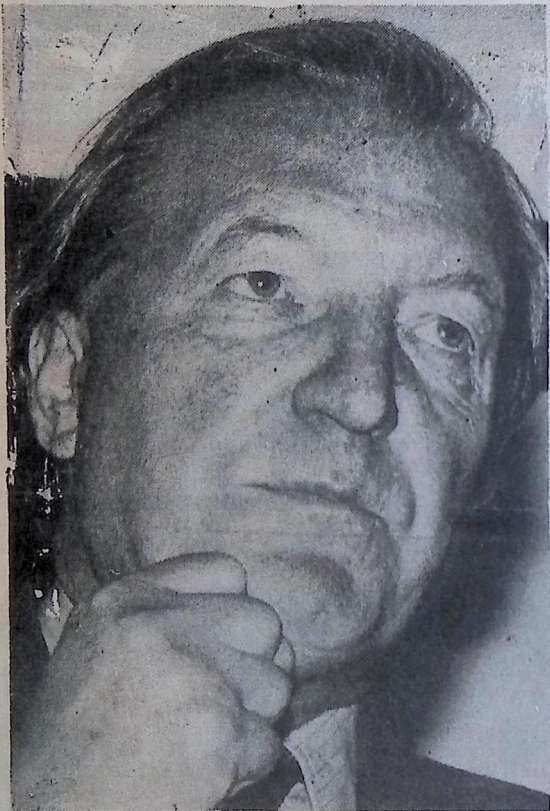


# Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

# Fianna Fail: The Green Tories



Millionaire Haughey

**CHARLIE HAUGHEY** has been crowing about how well the Fianna Fail government has turned round the economy.

In a "didn't I do well" speech at the Fianna Fail Ard Fheis last month he claimed that 29,000 new jobs were created last year, income tax was the lowest for twenty years and that the national debt is under control.

The "Programme for National Recovery", he claimed, held out the prospect of 3 per cent annual growth—higher than the European average—for the next five years.

He reckoned that EEC grants would pour in financing a massive National Development Plan complete with new railways, toll roads and bridges and more air links to Europe.

On the North, he looked forward to progress; claimed that Irish citizens would be

treated fairly by the extradition procedures and extended yet more olive-branches to the Unionist leaders.

The Fianna Fail faithful may have cheered Haughey's speech to the echo but the reality for the majority of working class people contrasts sharply with his bland assurances and phoney promises.

- All the poverty agencies report desperation of epidemic proportions. 40 per cent of children are brought up in homes on the poverty line;

- Unemployment in the South, far from falling, remains at a quarter of a million. And if 40,000 emigrants a year didn't pack the boats to England the figure would be very much higher;

- Tax cuts have predominantly benefited the rich while one in three workers are on low pay;

- Basic rights like health care, education and even bus services have been slashed for working class people.

Despite the public show of "standing up to Thatcher", Fianna Fail has been extending every co-operation to the RUC and British army.

Even as Haughey spoke at the Ard Fheis, three anti-extradition hecklers were bundled out of the building by forty gardai.

The idea that Fianna Fail is a party "of the people" stands exposed as a transparent lie. It is a party of big business every bit as much as Thatcher's Tories.

Haughey has surrounded himself with filthy rich cronies who have no more idea of the lives of ordinary people than they do of martians. And they care less.

- Dermot Desmond chief of financial sharks, National City Brokers, is often to be spotted chewing the fat with Charlie in Kinsealy;

- Multi-national building tycoons Dan and Amby McInerney are close confidants.

- Ex-patriot builder, multi-millionaire Charles Gallagher cements an alliance via his son Charles Jnr to Thatcher's Tory party.

- No need to for Charlie to go shopping for cheap bread when supermarket bosses Ben Dunne, Pascal Taggart and Gaven Weston are such frequent guests in the Haughey home.

But the myth remains—Haughey is "one of us". He is not. He is one of them. One of the pampered millionaire-crooks living off the backs of the rest of us.

