on the blind and partially sighted who normally use the Music Department in the mornings. In a display of gross insensitivity Cork Corporation raised the membership fee for the Music

Department from £17 to £18 on the same day that the reduced hours came into effect. Stung by this latest attack on a service which had been savagely cutback in previous months the public reacted strongly. City Hall and Cork Local Radio were deluged with calls complaining at this manifestation of what one caller termed "cultural barbarism". Even "The Cork Examiner" published several items deploring the move. In a city with one of the highest unemployment rates in the country and in the era of the "information explosion" the library service should be expanded and made free to all. Instead, Cork City Library has seen its staffing levels pared to the bone due to the non-

replacement of staff on career breaks and maternity leave and to the laying off of temporary staff. The inevitable result has been a reduction in opening hours at both the Central Library and the branches in suburban areas.

The angry public reaction to the latest cutback is an encouraging sign. A number of Trade Union branches have also passed motions condemning the cutbacks. If enough pressure is brought to bear on City Hall this scandalous decision may be reversed and the fight to restore a proper library service to Cork can begin.

The attack on the library service is just one more example of the vicious campaign being waged against the public sector and the entire working class by the Mac hiavellian U-turn party in government with the connivance of a phoney opposition.

Dublin play centres face chop



THERE ARE eight play centres due to be closed by Dublin Corporation this year. The East Wall centre has been hit already and the Mount Joy Square, Ballymun and Hill St centres (among others) are also due to be closed.

The Corporation will save only £90,000 and eight part-time workers will lose their jobs.

The report put out by the Corporation to justify the closures is based on a survey of one winter month when the playcentres are used the least. It implied that they are somehow outdated. But Eamonn Ryan at the Cabra Playcentre, Hill St and shop steward for the workers involved said that on average forty children attend each of the three sessions held daily at the centres.

Mrs Cris Ashmore, a member of the parents committee at the Mount Joy Playcentre claimed that the children in the neighbourhood had nowhere else to go. She also stated that there are ninety children on Sean O'Casey Street alone that will be eligible to attend the soon to be non-existent playcentres.

And where will these children go? There are only three state-run creches in Dublin, Aer Rianta, ANCO and RTE. Even worse according to the Employment Equality Agency, there are no publicly funded creche facilities whatsoever for lower income families with the exception of the "out of date playcentres."

So the Corporation is closing the playcentres, is depriving large numbers of Dublin parents and their children of the only creche facilities open to them. - EVE MORRISON

Southern Health Board axes free milk scheme

THOUSANDS OF families throughout the South have lost their rights to free milk. The free milk scheme was introduced for families on basic social welfare allowances each family entitled to one pint of milk a day for the first child, and a half-pint for each child after the first. The Southern Health Board admitted that there far more families entitled to the milk, but many of them simply did not know about

the scheme through lack of information.

Now the Southern Health Board has axed the scheme, depriving some of the worst-off working class children from proper nutrition.

Provisions for hardship cases have been made", came the statement from the SHB, but on further enquiries it was learnt that no instructions to that effect had been made inside the SHB.

When I called into the SHB

Department as a "hardship case", I was put onto the supervisor who told me to see my local social worker, and fill in a Supplementary Welfare form and get a letter from my GP.

This was a clear case of passing the buck, and making it as difficult as possible to get your entitlement, hoping that the red tape will frustrate you into giving up entirely.

-EAMONN LEWSLEY

INTERNATIONAL

PALESTINIAN FIGHTBACK ERUPTS

THE VIOLENCE and viciousness with which the Israelis have terrorised protesting Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and West Bank has shocked even British government ministers. But there is nothing new about this horrific treatment of Palestinians. Ever since the foundation of the Israeli State, the Zionists have treated Palestinians with the utmost contempt, coupled with brutal repression.

Mike Scully explains the origins of the Israeli State and why the Palestinians continue to fight back.

Zionists have always argued that the only way to end discrimination against Jews was to set up a Jewish state. Prominent Zionists such as Theodor Herzl argued, at the turn of the century, that it would be in Britain's interest to see a Jewish state in Palestine; a friendly state in one of the most important regions in the world. Important then because of the Suez Canal's strategic importance for the British Empire and because of the oil lying underneath the surface, even today estimated at about 1/2 the world's untapped reserves.

After World War 2 and the revelations about the Holocaust—the nearly total extermination of European Jewry—the Zionist argument seemed unassailable. Everyone argued that such a situation could never be allowed to happen again. In the midst of the anger at the Nazi concentration camps, many, indeed nearly all, forgot there were people already living in Palestine-native Palestinian Arabs. What was to become of them?

Many socialists argued against Zionism. Jewish socialists like the Belgian Abraham Leon recognised that not only was a separate Jewish state no solution to ending discrimination against Jews but actually accepted the racist idea that there is something "different" about Jewish people.

Leon explained that Zionist ideas were fundamentally nationalist and chauvinist and that a Jewish state could only exist if it allied itself with the imperialist powers in subjugating the Arab masses. And this is exactly the role which Israel's rulers sought for themselves; that of a watchdog for imperialism in the Middle East.

Very few of the Jewish emigrants from Europe between 1880 and 1929 went to Palestine. Most went to the US. Those that settled in Palestine bought land from absentee

Arab landlords and dispossessed the Palestinian peasants. This generated resentment among the Palestinians which blew up into a full scale revolt in 1936 against the British policy of allowing in Jewish settlers.

The revolt was crushed. After World War 2 the Zionists stepped up their lobbying efforts. The British mandate was due to expire in 1948 so the UN drew up a plan to partition Palestine in 1947.

Palestine was to be divided into an Arab and a Jewish state. The Jewish state was to occupy 55% of Palestine although previously the Jewish population only owned 6% of the land. But this was not enough for the Zionists. As the British left, a systematic campaign of terror against the Palestinians was launched. Villages, among the best known Deir Yassin, were attacked and the inhabitants butchered.

EXODUS

Threats of similar action directed at other Palestinian villages and towns led to a mass exodus of Palestinians to the Arab controlled areas. The state of Israel was founded on the basis of the forced expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians. By the time of the ceasefire in January 1949, the Zionists had grabbed 80% of Palestine.

As in 1936, the other Arab rulers were not interested in helping the Palestinians. They made a half-hearted attempt at war on the Zionists and then speedily got down to the real job of doing business with them. The Arab rulers divided the remainder of Palestine among themselves, Jordan taking the West Bank, Egypt taking the Gaza Strip.

Immediately Israel set out to prove its worth and reliability to the US, which had taken over from



Palestinian women race to Gaza City for food during lift in curfew

Britain as the dominant superpower in the Middle East. At this time, Western interests in the region were none too secure. Growing support for Arab nationalism (Mossadeq nationalised the Iranian oilfields in 1951) and the possibility of a left-wing victory in the Greek civil war were all unsettling.

In an effort to ensure stability, the US set up a "Periphery Pact" of some of the most vicious (and friendly) regimes in the area eg Turkey and Haile Selassie's Ethiopia. Israel, ever eager to prove itself, attacked Egypt with Britain and France in 1956. Despite US disapproval of this action, by the end of 1967 war Israel had proved itself a reliable ally. A State Department memorandum put it thus.

"In the Far East we can get almost nobody to help us in Vietnam. Here, the Israelis won the war singlehandedly, have taken us off the hook and have served our interests as well as theirs"

The defeat of Egypt was a humiliation for the Arab nationalist movements and thus of value to the US. Military aid to Israel was to increase dramatically after 1967.

Internationally, Israel has been closely linked with the implementation of US foreign policy. If the US Congress should disallow certain operations, then the Israelis can do

the job for them without any of the potential embarrassment should the US be directly involved.

Throughout the world, Israel allies itself with the most right-wing governments. In Central America, Israel has provided training and arms for the Guatemalan government. It, of course, put them to good use in the slaughter of 5,000 Indians in a "counter insurgency" offensive in 1982. Israel has helped Honduras to build up one of the most powerful air forces in the area.

ATOM BOMB

In Africa, US made helicopters and other military supplies reached Rhodesia via Israel in the 1970s. Today, Israel continues to supply South Africa with military hardware which it cannot purchase directly from the US. It is also probable that South Africa and Israel jointly possess the atom bomb.

There are now 1.5 million Palestinians living in Israeli occupied Gaza strip and the West Bank. 600,000 live in Gaza which has one of the highest population densities in the world—on a par with Hong Kong. Conditions are catastrophic. Cholera breaks out repeatedly as most areas lack sewage systems. Infant mortality is four times that in Israel.

Israel's "law of return" gives all Jews, wherever they are born, the right to return to their "homeland". But for the million and a half Palestinians who live in the occupied territories can go to the land of their birth only to work at those "dirty" jobs which Israelis don't want to do themselves—construction work, clearing rubbish, picking vegetables and the like. Each night they have to return to their refugee camp. As a result areas like the Gaza strip mirror South Africa's "tribal homelands" with vast pools of labour who work at minimum cost and can be treated as immigrants.

The Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank have been fighting back. They have little choice but to fight. For the right wing in Israel the solution is to "resettle" them—in other words to drive them into Egypt and Jordan.