His party is an efficient political machine for maintaining poverty, injustice, unemployment and oppression—in a word, capitalism—on this island.

Fianna Fail does the same job for Ireland's capitalists as Thatcher's Tories do for Britain's. They are Ireland's Green Tories.

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# Eamonn McCann

## Flynn's shame

ONE OF the most remarkable aspects of John Mitchell's battle against the right-wing in IDATU has hitherto attracted very little attention. It is the role of Sinn Féin's leading trade unionist, Phil Flynn.

It will be recalled that Mitchell's troubles began when he gave an interview to *Andersonstown News* in January 1987 in which he attacked trade union officialdom in the North for doing sweet f.a. about bigotry on the shop-floor. He referred to a "trade union mafia" which was in the pocket of the Northern Ireland Office.

This gave rise to squeals of complaint from union bosses in the North, as a result of which Mitchell was expelled from the executive committee of the ICTU, and IDATU itself suspended from Congress.

The executive of IDATU was considerably perturbed by this development. They now found themselves excluded from the cosy ICTU club, no longer eligible for membership of the various sub-committees and working parties which give union leaders access to a sense of self-importance and the "corridors" of power, free tickets for foreign junkets and so forth.

From the Spring of 1987, when the ICTU moved against Mitchell, the IDATU executive was on the look-out for a handy excuse to get rid of their troublesome general secretary and thus get themselves back in with the "right" people.

They got their chance in May last year when Mitchell hired a hall in the unions' Dublin headquarters to an anti-extradition group for what turned out effectively to be a meeting of Sinn Féin with Gerry Adams as the main speaker. Technically, Mitchell was in the wrong on this, and the executive used the incident to smear him as a "Provo".

At the same time they began spreading straightforward lies about the union's Derry and Belfast branches being "Provo fronts" and voted to close both branches down.

These were the issues which came to a head in November and led to Mitchell being sacked.

Given the nature of the issues it might have been thought that all Sinn Féiners in the trade union movement would have been rallying to Mitchell's defence. But far from it.

Phil Flynn is Sinn Féin's most prominent trade unionist. He's general secretary of the Local Government and Public Services Union (LGPSU) and a leading light on the executive of the ICTU.

Flynn hit the headlines five years ago when Coalition Blueshirt Paddy Cooney publicly urged the LGPSU not to confirm him as general secretary because of his Sinn Féin membership. To their credit, delegates to the LGPSU conference stood firm and told Cooney to get stuffed. So Phil Flynn both survived



Phil Flynn

as union general secretary and became a member of the ICTU executive.

What attitude did Flynn take when John Mitchell's case came before the ICTU?

Did he rush in to agree with Mitchell's right to castigate the unions' disgraceful performance in the North—or even to defend Mitchell's right to speak his mind?

### DISGUSTING

No, he did not. Phil Flynn, a former vice-president and still member of Sinn Féin, seconded the motion to kick Mitchell out.

Far from defending Mitchell, Flynn was among those who led the attack.

This disgusting performance wouldn't matter much if Flynn had been merely speaking for himself. He wouldn't have been the first "revolutionary" to have gained prominence in the trade union movement and then sold out everything he ever stood for. People like Flynn are a dime a dozen.

What is remarkable is that the Sinn Féin party, although it has covered the Mitchell story extensively in *An Phoblacht*, seems totally tongue-tied when it comes to explaining how one of their own members behaved in this way.

The best that embarrassed rank-and-file Sinn Féiners can come up with when they're confronted is that (a) Phil's under terrible pressure, his judgement was bad, or (b) he's being cute and keeping his head down, which is maybe what John Mitchell should have done.

Each of these "excuses" is as disgusting as the other.

Compared with Sinn Féin, the Socialist

Workers Movement is a tiny organisation. We'd "need" a trade unionist of Phil Flynn's prominence far more than Sinn Féin.

But we can say that if any member of ours even came within a barge-pole's length of behaviour like Flynn's over the John Mitchell affair, that member would be expelled, publicly, so quickly that his or her feet wouldn't touch the ground.

Not that such a circumstance is ever likely to arise within the SWM. Because the reason it can arise within Sinn Féin has to do with the political difference between a nationalist and a socialist approach to politics.

To Sinn Féin, the working class isn't central to political struggle. It's only one other element—with farmers, "small businessmen", "the poor", "progressive clergy" and anybody at all who'll accept the designation "Irish nationalist".

So Phil Flynn behaving like a quisling within the organised working class movement isn't anything crucial to Sinn Féin and wouldn't have been crucial to Phil Flynn's conception of himself as a "good republican".

It's worth repeating: Phil Flynn, a member of Sinn Féin, led the attack on John Mitchell for denouncing the union movement's failure to tackle sectarianism in the North.

Rank and file Sinn Féin members who regard themselves as socialists should now demand that Phil Flynn be publicly expelled from their party.

Either that or give over rabbiting about the Republican Movement being the place for socialists.

## Move Crotty on . . .

KILKENNY Fine Gael TD, Kieran Crotty, has launched an abusive attack on Travellers in the city.

He demanded last month that gardai put a stop to the "begging epidemic" in Kilkenny.

Attacking what he called "the offspring of travelling knackers", he asked, "How is it they are allowed to roam the streets and are not in school?"

FACT: Kilkenny

### DUNDALK:

# Hospital cuts protest

A THOROUGHLY miserable day did not deter thousands of working people from marching in protest through the streets of Dundalk to protest at the threat hanging over the Louth County Hospital.

The demonstration was organised by the Dundalk Trades Council, with the backing of the Hospital Action Group.

Syl Rogers, Chairman of the Dundalk Trades Council, told those assembled that by gathering in such great numbers they were showing the TDs in the Dail that they were no longer going to accept the position of second class citizens where hospital services were concerned.

Messages of support were read from the Monaghan, Drogheda and Meath Trades Councils.

Michael O'Reilly, ATGWU District Organiser, said in his address that "the cutbacks at the hospital have been taking place for three years and this is going to have to reverse".

He also stated that the interest charges levied by Irish banks on County Councils, Health Boards and semi-state bodies was £504 million for 1986.

If this was reduced by 2 per cent, cuts in health, education and social services would not be needed. Adding that Dundalk suffered the ravages of unemployment, he said that if the hospital was down graded there would be



Hospitals cuts protest

industrial action right through Dundalk to save the hospital.

This statement promising action was warmly received by the audience.

Tom Dooley, Vice Chairman of the Trades Council, announced that if another bed was lost or any there was any further threat to the hospital the Trades Council would support a "shut down" in the town. He concluded by saying "hit the wealthy; don't hit the unemployed".

At present the executive of the Dundalk Trades Council is in the process of setting up a joint meeting with the Drogheda Trades Council and hopefully a co-ordinated campaign

against the cuts will be implemented in Louth.

The SWM in Dundalk want to see a nation wide campaign called by these Trades Councils against health and education cuts. Only such action will ensure a climb down by Fianna Fail.

### McGAHON

Already the call for industrial action has been attacked by the right wing Brendan McGahon, Fine Gael TD.

The fear of politicians that working people will organise in their own interests brings the usual knee jerk response from them.

However, in Britain, Thatcher's policies on a

whole range of issues have been deeply unpopular.

Bishops, business people, and bourgeois newspapers have opposed her. But this impressive coalition cut no ice at all.

What did temporarily stop Thatcher in her tracks was strike action by hospital workers, beginning with 38 nurses coming out in Manchester—precisely the action McGahon opposes.

Hopefully the Trades Council will not turn its back on the only force with the ultimate potential to reverse decisions taken about the hospital, the force of industrial action by working people.

## Smash ALL the bigots

NO socialist could condone the death threats to Salman Rushdie by the Iranian government.