For Israel's Labour Party, the solution is to "discuss" the creation of a "separate state" for Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. But they have made it clear that such a state would only be tolerated if it were like the South African Bantustans—a phoney state with no resources, no power and unable to decide its own foreign policy independent of Israel.

There is no support in Israel for the only thing which could bring peace to the region, a democratic secular state of Palestine in which all religious groups would have equal rights.



Israeli troops beating up a Palestinian.

ANALYSIS

CRISIS IN THE EAST

EVEN WHILE Gorbachev was basking in the international approval which followed the signing of the INF arms limitation treaty, Eastern Europe was in turmoil, with strikes, riots or political crises in Poland, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Rumania.

Here, Paul O'Brien looks at the reason for the crisis in Eastern Europe and at the prospects for working class revolt there.

In stores across Poland during November and December 1987 customers waited for hours in lines to buy anything and everything. They snatched up salt, sugar and vinegar. But by the time housewives and workers got to the head of the seemingly endless queues, they found that many of the bare necessities such as soap and shampoo had disappeared.

The panic was started by the announcement that a new economic reform plan will result in the doubling of food prices from January of this year.

This is just one manifestation of the severe economic crisis in Eastern Europe. The warning signs are not hard to read. Yugoslavia, which

pioneered reforms long before the other countries of the Eastern bloc, is now faced with inflation of 135%. Workers there, as in Poland, are forced to buy any goods they can before another price hike comes into effect.

Last year was one of industrial strife for Yugoslavia as it faced the problem of servicing a crippling foreign debt. These problems are set to continue or even worsen over coming months.

Meanwhile so great is the crisis in Czechoslovakia that the leadership is arguing among themselves. Husak, the country's leader since the Russian invasion of 1968 has now been replaced by Jakes but this is a purely cosmetic move since Jakes is another hardliner, who has little if any real political differences with Husak.

The stagnation of the Hungarian economy, once the flagship of economic progress in Eastern Europe continues, while Romania's problems make the other countries look like paradise. Romania is the most centralised economy in the Eastern bloc. Almost alone Romania resisted economic reform and continued with a 1950's Russian-type economy. This has led to high taxation, low wages and food shortages. It has served as a warning to rulers all over Eastern Europe of the dangers of resisting reforms.

Last November workers in the



country's second biggest city, Brasov, marched out of the Red Flag factory shouting "down with the dictator" and burnt down the city's Communist Party headquarters. Two weeks later printers at the government's official newspaper destroyed the edition that contained a speech from the country's leader—Nicolae Ceausescu.

The Eastern bloc countries have faced crisis before: East Germany 1953; Hungary 1956; Czechoslovakia 1968; Poland 1956, 1976, 1980; but in each case Russian troops or the threat of Russian troops and economic aid managed to maintain the regimes.

What is different now, is that the crisis affects Russia as much as any other country East or West. Having grown dramatically from the 30's the Russian Economy was reduced to an average growth rate of 2% by the mid-80s—lower than any other industrialised country except Britain. Agri cultural output rose less than 1% a year in the 1970s. Industrial and Agricultural production have been chronically hampered by supply shortages, absenteeism and equipment failures. Gorbachev himself cited the example of a TV factory that turned out 49,000 defective sets every year. It was also noted that 40% of the 28,000 fires reported in Moscow last year were due to faulty TV sets.

By the time Gorbachev came to

power the Russian economy was desperately in need of change. The twin towers of his campaign were to be Perestroika (economic restructuring) and Glasnost (openness).

Perestroika means an increase in productivity so that the Russian economy can compete in the world market in the production of commodities and arms. To achieve this it will be necessary to reform the economic system by the introduction of an internal price mechanism—price rises and to make enterprises "self-financing" i.e. profit-making. Restructuring means massive changes in work practices.

New shifts are being introduced and bonuses recalculated as norms are raised. Economist Abel Aganbegyan has advocated letting prices rise to market levels. At present, government subsidies on such items as clothing, food and housing run to \$114 billion. Perestroika is likely to also mean the closing of thousands of unprofitable enterprises.

To make these changes palatable Gorbachev needs to convince workers that they have a stake in the system. He put it like this at a Central Committee meeting last June, "a house can only be put in order by someone who feels like he owns the place". That is the rationale behind Glasnost (openness)

He needs to convince workers to accept a cut in their living standards in return for changes in the organisation of society.

The impression given is that massive changes, are taking place in Russia.

Martin Walker, the Guardian correspondent in Russia appears to have accepted this illusion. He ends his recent book 'The Waking Giant' on Gorbachev's Russia like this:

"Gorbachev's revolution promises to be as profound and may yet prove as dramatic as that astonishing year of 1917

This is just not the case. Greater changes took place 30 years ago under Khrushchev than Gorbachev is proposing. Millions were released from the labour camps. The Secret Police (KGB) power of arrest was diminished and most importantly living standards of workers increased.

Neither have the reforms the total support of the ruling bureaucracy. The sacking of Boris Yeltsin in November 1987, the Moscow Party boss and supporter of Gorbachev, was a signal from the conservative elements within the bureaucracy not to go too far with Glasnost. Gorbachev supported his sacking indicating a shift in his position. Another indicator was his speech of November 2nd when he was expected to announce new changes. Instead he argued for caution.

Why did Gorbachev balk at the first hurdle that confronted him? We need only look at what happened in Czechoslovakia twenty years ago to see why he might hesitate. The Czech economy then was in crisis.

The progressives ousted the old Stalinist regime and installed Dubcek—like Gorbachev a loyal bureaucrat, as the new leader. The policies they tried are the same as Gorbachev's today. In order to consolidate their position the new leadership promised reform. But they needed to sweep aside the thousands of bureaucrats, who feared any change. When the conservative section of the bureaucracy started to plot a military coup, Dubcek was forced to look for allies outside the bureaucracy and to campaign among the working class. This unleashed something he could not control.

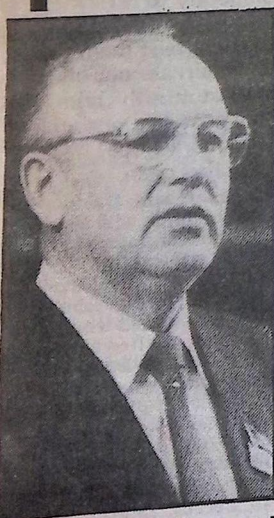
What followed came to be called the Prague Spring—Workers organised meetings published newspapers, held demonstrations and strikes. The hardliners regained power when Russian tanks invaded in August 1968.

That's the nightmare that's facing Gorbachev. If Glasnost goes too far it could unleash movements he cannot control. Neither can he go backwards as that would push the economy even further into crisis and spark off the possibility of working class revolt such as happen happened in the past in East Germany 1953, Hungary 1956 or Poland 1970 and 1976. This is the problem that faces all the regimes in Eastern Europe.

At the moment they are more afraid of their fellow bureaucrats than the working class. But the drive for greater productivity with very little to show for it will eventually lead to an explosion of revolt. Gorbachev and the rest of the leaders in Eastern Europe have little room for manoeuvre—which can only lead to further infighting between those who want reform and those who want to resist it. This is good news for socialists, for when it happened in the past, groups of workers and students emerged and posed their own alternatives to the crisis.

We don't know if this will happen in months or years. But when it does, then maybe, we will be able to say, "that the changes may be as profound and dramatic as that astonishing year of 1917".

What Gorbachev says on Glasnost



● Gorbachev: "those were real crimes stemming from an abuse of power. Serious damage was done to the cause of socialism."

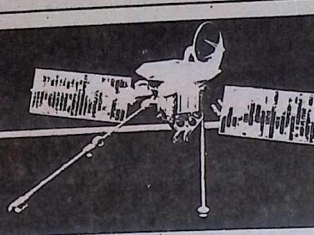
● Khrushchev: did not complete the "process of restoring justice". He had "great courage" but made "errors of subjectivity".

● Lenin: his premature death was a terrible shock and old differences made themselves felt in the new situation created by his death.

● Trotsky: an "excessively self-assured politician who always vacillated and cheated".

● Stalin: "an extremely contradictory personality" whose "gross political mistakes" were "huge and unforgivable".

science report



GETTING SPARSE ON TOP

by MALCOLM POVEY



WHAT is the meaning of Reagan's nose problem?

THE OZONE layer, a fraction of the earth's atmosphere which screens us from much of the sun's ultraviolet rays, is in danger.

Already an alarming increase in skin cancers has been linked by scientists to the decline in ozone levels. Ronald Reagan's very own cancerous nose stands as a testament to this frightening problem.

Scientists now also know the cause of the decline in the ozone layer. Earlier candidates for blame, such as cyclical changes in the activity on the surface of the sun and shifts in world weather patterns have been fairly decisively ruled out.

The prime culprits are a group of chemicals called chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). Scientists have suspected these chemicals for quite some time now.

Eleven years ago a Department of Environment report warned that if emissions of CFCs were not reduced, then there would be a reduction in the ozone layer of up to 16 percent.

Ozone is a simple, but unstable, form of oxygen. The CFC chemicals wreak their damage by breaking down to form chlorine monoxide, which then attacks ozone.