The author of *The Satanic Verses* is being used by the mullahs as another scapegoat. Once more religious fanaticism is being whipped up to draw Iranian workers closer to the regime.

On the other hand we have to expose the complete hypocrisy of Western leaders who

have condemned the threats.

People like Margaret Thatcher have attacked

Khomeini for his "intolerance" and lack of "civilised values".

Thatcher has no right to talk about intolerance. Her government recently passed Clause 28, an act designed to further victimise gays in Britain. Racist bigotry and violence is a fact of life under the Tories, as shown in the recent film *For Queen and Country*.

Neither has Thatcher

any right to champion "civilised values". She wants to increase the number of nuclear weapons in Europe just as Russia is cutting its stockpile.

Of course the idea of the Irish government talking about religious bigotry is laughable.

In recent years the bishops have whipped up such bigotry to prevent abortion and divorce. It took EEC intervention to change the ban on homosexuality.

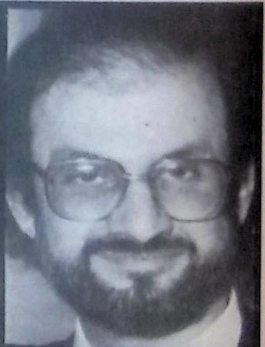
Only last year the bigots protested at Scorsese's *Last Temptation of Christ*.

In fact it is not so long ago that a case similar to that of Salman Rushdie happened here.

In the 1930s the writer Frank O'Connor met an old couple who lived in West Cork. They told him many stories dating back to a less sexually repressive era.

When O'Connor had these stories published the government and Catholic Church came down like a ton of bricks. The couple were ostracised and terrorised by neighbours.

Religion and religious intolerance go hand in hand. Such intolerance is always used to isolate



Salman Rushdie

those who stand out from the "norm" or who attack the status quo.

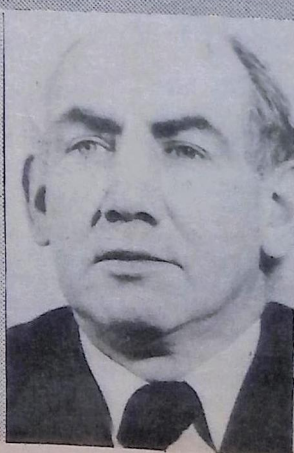
Salman Rushdie is under attack because his book challenges the myths of Islam.

Unfortunately many left wingers in Britain accuse Rushdie of being insensitive to Muslims. Socialists have to respect the right to practice any religion but we also have to expose religion as a sham.

While Rushdie attacks Islam he also opposes Western imperialism's interference in Asia—from Britain's role in his own native India to the West's role in the Middle East. We stand with him on all counts.

But we do not stand with the Western leaders who attack Khomeini. Their condemnation is part of a racist propaganda war on the "mad Iranians".

Khomeini may be a thug but Thatcher and Bush are bigger thugs.



THE MAIN business of the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis last month was the proposal from the Ard Chomhairle to build an "all-Ireland anti-imperialist mass movement".

The proposal was passed with only one dissident voice, from a Donegal delegate.

An Ard Chomhairle document gave details of the mass movement which is envisaged.

The objective is "to unite all the progressive forces in this country...around a charter of demands under a central and democratic leadership". The charter of demands would be centred on the principle of "national and economic self-determination".

The document argues that "Nationalists, who may not subscribe at present to radical social or economic policies, do subscribe to this principle. Equally, genuine socialists recognise that the struggle for national self-determination is an integral part of the struggle for the control and ownership of wealth by the majority class."

The document concludes from this that "Socialists and Republicans should therefore be...in the lead in advocating a movement for national self-determination which would include non-republicans and non-socialists."

A movement constructed in this way would "distil agitational demands which arise from the denial of self-determination". The demands would focus on human rights, jobs, living standards, social services, women's rights and cultural rights.

People taking part in campaigns for such demands "will be drawn through their own struggle inevitably to take on the controlling interests in Ireland which prevent such demands being met".

That is to say, these struggles will eventually, inevitably, come into confrontation with British imperialism and the agents of British imperialism in Ireland, and thus win the participants to active support for national self-determination.

*Socialist Worker* regards the Sinn Fein proposal as an important development. To the extent that it dispenses with the notion that Irish people can be brow-beaten into "anti-imperialism" with "patriotic" rhetoric and sentimental appeals to the past, it is to be welcomed.

The SWM will participate in any movement which sets out to draw together the various strands of discontent in Ireland North and South, and across the sectarian divide in the North. But we say from the outset that the proposal as

WE THINK

# What sort of movement?



United action is the key

formulated by Sinn Fein is seriously flawed.

Crucially, nowhere in the document is it explained how or why campaigns on, for example, jobs, wages, women's right or the Fianna Fail cut-backs in health and education will lead inevitably towards confrontation with British imperialism. This is just stated as if it were an obvious fact.

But can the Republican leadership point to a single workers' struggle in the South in the recent past the trajectory of which led towards confrontation with British imperialism. Hanton's ambulance factory in Long-

ford? The teachers' fight against cut-backs? Dublin firemen or corporation workers? The Cork ESB strike? The sold-out cleaners' dispute in Dublin?

## DIVORCE

Or take women's rights: the fight for equal pay, maternity and creche facilities, against sexual harassment and sexist attitudes to rape, for free access to contraception, divorce and abortion. In what way do these struggles come up against "British imperialism"?

Or consider the struggles arising from the Fianna Fail-Fine Gael-PD consensus on "fiscal rectitude"—against cut-backs, new charges and the penal taxation of the PAYE sector.

None of these struggles has headed in the direction of opposing British imperialism or of seeing "national self-determination" as a solution—for the good and simple reason that it's been native Irish capitalism and its political representatives who have been the enemy.

The political extension of these struggles is therefore in the direction

A MEETING in Dublin last month discussed ways and means of marking the twentieth anniversary this August of British troops coming into the streets in the North.

The meeting had been called at the invitation of a number of individuals, including Gerry Adams, John Mitchell, Christy Moore, Neil McCafferty and Robert Ballagh. Seventy-five people attended.

The meeting decided to launch a campaign involving a series of conferences—of writers, women, trade unionists, "progressive church groups", cultural activists, civil libertarians and community

workers.

The conferences would consider the impact of the last twenty years and of the "denial of national and democratic rights" on such interest groups. The activities are to culminate in a demonstration in Dublin on August 14th.

In our opinion this was a missed opportunity.

While not objecting to the proposed conferences, SWM speakers argued for a more open and activist approach, with a sharp focus on the demand for the withdrawal of British troops, the release of prisoners and an end to extradition; action groups set up

area to area to agitate for and organise support; and an open, publicly-called conference within three months to give the campaign a democratic structure and decide on precise demands and strategy.

We urged that the central emphasis of this activity should be on mobilising for a massive turnout on August 14th.

Our fear is that much energy will go into a series of talking shops which will not draw in any substantial new forces, when what is needed in this instance is an energetic, outward-looking campaign.

# WATERFORD: Anti-water rates fight hots up

THE WATERFORD Anti-Water Rates Campaign has moved into a crucial and perhaps final stage.

The campaign, which has been going on now for about five years, is still attracting large weekly public meetings and well attended pickets of both the Corporation and District Court sittings where water rates campaigners are to appear.

Well over 50 per cent of local people have still refused to pay, despite the Corporation and City Manager intimidating housewives on the doorstep, refusing grants for other services to defaulters, dragging them

before the courts and now finally bringing in outside scab contractors to cut off water supplies.

The backbone of the campaign is made up of local trade unionists who argue that they pay for local services like water through PAYE and that the imposition of water rates is just another form of tax.

## JAILED

The campaign has the backing of the local Trades Council, who have said publicly that they will call a work stoppage if any anti-water rates campaigners are jailed.