As a result of the massive amount of chlorine released by CFCs into the upper atmosphere, the ozone layer has declined worldwide by 3 percent. But in some areas the decline has been up to 50 percent.

Now a giant hole opens up in the ozone layer above the Antarctic every spring and a second hole is appearing over the North Atlantic. The peculiarities in the polar atmosphere

make these regions particularly vulnerable, but no part of the world will remain unaffected.

This destruction of the environment is well established as the result of human activity. So it should be within the bounds of our powers to stop and reverse the process. What has been done up to now?

The Reaganite solution to this problem was given by Donald Hodel, US Interior Secretary, who proposed a "personal protection" programme including the use of "hats, sunglasses and sunscreen lotion."

Appropriate for waning American presidents perhaps, but completely impractical where the bulk of the world's population is concerned.

The simple first step is to ban the unnecessary use of CFCs in aerosols. But here we come up against the competing interests of international big business.

The use of CFCs in aerosols has been banned in the US for nearly 10 years. Pressure from the environmentalists coincided with big business seeing advantages in a ban on them, by denying access to US markets by foreign competition.

This, however, has not stopped them shedding crocodile tears about the ban costing them \$1.5 billion.

An international conference in Montreal has just signed the first treaty controlling the production of CFCs. But as always in this capitalist world, profit holds sway before principle.

Keenest on the new controls were the US chemical giants. They stand to make a killing. If CFCs are banned then the American company Du Pont can displace the UK company ICI as the major producer of aerosol propellants.

ICI is one of the world's biggest producers of CFCs which are also used in fire extinguishers and refrigerators. Du Pont has patented alternatives to CFC.

This competition makes the prospect of any agreement look decidedly rosey. At stake for the British government is the profitability of one of the largest British firms.

The British government refused to sign the treaty and despite pressure for a 50 percent cut in production, is unlikely to agree to more than 20 percent.

At the present rate of progress, a 50 percent cut is unlikely to be achieved before 1999, by which time the damage to the ozone layer will be much worse than now.

The *New Scientist* reports that the Montreal agreement had more to do with the international chemical trade than protection of the ozone layer.

In particular, it is claimed that a period of grace built into the agreement will permit US producers to gain a share of third world markets, presently dominated by European manufacturers.

A nineteenth century economist said, "for a certain 300 percent profit, the capitalist will even risk hanging."

No one is going to be hanged by the wrangling over CFC production, but many will suffer agonising injury and death.

As capitalism has developed it has united the world through trade, transport and communication. But these advances, and the massive advances in our potential control over our environment can't be put to their full use under capitalism.

Capitalism now threatens every individual through industrial pollution, nuclear power and war. Yet the necessary international solutions to these problems are as far off as ever because of the anarchy of competition.

One replacement for CFCs is nitrous oxide, commonly known as laughing gas. Perhaps the old saying, "He who laughs last, laughs longest," will gain new meaning.

1968 A YEAR TO REMEMBER

by EAMONN McCANN

ALREADY THIS YEAR half a dozen hard-back books have been printed marking the twentieth anniversary of 1968 and the great wave of student militancy which swept the western world that year.

There'll be dozens more before the year is out. At least two are planned dealing specifically with Ireland and the role of students in the Northern civil rights movement.

It's true that 1968 was a year of great political drama. But the drama didn't come out of the blue. It can only be understood in the context of political developments which had been under way for at least two decades.

1968 came at the end of a long period of relative peace and economic progress. In the years between the end of the Korean War (1953) and the beginning of major American involvement in the Vietnam War (1966) the gross national products of the western countries—ie, the US, western Europe and Japan—increased by 250 percent.

This economic expansion and the development of new technology meant that capitalism needed a far better educated workforce than ever before. In all the developed western countries there was a mushroom growth of higher education.

At the same time the great myth-or lie-which had dominated political thinking for as long as these students had been alive was beginning to be exposed. The great myth was that the world was divided into two entirely antagonistic systems of political and economic organisation. Everybody had to be on one side or the other.

TAKING SIDES

If you were on the American side you would see the difference as being between "democracy" and "dictatorship". If you were on the Soviet side you would see it as between "imperialism" and "socialism".

But in 1968 the US, in the name of democracy, was raining down bombs and napalm on the peasant people of a poor Third World country. While in the name of "socialism" Russian tanks were denying the working class of Czechoslovakia the most basic human rights. The old simplicities were obviously inadequate as an explanation of the world young people lived in.

It is not surprising that this situation produced a ferment of ideas among students—the people who were being "trained" as the intellectuals of the next generation. Many began to question the ideas and assumptions on which their university courses were based. The result was dispute and confrontation between student and academic authority in many universities.

New revolutionary "gurus" were discovered and heroes made of hitherto obscure writers and thinkers. Rejecting both East and West, there was a tendency to look towards the Third World. The faces of Guevara and Mao became familiar on posters and pamphlets. Trotskyism was re-discovered.

Had this new radicalism been contained within the student population it would have had little or no effect on politics generally and there would be no point in dwelling on it now. But students don't live in a vacuum or in a world that's sealed off from surrounding society.

It was when, and only when, student discontent became linked to movements outside the university campuses that it had a real effect on political events. However, in the excitement and euphoria of this period this point was missed by many of those prominently involved. Some developed a theory of students as a new revolutionary element, or even "class"—a notion which did wonders for the self-esteem of some student leaders but which had little to do with reality.

TET OFFENSIVE

In the US the student movement played an important role in the fight for black liberation and against the Vietnam War. The struggle of the blacks had been gathering pace since the late fifties. The sit-ins and marches against segregation in the Deep South had been followed by ghetto uprisings in cities like Los Angeles, Detroit and Chicago.

The crucial event in the fight against the Vietnam War was not protest activity in the US but the "Tet Offensive" in January 1968 when Vietnamese fighters attacked every major American base in South Vietnam, captured Hue city and even seized control of part of the US embassy in Saigon for a time. It was this which finally shattered the myth that the US forces were merely assisting a "democratic" government to defeat communist "invaders" rather than imposing a corrupt dictatorship on the mass of the Vietnamese people.

Relating to the rising tide of black militancy, and to the growing awareness of immorality and futility of the War, the American students were able to make a real and lasting impact on political life.

In Ireland the student movement, mainly centred on the Peoples Democracy at Queen's,

Belfast, developed out of protests against RUC attacks on Civil Rights marches. In some ways it was the most successful student movement of all—in February 1969 it was to win 27 percent of the vote in the eight constituencies in which it stood in a Northern election.

PD's strength was that its militant student rhetoric matched the mood of the Catholic masses angry at the latest outbursts of RUC sectarian violence. But it never carved out for itself a socialist position within the Civil Rights movement and was soon swamped by the rising tide of Republicanism.

In Czechoslovakia and Poland student protests both reflected and reinforced the widespread opposition of workers to Stalinist tyranny.

But it was in France that the student movement reached its high-point.

The student "revolution" in Paris erupted with dramatic suddenness. A small group at Nanterre, near Paris, held a demonstration in the first week of May against the threatened deportation of a German Jewish

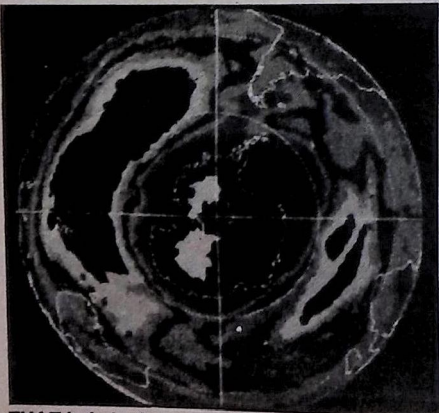
Where

WHEN THE *Sunday Tribune* wanted somebody to review a couple of books on the "1968 revolution" they sent them to Labour TD Ruairi Quinn. In the *Tribune* last month Quinn duly wrote a nostalgic piece about what a marvellous episode 1968 had been.

This is the same Ruairi Quinn who supported coalition with Fine Gael in the seventies and again in the eighties, who grabbed the Cabinet seat left vacant when Frank Cluskey resigned in protest against the Dublin Gas scandal and who, as Minister for Labour, drafted anti-trade union laws which Fianna Fail is now considering re-introducing.

To many people the explanation for this turnaround is simple: Quinn "sold out". And there's an obvious sense in which this is true.

But in another sense he didn't sell out at all. Because to many of those who, like Quinn, were involved in radical politics in the sixties, it was never a matter of liberating oppressed humanity but of liberating themselves from



THAT hole in the ozone layer





udent, Daniel Cohn-Bendit. When the French riot police reacted with vicious brutality, the student protests spread with bewildering rapidity. Within 48 hours there were all-night pitched battles in the Sorbonne university area—and so savage were the police tactics that a very reluctant trade union leadership was forced to call a one-day token strike in protest.

However, once the workers came out they stayed out, for their own economic demands which, until then, they had not felt confident or militant enough to take direct action for. Within days, workers all over France had begun to occupy their factories while trade union officials tried desperately to dampen down the action.