No doubt this has stopped the City Manager, Michael Doody, from seeking committal orders to

jail people who have gone through all stages of court proceedings and have still refused to pay.

Now the City Manager has resorted to bringing in outside scab contractors to cut off water when his own Corporation workers (ITGWU members) refused and said they supported the campaign.

The campaign has set up an emergency phone number (75438) for people who get cut off and to date have succeeded in turning everyone back on within a matter of hours.

When the contractors started to cement in the water cock-stops they also succeeded in clearing those.

Because there are different levels of consciousness and political views within the Anti-

Water Rates Campaign, the Corporation's latest tactics have caused much debate.

Should the campaign chase back the scabs to their home base and warn them off? Should we demand that the Trades Council organise a march and work stoppage? Should we extend picketing to the City Manager's private house? Questions like these have all been discussed at length.

## ACTION

Some members counterpose direct action to standing candidates in the next local elections and others say the campaign must at all costs stay within the law.

Socialist Workers'

of confronting Irish capitalism, of aiming at socialism, not of uniting with non-socialists in an effort to reach a half-way-house defined as "national self-determination". No such half-way house lies across the path of these struggles.

The areas of struggle in the South which do involve conflict with British interests are those directly connected to the North—extradition, no-jury courts, the Offences Against the State Act, censorship of republicans etc. But even here, Irish governments have been acting primarily not as "agents of British imperialism" but as representatives of Irish capitalism out to defend their own Irish capitalist state.

In doing this, of course, they collaborate closely with their British counterparts: Irish capitalism has a compelling common interest with British capitalism in maintaining political stability throughout the island.

Again, for socialists, political logic dictates that in these areas too we must take on Irish capitalism, not seek to unite with some putative "progressive" section of it.

The mass movement which Sinn Fein has in mind could not argue for socialist solutions since it would be purpose-built to accommodate non-socialists.

Who exactly are the non-socialists, and indeed non-republicans, that Sinn Fein believe will involve themselves? The document doesn't identify them in party political terms but refers to categories such as "patriots", "nationalists" and "democrats".

Lurking behind these labels are our old friends, "the grass roots of Fianna Fail and the SDLP".

In other words, we are back with the notion of a "pan-nationalist alliance" (albeit in broader and more activist form) within which labour—that is to say, socialist ideas—must wait.

In announcing this project Sinn Fein is recognising that the struggle against the British presence and for the dismantling of the sectarian Northern state must, if it is to succeed, break out of the confines of the working-class Catholic ghettos in the North and link up with the day-to-day concerns of the mass of the people.

We are entirely in favour of this. Our objection is to the politics which inform Sinn Fein's effort to achieve it—politics which are deeply rooted in Republican ideology.

These differences between the Marxist perspective of the SWM and the Republican perspective of Sinn Fein cannot satisfactorily be resolved in abstract argument. Let us put them to the test of action.

The SWM, while joining in the effort to build a mass movement, will argue sharply and vigorously for concentration on the specific interests of the working class, North and South, and against any suggestion of holding back on working class demands or struggles so as to keep "patriots", "nationalists" and "democrats" on-side.

And we shall see which set of ideas proves more adequate to the task.

Movement members and others have argued for militant tactics, linked through the Trades Council with the organised strength of workers as the only way to win.

Our members have also argued that by not paying the water rates in the first place we are breaking the law and that the next local elections are eighteen months away, whereas we need to fight Doody's tactics of fire with fire, now.

Fortunately the vast majority of those attending meetings have supported militant tactics to match the City Manager's and there is every chance that with unity of action and purpose plus a level of class consciousness the campaign can go on from here to victory.



City manager Doody

## INTERNATIONAL

## AFGHANISTAN

## Russia's Vietnam

THE DEFEAT suffered by Russia in Afghanistan is something to be welcomed by all socialists—not just because it's good to see the powerful humiliated, but also because the Russians are now less likely to roll their tanks into somewhere like Poland.