What had begun as a student protest turned into the biggest general strike in history, involving 10 million workers. For a brief moment French capitalism trembled and De Gaulle, the president, fled an army base in Germany.

What had happened in France showed the way in which student protest with its spontaneity, daring and sheer fervour, in particular circumstances could detonate mass action by workers. It was the mass action of the workers which made the "May Days" a real threat to the capitalist system.



Where are they now?

something which hardly qualified as oppression". The long capitalist boom of the fifties and sixties, and the expansion of higher education which went with it, made masses of young people impatient with the dull, stultifying ethos of their parent's world. The economy seemed crisis-free and capitalism capable of infinite expansion. The spectre of mass unemployment seemed gone forever. There was a sense of confidence and energy and a quickening rhythm of life all around.

INDIVIDUALISM

Old conventional ideas and attitudes seemed as outmoded and unnecessary as the political leaders associated with them—Eisenhower and Stalin, MacMillan, De Gaulle and Adenauer, and in Ireland de Valera and Lord Brookeborough. And thus "revolutionary politics" took the form not only of campaigning for radical change in society and support for liberation movements abroad but also for rejecting the limitations on

individual personal freedoms which had made the fifties such a boring time to grow up.

For many, dope-smoking and sexual adventurousness with a Beatles album as background music was as central to the "spirit of '68" as campaigning for definable political objectives. One activity seemed to go with the other.

It was all relatively harmless and certainly an advance on the repression and guilt which had gone before. But it did indicate the extent to which "revolutionary" politics were regarded as a holiday out of real life rather than as a serious effort to change the reality of life under capitalism.

The subjective idealism of many of those involved in 1968 is not to be doubted. What can be doubted, however is the extent to which any serious effort was made to work out what type of political organisation was needed, and what section of society it would have to be built on, if "personal freedom" were to become a reality in society generally rather than a bonus for themselves in their off-duty hours.

For many thousands 1968 was a

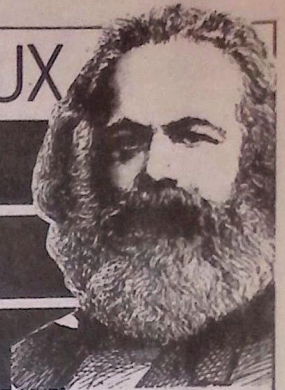


time when revolutionary politics were great fun and when it was even possible to catch a glimpse of a way in which the world could be organised for the benefit of all. But for the vast majority of the many thousands a glimpse was all it ever came to. The painstaking work of building a revolutionary political organisation, and of relating revolutionary ideas to the day-to-day reality of working class life was not for them.

Nowadays, like Ruairi Quinn, they recall 1968 with affection and can relive it again in the arts pages of the snob Sundays or by listening to the evocative music of the period—this time no doubt on the new compact disc player which offers high-fidelity sound and low-fidelity politics.

JOHN MOLYNEUX

Teach yourself Marxism



SEVERAL events have powerfully raised the question of abortion in recent times.

First, the defeat of the opposition to the SPUC-inspired abortion amendment in the South.

Second, following on from that defeat, the attack on the referral clinics culminating in a High Court judgement making the provision of information on abortion illegal.

And last month, the first major hurdle was passed in Britain for Alton's Bill shortening the time limit on abortions there.

The right to abortion enlarges the control that women can exercise over a crucial aspect of their lives.

Marxism is the theory of class struggle, but in the final analysis that struggle is about working class people fighting for control over their own lives, indeed Marxism views the whole of human history in terms of this struggle.

In the earliest stage of human development, the stage of hunting and gathering, people lived in small, relatively harmonious groups without inequality or class divisions—therefore, without states or political domination or conflict.

Control

This might be seen as an idyllic state of affairs except for the crushing fact that people were almost completely at the mercy of the natural environment.

The forces of production were then so limited that the entire life of every member of the group was dominated by the task of obtaining the immediate necessities of food, shelter and clothing.

Like animals, people were compelled primarily to adapt themselves to the environment, for example moving from one place to another as the supply of food ran out.

However, unlike animals—and this was what differentiated the human species—they had already begun in a very limited way to engage in production—an activity which contained in embryo the capacity to exercise control over nature.

The further development of this capacity through horticulture and then agriculture, brought human history to a crucial turning point.

It became possible to produce a small surplus over and above what was needed for immediate subsistence, and it was now that there occurred the division of society into classes—a minority class that controlled and lived on this surplus and a majority class from whose labour the surplus was extracted.

Abortion and human emancipation

The extraction and accumulation of this surplus was of immense significance for human advancement. It made possible the establishment of written language, and the beginnings of scientific knowledge. And it led to a massive acceleration in the growth of the productive forces.

At the same time a terrible price was paid for this advance—the inauguration of the epoch of exploitation and oppression. An enormous expansion of human control over nature was purchased at the cost of submitting the majority of society to the control of a ruling minority.

The long history of class society in its various forms, from the ancient world based on slavery, through feudalism to capitalism has seen the further development of this contradiction.

On the one hand, a truly fantastic advance in the productive forces, ie in the general human capacity to master nature and determine our own fate.

On the other hand a no less fantastic subordination to the tiny minority who control production and who are themselves ultimately subordinate to the logic of accumulation for accumulation's sake.

The final stage of this process, modern capitalism, has, however, laid the basis for the resolution of this contradiction.

It has raised the productive forces to the point where a decent life is available for everyone without anyone being condemned to endless toil. And where a sufficient surplus

can collectively be set aside without any necessity for the exploitation of the majority by a minority.

All that is required is that the direct producers, the working class, should take control of the means of production and the running of society, ie that we should take control of our own lives.

Producers

But, of course, the ruling class have an intense interest in stopping this happening and one of the main weapons in their arsenal is the ideology that our subordination and their rule are not social and changeable facts but the natural and immutable order of things.

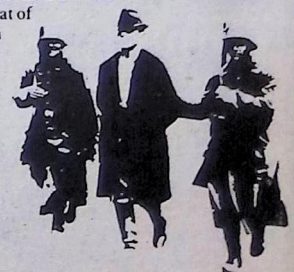
Religion and the concept of "the natural" both play major roles in this ideology. Both insist that we should not even aspire to control our own destiny.

So useful are these ideas, that the capitalist class clings to them even though the whole history of capitalism, from the steam engine to the jumbo jet and the intercontinental ballistic missile, is a relentless interference with the "natural" and the supposedly God-given "sanctity of human life".

The demand for abortion rights challenges all this in a vital area.

It asserts the principle of self determination for ordinary people. That is why so many of the ideologists of capitalism are almost instinctively anti abortion. That is why Marxists support abortion rights as a matter of principle. That is why abortion is a class issue not only practically, but also ideologically.

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



THE LOST REVOLUTION

Germany 1918-1923
by Chris Harman

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

OUR HISTORY

Gramsci versus Reformism

GRAMSCI WAS born in 1891 amongst the grinding poverty of Sardinia. His father was a state functionary but was imprisoned on an embezzlement charge and so Gramsci's childhood was as poor as many of the Sardinian labourers' children around him.

The experience of his childhood in Sardinia was to influence him later in his analysis of the "Southern Question". Italy's Northern capitalists had reduced Southern Italy to a colony. Workers from the South were forced to leave the rural underdevelopment of the south and pour into the northern industrial towns of Turin, Milan and Genoa. This influx of "immigrants" became a source of division among Italian workers. Gramsci argued that Northern workers had to take up the Southern Question otherwise the southern peasantry would fall prey to the ideology of their landowners. Fascism was to prove Gramsci right.

At 20 Gramsci won a scholarship to Turin. Turin was a burgeoning proletarian city. Vast engineering works dominated the city's horizon.

They tripled in size during the war so that FIAT alone employed 30,000 workers. 3 million workers had flowed into unions, mainly the metalworkers' union, the FIOM, which won the eight hour day in 1919. Much to the alarm of the Italian government, in August 1917 the Turinese workers had greeted the Kerensky government with cries of "Viva Lenin". Turin was Italy's Petrograd.

Gramsci was soon propelled into the leadership of the local Socialist Party (PSI). The PSI was a ragbag of right reformists (like Turati), left sounding so-called Maximalists (like Serrati) and political purists who followed the sectarian Armando Bordiga. Gramsci founded a journal called *Ordine Nuovo* which became the name of his grouping within the Socialist Party. The main issue that separated *Ordine Nuovo* from the rest of the PSI was support for the

workers' councils or *Commissioni Interni*.

Commissioni Interni (factory committees) had sprung up during strikes in Turin and they led the factory occupations during the 1920-21 period. They were rank and file workers organisations that grouped together the most militant workers, union and non-union and organised independently of the official union leadership. Gramsci recognised in them a potential embryo of workers' power and, aware of what had happened in Russia, saw them as Italy's soviets. *Ordine Nuovo* tirelessly fought for their political strengthening during the occupations. But the occupations were defeated.

The peak of working class struggle was in September 1920, with half a million workers occupying their workplaces. Only eighteen months later, the fascists marched on Rome and Mussolini began smashing all remnants of opposition in unions and the PSI.

The defeat was dramatic and disastrous. Gramsci came to see the glaring need for a unified revolutionary socialist party. Workers' councils alone would not be enough. What was needed to push the occupations on to victory was a party "in which the spontaneous movement of the revolutionary masses and the organisational and directive will converge". Without it, the reformist leaders could step into the breach.

Gramsci spent the years after the occupations building and arguing for such a party. In 1921 he helped to found the Communist Party (PCI). However, it was only a minority from the PSI that were prepared to make the break with reformism, and many of these, under the leadership of Bordiga, bore the hallmarks of a sect. They made a virtue of not tainting themselves with workers' everyday "economic" struggles; as a result they failed to build the new PCI. More importantly they spurned all activity with reformists, even if it was against the common enemy of fascism.

Gramsci argued for a very different sort of party to the Bordigists. In the Lyons Theses of 1926, he argues that the party must be based where workers have power—at the point of production. Only then can it counteract the influence of reformist leaders, who he defines as the "left-wing of the bourgeoisie". While insurrection and establishment of workers' power must be its goal, it must also be prepared to use the tactic of the united front—of working side by side with reformists—as a means of unmasking so-called socialist parties and fighting fascism.

This is not the language of accommodation and compromise as the Eurocommunists would have us believe. Indeed Gramsci specifically criticised any "pessimistic" talk of historic blocs with the bourgeoisie. Those who advocated such alliances were "timorous souls who were waiting to become fifty percent plus one of the population, and who expect socialism to arrive in the shape of a royal decree, countersigned by two ministers!"



The Prison Notebooks

HOW then can Gramsci be claimed by the reformists? The answer lies in the writings he produced from prison, after his arrest by Mussolini in 1926.

In order to get past the fascist censors, Gramsci had to use obscure language. For example, he used "philosophy of praxis" for Marxism, the "Modern Prince" sometimes for the party, or more confusingly "bourgeois revolution" for workers' revolution. As a result, the Prison Notebooks are difficult and obscure.

This weakness has been used to "give Marxism a new perspective" in an attempt to remove Gramsci from the revolutionary tradition. No-one was more guilty of this than

Gramsci's former comrade in the PSI and the future leaders of the CPI, Palmiro Togliatti. In Russia during the Mussolini period, he withheld publication of Gramsci's works because they might not be fully reliable from a Stalinist point of view. When they were published in 1947, they were mis-used to back the current CPI line and interpreted as a vindication for a climb-down from a revolutionary perspective. All references that Gramsci had made to Trotsky, Bordiga and Rosa Luxemburg were removed, for example. Togliatti held that all these were "fascists".

CULTURE

But the ideas in the Prison Notebooks, while being a wealth of Marxist analysis, covering subjects from Italian history to culture and art, are open to interpretation and are used to oppose those very revolutionary ideas which Gramsci was trying to develop.

Gramsci was preoccupied by the problem of why the occupations had failed. He concluded that spontaneous insurrection alone could never lead to a successful revolution in the West. A revolutionary party would have to deal with issues that had not beset the Bolshevik party, in particular the presence of reformism and a more developed state apparatus that wielded ideological power as well as physical force. He argued that the strategy that socialists should adopt should be two-fold: a strategy of overthrow when the time was right and a strategy of trench warfare when power could not be immediately conquered. He called the direct assault the war of manoeuvre and the more drawn out process the war of position.

The value of this distinction is obvious. Socialists have to know when an all-out attack on state power is winnable and when, on the contrary, a longer more defensive battle is required. The point is that Gramsci always argued that both would be required.

But Eurocommunists simply

dropped the war of manoeuvre. They argued that in the West overthrowing the state was not on the cards and what was needed was a long drawn out trench battle only. This allowed them to see elections as a way to win socialism.

Gramsci had also argued in the Prison Notebooks that workers had to win hegemony—ie dominance—over other classes to complete a successful revolution. He was particularly referring to the Southern peasantry, since northern workers had remained cut off and divided from them during the occupations.

He also linked the idea of hegemony to civil society. The ruling class in the west does not simply govern by force. They govern also by consent, through a panoply of social institutions such as the Church, the education system and so on. They were areas that socialists could not ignore. The war of position had to be carried on here too.

PRISON

This idea was seized upon by the Eurocommunists as justifying their position that the battle for ideas supplants the need to take on the capitalist state. And this in spite of Gramsci's explicit insistence that "there is no possibility of a revolution in Italy that is not a socialist revolution".

What we should take from Gramsci's concept of hegemony is the need to combat reactionary ideas as well as waging the struggle from below. While racist, sexist and other such ideas cannot be challenged on a wide scale without revolutionary upheaval, equally they cannot be simply ignored hoping that they will be spontaneously changed in the course of revolutionary struggle.

The years Gramsci spent in prison were long and hard. A fall that he had had as a child had left him a hunchback, and he suffered terrible feverish attacks. Letters to his wife and children (one of whom he had never seen) and his sister in law, Taranina speak eloquently of his solitude and isolation.

He was behind bars all through the early Stalinist period. Gramsci did indicate that he was critical of the excesses of Stalin, though he remained distrustful of Trotsky.

Prison finally killed him on 27th April 1937. He was 46 years old. The fascist prosecutor had said when passing sentence 11 years earlier that he wanted prison "to stop this brain working for 20 years". The prison notebooks prove that it had not done that. But it had cut him off from the involvement of workers' struggles that had earlier made him a man of such inspiration.

—MARNIE HOLBOROW



Workers occupy the factories in Italy—September 1920

'A little man with a large head'

An eye witness from the Third International who went to Italy in 1919, wrote,

"By chance I found myself reading a Turin weekly called *L'Ordine Nuovo*, edited by Gramsci. I found it very interesting. The correct position in every line of the paper induced me to invite Gramsci to Rome. He came at once. He was a marvellous, a fascinating comrade.

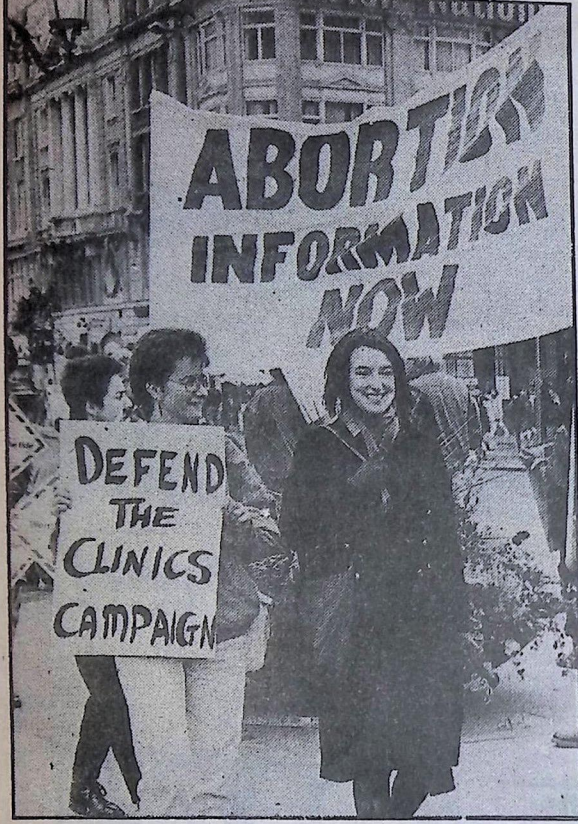
A little hunchbacked man with a large head (almost as if it did not belong to him) and penetrating intelligent eyes. He calmly analyses the situation in Italy. Every thought shows him to be a genuine marxist.

In the city of Turin his paper had a wide following and his influence was great, although Serrati passionately denied this was so".

LETTERS
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LETTERS

SW unfair to campaign

WHAT WE STAND FOR



GER TUOHY'S criticisms of the Defend the Clinics Campaign (SW Jan) were a bit of the mark.

She claims that the word abortion has been dropped from slogans, supposedly in an attempt to make the 'issue more acceptable'. In fact, the campaign banner is emblazoned with the words "Abortion Information Now". The headed notepaper makes the same demand. Stickers, T-shirts, posters and leaflets all refer openly and directly to abortion.

Ger Tuohy also accuses the campaign of "shying away from a militant broad-based campaign which would involve the mass defiance of the law thereby making it unworkable". It's true that the campaign might have been more militant. But this approach has been somewhat hampered by the limited support we have received. I'm afraid that Ger's

laudable desire for "mass defiance" isn't actually realisable at the moment, though that's not to say that the campaign has not worked hard for wider backing and action.

But I simply can't understand Ger Tuohy's assertion that the campaign must become more broad based. The campaign has consistently orientated on a worked with within the trade unions, community groups, womens groups, student unions and political parties. Maybe Ger thinks we should try and pull the Church in behind us.

Finally, Ger correctly argues that it's essential to step up the campaign and include as many people as possible to defy the law. Hopefully the, the SWM in Dublin will take up this appeal and rejoin the campaign.

-PAM VENES, CORK

The editor replies

It seems that Pam Venes cannot see the wood for the trees. Of course, it is

frustrating that the Defend the Clinics Campaign has failed to mobilise people. We share the irritation. But the point is: why has it failed? On ly an honest reappraisal of the campaign's politics and priorities will point the way forward. This is what Ger's article did. Yet Pam singles out the SWM for blame when it is the prevailing politics of the campaign that are at fault.

Sorry, Pam, but there was an attempt at the beginning of the campaign to shy away from the abortion issue. Right at the beginning when over one hundred women gathered for an initial Dublin planning meeting precisely on the abortion issue, they were told by Nell McCafferty and others that abortion shouldn't be mentioned. It was non-directive counselling that was to be the lane phrase. It wouldn't, apparently, put off the Council for Status for women.

'Lies' about Lenin

WITH reference to the article "Why socialists don't defend national sovereignty" June 1987 No 37.

Quote: "Marxism cannot be reconciled with nationalism be it even of the "most just", "purest" most refined and civilised brand". In place of all nationalism Marxism advances internationalism, the amalgamation of all nations in the higher unity, a unity that is growing before our eyes with every mile or railway line that is built. . . and every workers association that is formed. . ." Combat all national oppression? Yes of course. Fight for any kind of national development, for "national culture in general? . . . Of course not!"

Where did Lenin write that? When did Lenin write that? In what context did Lenin write that? It would be interesting to find

out what was written where the dots are. One thing is clear to anyone who knows the slightest thing about Lenin; the way you meant it, is a lie!

Whats wrong with the IRA is that they're not Leninists. And is it any wonder? You say to the IRA that if they want to be Leninists they must, turn traitor on their country, betray their dead comrades and call all the comrades who are now in prison and all those that in any way the Irish republican movement helped, fools!

If after this every IRA man or woman spite on the name of Lenin who could blame them? This is a tragedy, because in reality Lenin would have had no problem supporting the IRA. As he said himself "critical support". He would try and show them, that capitalism is responsible for their

"just grievances", and that communism is the only answer.

For Lenin there is no contradiction between "proletarian" nationalism and internationalism.

This lie from you was deliberate. On that there can be no doubt. Lenin is loved by national freedom fighters the world over, for the very reason that he fought determinately on their side. There is no way on earth that you didn't know about this; you must have looked very hard to find this quote. Why the man wrote a whole book against Rosa Luxemburg on this point. It is criminal that you play on the ignorance of the Irish working class on Leninism, to spread this slander.

-ADRIAN WOODS, BERLIN

WE REPLY

FIRSTLY, you ask where are Lenin's remarks taken from. They belong to his most famous work on the national question: "The Rights of Nations to Self-Determination". Hardly an obscure work!

His remarks were directed at precisely those socialists who championed a form of "proletarian nationalism" that you espouse.

Lenin argued for self-determination as the most democratic way of settling national disputes. He supported all struggles against national oppression and ALL battles waged against imperialism.

But he did so from a working class point of view, and hence never made the slightest concessions to nationalism.

Secondly, this is of particular relevance to Ireland. Today, the Republican Movement is fighting British-imperialism and the sectarian state of Northern Ireland. We fully support that fight—though we disagree on their tactics. But when they call for "reclaiming the national spirit"; when they demand import controls; when they call for a "pan-nationalist alliance", revolutionaries brand those slogans for what they are: reactionary, backward looking utopias.

Secondly, the campaign's spreading out in all directions, with everyone doing their own thing has led to wholesale demoralisation. A campaign must prioritise activities and that implies certain politics. A militant picket outside RTE could have built up confidence and exposed the media role. The campaign let our suggestion drop.

Finally, Pam, what lessons do you draw from the campaign's failure? You do not not say. More hard work will not do it. Moralism never won any campaign. Mobilisation, however, does. Opportunities to do that should be seized upon not ducked.

Public meeting

1968-88—The Revolutionary Road to Socialism

Speakers
Pat Stack, SWP
Eamonn McCann, SWM
8pm Friday 19 February
North Star Hotel, Amiens Street
Dublin

National Anti-Apartheid March

Dublin, 19 March
Assemble 2pm Parnell Square
Rally 4pm GPO

LETTERS
TO
SOCIALIST
WORKER
PO Box 1648,
Dublin 8

The Socialist Workers Movement is a revolutionary socialist organisation that fights for a workers' republic and international socialism. The system under which we live, capitalism, is based on production for profit—not for human need. It leads to poverty and war; racism and sexism. It is a system that can only be destroyed by the class which creates all the wealth—the working class.

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

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW
That kind of socialism does not exist anywhere today. Workers have no control over countries like Russia, China or Poland. They are exploited by a state capitalist class. A workers revolution is required in these countries too.

AGAINST PARTITION
The six county Orange state is propped up by British imperialism. That state divides the working class by the guarantee of marginal privileges in housing and jobs to Loyalist workers. The struggle of Catholic workers to rid themselves of sectarianism and bigotry can only succeed by smashing that state. The slow task of building working class unity against imperialism must be begun. However imperialism must be fought in the here and now and we support all forces engaged in that struggle regardless of our differences of programme.

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

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

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

AGAINST ALL OPPRESSION
Revolutionaries oppose all form of oppression that divide and weaken the working class.

We are for real social, economic and political equality for women. We are for an end to discrimination against homosexuals. We stand for full separation of the church and state. We stand for secular control of the hospitals and the schools.

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

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

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

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

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

I would like more details about the Socialist Workers Movement
NAME
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.....
Send to SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

An intensely political duo

EMERGING from nowhere in '87 to launch both their debut album "This is the Story" and their hit single "Letter from America", Craig and Charlie Reid (The Proclaimers) have served notice that they will be around for a long time to come.

The twins are an intensely political duo with the emphasis on the small "P". They have in the past campaigned for the Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP) and both are still members. Their progression from Punk to acoustic roots rock was a result of their desire to establish a distinctive Scottish identity. Their claim to be the only Scottish band without an American accent can only be said to be well founded.

They have survived an attempt to package them up and pass them off as a kind of novelty act with just enough politics and socialist acne to pick up where the Hull 4 left off.

The album's first track, "Throw the 'R' away" picks up the identity thread sardonically with the pressure they've subjected to to tone down their harsh Scottish pronunciation for British and American consumption.

Many Irish people will have no trouble relating to the topics covered in the album.

The appropriate hit single from the LP, "Letter from America" will strike a chord in many Irish homes. The track is a powerful evocation of the conflicting emotions surrounding emigration. "It Broke my Heart" also reflects the hardships which force so many young northerners in Britain to travel South in search of work and so many Irish young people to go to Britain.

The Proclaimers unusual vocal delivery, unashamedly Scottish along with the nationalist sentiments captures the mood of Scotland in its third term of Thatcherism. It is a musical document reflecting Scotland's rejection of Conservative rule.

Watch out for their coming Irish tour.

—CHRIS McCAY

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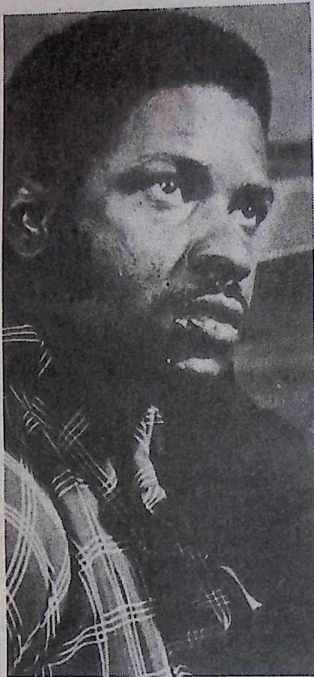
Alexandra Kollontai

Sexual relations and class struggle

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SOUTH AFRICA is fast becoming a very popular media event. For example, Paul Simon's Graceland tour; the recent television series on Mandela; and now Richard Attenborough's (remember Roger in the "Great Escape") film about Steve Biko, "Cry Freedom".

Attenborough has specialised in these large scale treatments of popular political causes, such as his film about Ghandi, (he also, on a smaller scale, films the Queen's Christmas speech, but no doubt, he doesn't have much influence on that).

"Cry Freedom" is designed for a massive popular audience and the way it is packing the large Adelphi cinema is witness to its success and also to the interest in South Africa here. And this is a good thing, in that it will manage to educate a massive audience on the horrors of apartheid.

The film's quality is based on the large scale scenes where we see the white apartheid state in action against the black majority. The opening sequence of the razing of the shanty town is

brilliantly done. These large mass scenes are where Attenborough is at his best. In a similar way Biko's funeral and the mass murder sequence at the end are equally brilliant. And the final list of names of people who died in police custody is a very effective and gripping end to the film.

The basic story of the film revolves around the friendship between Steve Biko and a white liberal newspaper editor, Donald Woods. The first part of the film is about the education of Woods to the real horrors of apartheid. He is initially against Biko and his ideas, in that he confuses black consciousness to be an equally racist ideology. His developing friendship with Biko leads him into direct confrontation with his own state. The film clearly shows that the apartheid state will spare no-one who opposes it, black or white.

The emphasis on the Donald Woods story, and his "education" is the film's major flaw. There is too little about Biko himself, too little about the organisations of the blacks and their attempts to actively resist the apartheid state. We see the naked brutality of the state in dealing with them and the

inventiveness and cleverness of Biko in opposing the repressive system, but this appears to be an individual solution.

Despite this flaw, which is probably designed to capture the hearts and minds of white liberal opinion in the western world, the film still manages to show up the repressive system and its effects. It explains how the "black consciousness" movement came about and how it laid the ground for the development of a black mass political movement.

In this way, however, the film is a document of a period of political history. The present day situation in South Africa is considerably different. The development of a trade union movement and workers consciousness has radically changed the political situation.

It will be interesting to see if the film is shown in South Africa itself. It is hard to imagine it will be within South Africa it would have quite a subversive impact. It is a film which should be seen by anybody with an interest in South Africa. It is a very well made film with excellent performances from the two main characters, and the mass sequences are brilliant.

—JOE O'BYRNE

Pogues: Old Gaelic poets

—DECLAN O'GORMAN

ABOUT 1980, I gave up listening to music altogether. Planxty and the Bothy Band were gone. Punk had been sold out and watered down by whatever forgettable groups were doing then, what the Pat Shop Boys are doing now. Then one night I switched on the Dave Fanning show. To my astonishment, I heard a spoon tap and a "piosa ceoil" blast off. Ceili music? I wondered for a moment. Then the best London punk voice I'd heard since Johnny Rotten, joined in with lyrics about "lazy drunken bastards singing Biddy in the Bowl".

Two years on, I still believe the Pogues have saved music. They have saved Irish music for a generation which missed the early excitement of Planxty and were bored by the later remnants of '70's folk. And they saved rock music from the miserable producers or whoever it is who insists on diluting every decent music form—be it blues, rock and roll or punk—and processing it for Superquinn and Top of the Pops.

The new Pogues album "If I should fall from grace with God" still has that feeling of a ceili band gone mad on some of its tracks, notably the powerful title track which opens Side 1, and "Bottle of Smoke" a gambling song. But it also develops the other side of the Pogues; the lyricism and feeling which lifts them above the run-of-the-mill punk bands of ten years ago.

Both in the political songs

such as "The Birmingham Six" and the more personal ones like "Lullaby of London", Shane Mac Gowan expresses emotions ranging from anger to despair to wistful reminiscence.

There is a sense of occasion about his singing. He ranks with Luke Kelly and Christy Moore as a brilliant interpreter of folk songs.

The themes of the songs range from the "oul reliable", "drunkenness (on the forgettable "Fiesta"), to a depressing morbidity on some of Gowan's more disturbing songs, to the despairing sadness of the down-and-out emigrant. "Fairytale of New York" is probably the first ever good Christmas song in the history of music. Some of Mac Gowan's writing has the intensity and natural quality of the old Gaelic poets.

The politics of the Pogues is an intriguing question. Philip Chevron's "Thousands are Sailing" is a brilliant indictment of the Irish system of exporting the unemployed poor, and interesting study of the emigrant's confusion.

"Where e're we go, we celebrate the land that makes us refugees".

The best song on the album is the Terry Woods/Shane Gowan medley "Streets of Sorrow, Birmingham Six", first a moving lament, then a raging accusation of British injustice:

"A curse on the judges, the

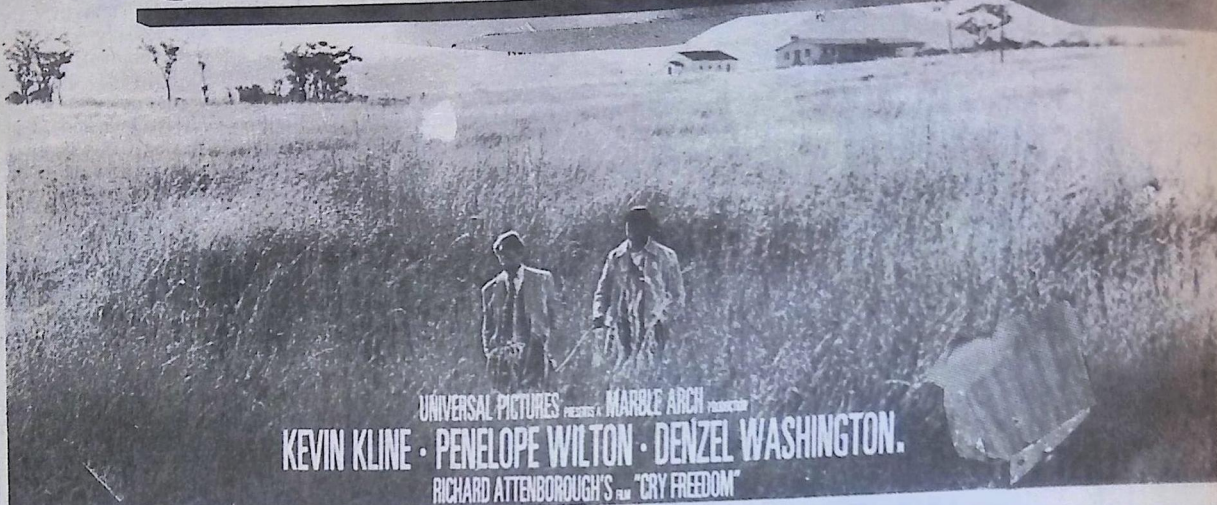
coppers and screws

Who tortured the innocent, wrongly accused".

My admiration of Mac Gowan which used to be total and unquestioning, suffered a setback when I read a Sunday Tribune interview last year, in which he suggested that young Irish people should vote for Charlie Haughey, as Haughey and Fianna Fail appear more "pro-Irish" and caring than Fine Gael. I was shocked when I read it. Anyone who lives here knows that in reality Haughey cares as much for the Irish in Britain, the nationalists in Northern Ireland, and young people in the Free State, about as much as Yitzak Shamir, cares for Palestinians. Whose economic policies are sending the "thousands" of Phil Chevron's song into exile? Whose army has been sent in to weed out working class activists and republican sympathisers? Whose extradition bill was passed? They are all the same—Fianna Fail or Fine Gael—unless you happen to be a RICH Irish person. However, I suppose all this is clearer now than when Shane made the remark. And even if his politics are uncertain, "The Birmingham Six" and "Fairytale of New York" show that his heart is in the right place.

This album is a welcome antidote to the mormon-style hypocrisy of the U2 image of Ireland and the world. It deserves to be huge.

CRY FREEDOM



UNIVERSAL PICTURES PRESENTS A MARBLE ARCH PRODUCTION
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RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH'S FILM "CRY FREEDOM"

A well crafted pistol



IF BOOKS are weapons, as socialists maintain, then "Women's Liberation and Socialism" is a welcome addition to the arsenal. It's written by three women in the International Socialist Organisation, the equivalent of the SWM in the USA.

At the risk of doing the analogy to death, it's more of a well-crafted pistol than a Sherman tank—compact, readily usable, and effective.

Although a slim volume, it covers the most important arguments about the relationship between the struggle for socialism and women's liberation, and how Marxists differ from feminists in tackling the question of women's oppression. Indeed it is because it is so concise, distilling the arguments and historical examples to the essentials, that makes it such a useful book—an accessible and ready outline of the revolutionary marxists' view.

For a more comprehensive study of the questions raised Tony Cliff's "Class Struggle and Women's Liberation", would be an ideal companion (and indeed begs comparison).

My only negative criticism is that I felt the explanation of the origins of women's

oppression, beginning as it did with the development of class divisions in society, could have been more well rounded. It can be a confusing argument to those new to the marxist analysis, and occurring as it does in an early chapter might not invite further reading of what is otherwise and excellent book.

—MARY SMITH

Women's Liberation & Socialism



"Women's Liberation and Socialism" by Celia Petty, Deborah Roberts and Sharon Smith, £1.95 + 50p postage;

"Class Struggle and Women's Liberation" by Tony Cliff, £4.95 + £1 post from SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

VICTORY TO THE FIREMEN

WHEN THE Stardust Disco in Dublin burned down six years ago the firemen were the heroes of the hour. Time and again they have been lauded by the establishment for their courage in saving lives and property.

Now they are vilified by that same establishment. This time Dublin's firemen are on strike and the media paints a picture of well-paid workers, endangering lives by their action.

Yet the firemen themselves know better than anyone that it is Dublin Corporation which is putting lives in danger.

It is the Corpo which is trying to shed staff, thereby making fire-fighting harder and more dangerous.

Dublin Fire Brigade is already understaffed by International Standards.

A city the size of Dublin should have one hundred extra firefighters. There should also be a surplus of

staff to cover for injured firefighters and inexperienced trainees.

Now the Corporation has tried to use the Public Service Voluntary Redundancy scheme to make more staff cuts.

Yet when the redundancies were offered to firefighters they were not as voluntary as was reported. At first, grades other than District Officer were refused severance.

The Corpo wants to save money by getting rid of the District Officers. Junior officers are now expected to take charge of the big fires without promotion and with smaller crews.

"Liberal" newspapers like the Irish Times and Sunday Tribune have carried stories about the backwardness of Dublin's fire service.

But you won't see them supporting the firemen's strike. This is because instead of waiting years for the authorities to make improvements the firemen have taken the fight into their own hands.

Solidarity is the key

IN A SHOW of solidarity with the Dublin Firemen, the Dun Laoghaire brigade has refused to serve areas in the south of the city.

Their suspension means that the army faces a bigger job to provide a scab service.

Corpo hard-man, Noel Carroll, is reported to be "confident" that the army can provide an adequate service. Undermining his confidence and winning a swift victory requires stretching the army even further.

If other Corporation workers came out in solidarity this could be done. Give the army the job of clearing up the rubbish and fighting

fires and we would soon see the Corpo climb down.

Also, other Corpo workers have a direct interest in supporting the strike. Their jobs and the services they provide are also being threatened by Local Authority cuts.

A campaign run by the union bureaucrats in the Corpo has concentrated on lobbying politicians and picketing City Hall.

This campaign could be pushed in a much more militant direction if the fight against cuts is linked to the firemen's strike.

Strikers should now be speaking at meetings of other Corpo workers to argue for this.

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IN BRIEF

IRISH GLASS BOTTLE STRIKE

WORKERS IN Irish Glass Bottles in Dublin have been on strike since 22nd January.

Machine operators have decided to fight management attempts to reduce staffing levels by 70 out of an operating staff of 300.

As is happening in schools, factories and other workplaces all over the country, Irish Glass Bottles (which made massive profits last year) is buying redundancies by lump-sum payments—the remaining workers will be expected to cover for the job losses. As it is, the operators work a dreadful shift system, working continuously 8 hours on, 24 hours off—nights or weekends are not regarded as overtime. The night shift cup of tea has to be drunk on the shift, and there is a general squeeze on working conditions.

The operators are demanding full maintenance of staffing levels, better working conditions than their present shift system and a better pay rise; (Management offered a raise of 3% over 15 months, and they only offered that when they realised there was going to be a fightback.)

As a result of the operator's action (they are all members of the ITGWU), the carpenters and fitters (NEPTU members) are laid off

and if the strike continues office workers will be laid off from 1st February.

It is vital the operators build solidarity with these other workers—holding common meetings, and encouraging active picketing etc. The fitters and carpenters have also experienced lay-offs and staff reductions—and it is this unity of the greatest possible number of workers, that is the key to winning.

—MICK BERRY

UP IN SMOKE

P. J. CARROLL'S has taken up the axe for redundancies again. 140 jobs are set to go in the tobacco division. The distribution centre in Dublin is to close with the loss of 40 jobs. Workers are to be redeployed to the Dundalk plant 60 miles away.

Last year however, PJ Carrolls turned in massive profits. The group as a whole made £14 million in profits.

The tobacco division despite government anti-smoking campaigns made £9 million. These profits have not deterred Carrolls from slashing jobs.

The plant in Dundalk is to be re-equipped with modernised machinery.

It could be Carroll's last push on investment. They are determined to suck as much profit as they can from a declining industry. Instead they

they will seek to diversify out of tobacco.

To carry through a redundancy programme they have brought in a management consultant, a Mr Fish. Mr Fish comes with an appropriate number of scalps under his belt. He was the axeman that slashed jobs at Cadbury Schweppes.

The hypocrisy of Carrolls knows no bounds. They both with the FUE rant on about getting the "right climate for investment so they can create jobs". But when the profits are really as never before, they slash jobs.

Management at Carrolls are already talking about "how things will be different" after the redundancies go ahead.

Workers must strengthen their shop floor organisation now to resist the redundancies and the attacks that are ahead.

VICTIMISATIONS

ON 12TH November last, Innovation Display Mannequins sacked two workers who had just joined a union. Soon afterwards the ITGWU sanctioned an Official Strike.

The workers were victimised for organising to fight for better health conditions.

Their job involved making and repairing shop mannequins. This required

skills like spray-painting and wig-making but the workers were paid a maximum of £105 per week.

They began to suffer from sinusitis caused by fumes from chemicals and bad ventilation.

One worker, Noleen O'Callaghan had dermatitis and asked for protective gloves. She was given rubber gloves, bought in a supermarket.

When the ITG agreed to represent the staff, Noleen became the Shop Steward. She and another member were victimised.

At first there were five strikers—now there are two. The boss and one scab are still delivering to shops but the strike can be won.

Innovation Display supplies all the big department stores. IDATU—which organises workers in these stores—has agreed to black the products.

Shop Stewards in the big shops must ensure effective blacking to force Innovation Display to climb down. The strikers should also be invited to speak at Annual General Meetings of IDATU branches.

Donations can be made to the strikers on the picketline at Great Ship Street, Dublin 2.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism



Thatcher's RUC

cover up

THE STALKER affair and the Birmingham Six case has caused more rage in Ireland against British justice than at any time since Bloody Sunday. If mass rage was enough to end injustice we would be well on our way to victory. But all history shows that it is not enough.

We should be clear at the outset that the rantings of Leinster House politicians and of the SDLP are sheer hypocrisy. If Charlie Haughey wanted to show the Brits he meant business there's a number of simple things he could do immediately and inexpensively. Boot out the British Ambassador, for example. He has not done that and no opposition party has urged this course of action either. Because none of them are serious about opposing British policy or British interests in Ireland.

The same goes for the SDLP. Like his Leinster House pals, John Hume has reacted to Stalker and the Birmingham Six case by arguing via some twisted process of logic that the Anglo-Irish Agreement is more important and more valuable than ever!

DIFFICULT

What enrages Haughey, Hume, Dukes, O'Malley, Spring and the rest of them most of all is that the British, by their "intransigence" and "insensitivity", have made it more difficult for Irish capitalist politicians to make their final peace with imperialism.

It doesn't lead them to oppose imperialism. Nothing could. It is the height of lunacy for any socialist or republican to imagine that the pained protests of Fianna Fail or the SDLP indicate that these parties—whether at "grass roots" or leadership level—can be "won over" to an anti-imperialist position.

The reason that can never happen doesn't have to do with the individual personalities involved. It has to do with the simple fact that it does not in any way serve the interests of Irish capitalism to be in conflict with British imperialism. This is the overriding truth which must be kept in mind. It is vastly more important than the traditional tactical weaving and dodging of Fianna Fail and SDLP politicians or the little outbursts of "patriotism" from "grass roots" of these sleazy organisations.

The Stalker and Birmingham cases didn't reveal anything fundamentally new about the viciousness and dishonesty of the British ruling class.

Shooting-to-kill, beating-to-death, torture, perjury and conspiracy to prevent the course of justice, these have been "acceptable" tactics since the RUC beat Sammy Devenney to death in the kitchen of his home in Derry in April 1969 and presented a "wall of silence" in order to shield the murderers. Rail-roading innocent people into prison comes as naturally to the British cops and judiciary as opening their mouths to breathe.

After all, the British ruling class has murdered, maimed, looted and raped its way around the world for centuries.

What was different about the 1982 "shoot-to-kill" policy is that they actually formed an "elite" RUC unit for the purpose, supervised and sanctioned by the British secret service.

The Birmingham Six case was out of the ordinary in the sheer scale of the injustice and in that evidence emerged to demolish the perjured case against them.

But what both cases show is that the capitalist state will always close ranks to defend those who commit crime and violence on its behalf. That's what the Thatcher government was doing when it sent its Attorney General out to announce that there would be no prosecutions arising out of the Stalker/Samson report, and what the Law Lords were doing in rejecting the Birmingham Six's appeal.

CONSPIRACY

In both cases there was a conspiracy to prevent the course of justice—and they were all in on it—Thatcher, the judges, the lot.

The capitalist state is a conspiracy—directed against the mass of the people and specifically against any group or community which presents a challenge to entrenched privilege.

The 26 Counties, too, is a capitalist state, run by and for people who live in fear of the

masses rising against them. They've had their own Birmingham and Stalker-style scandals too. The Heavy Gang, Nicky Kelly, the killing of Eamonn Byrne by detectives at the North Wall in Dublin etc.

They too, have police who are past masters at perjury and corrupt, politically-motivated judges.

STABILITY

What's more, we live in a world in which all capitalist states are to a greater or lesser extent inter-dependent, each with an interest in the political and economic stability of the other. British and Irish capitalism are united in wanting stable political arrangements on this island so that, together, they can get on with the job of running society for the benefit of their own class. Of course they can have difficulties and disagreements from time to time and even, as at present quite stormy rows, with shows of

emotion and exchanges of insult.

It's always like that when people who have no choice but to stick together has a bit of a falling-out.

But they do have to stick together, and they will.

In this situation, those who are opposed to extradition and all other aspects of repression should reject the notion of looking to the "grass roots" of Fianna Fail or the SDLP. On the contrary, we should look to the victims of Fianna Fail—thousands of whom have been on the streets of the 26 Counties protesting against Fianna Fail's anti-working class policies.

That is the anger we should be trying to tap into—a real rage rooted in the economic interest of the working class.

For example, as mentioned elsewhere in this issue, the soldiers scabbing in the Dublin fire-fighter's strike are the same soldiers who man the Gardai check point and carried out the "national search"

The link between political and economic repression is not a matter of abstract analysis.



Bugged by MI5: The Hay shed, Co Armagh, where Michael Tighe was shot dead by RUC