Afghanistan has an estimated population of 15 to 20 million people.

The majority of Afghans try to eke out a living from the land.

This is difficult as Afghanistan is choc a bloc with dry, rocky desert mountains, with valleys and seasonal streams. In the larger valleys small irrigation schemes have made agriculture easier.

Afghan life has been dominated by large landlords in a feudal manner. Most Afghans are landless 'sharecroppers', nomads and small farmers.

Afghans belong to various different ethnic groups—people

of Persian and Iranian descent, some of Turkish, some of Mongol descent. Even these broad groups are divided into various groupings—Tajiks, Uzbeks, Safis, Hazaras, Pushtuns, etc.

They differ in language, culture and history. One of the few things uniting all Afghans is Islam.

The life of women in Afghan society is even more tragic than that of men in terms of poverty, shame, humiliation and repressed anger. In the 1950s women risked acid being thrown at their legs for not wearing the 'veil'.

Afghan history is equally tragic, having been pushed around and squabbled over by Britain and Russia since 1838. Resistance to imperialism has traditionally focussed around

Islam.

A more progressive layer emerged in the '60s and '70s based on students and school kids. However, they failed to break the ideological power of male chauvinism and feudalism amongst the peasantry.

The left groups formed the PDPA (People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan) and turned their attention towards the army officers. This led in 1978 to the "communist" coup. They announced land reform and education for girls.

The problem was that these measures came from the top down, from the army officers—not from the rank and file soldiers, not least from the peasantry. To the peasantry the state had always been oppressive, they saw that the state was weak and took the opportunity to revolt.

Local revolts spread across the country. There might still be oppression and lords, but at least no state and taxes. The mullahs joined this revolt, taking the lead against "godless Russians".

By April 1979 the PDPA government held only six of the 26 provinces. Its days were numbered. The effects of this defeat could spread, not least to the Persian and Turkish speaking Muslims of the oppressed southern republics of the USSR.



In December 1979 the Russians moved in. For the last decade they have propped up the government with tanks, helicopter gunships, napalm etc. The parallels with the US in Vietnam are obvious: propping up unpopular regimes in the name of "democracy and freedom" (Vietnam) or "socialism and women's rights" (Afghanistan). One million have died, six million have fled to refugee camps. The irrigation systems are in bits. Famine stalks the capital, Kabul.

With the Russians gone, the regime is likely to fall, if it hasn't already by the time you read this. However, the Mojahedin is divided religiously, ethnically and territorially. The likely winners of the coming power

struggle within the Mojahedin are the fundamentalists.

Whilst Russian imperialism has received a bloody nose, socialists cannot rejoice that the backward, reactionary forces of the Mojahedin now have the upper hand. Financed by US imperialism via Pakistan, they represent the interests of the landlords and gangster-like chiefs.

As Kabul position became more precarious last month, Western embassies—whose aid had financed and armed the rebels—took fright and evacuated.

It is easy from the relative comfort of Ireland to despair of Afghanistan, of the misery, oppression and poverty that looks

set to continue, but there is hope, there is a way out of the cycle of misery.

It lies with the huge and potentially powerful working class of the surrounding countries—Iran, Pakistan and the USSR. With their economic resources they can overcome the problems besetting Afghanistan.

Another cause for hope is the estimated one million conscript Russian soldiers who have passed through Afghanistan. As they return to their towns and villages, factories and offices, they will begin to question: "What were we fighting for anyway?" It's a start.

VASCO PURSER

## SOUTH AFRICA:

## Botha's glee at Mandela tragedy

THE SOUTH African government has taken much pleasure in the scandal surrounding Winnie Mandela's body-guard, the Mandela United Football Club, and the murder of 14-year-old Stompie Moeketsi.

Television cameras were invited by the police to film their raid on the Mandela home.

Police claimed to have found weapons and bloodstains and arrested four of the football team in the full glare of the television.

Later two were charged with Moeketsi's murder, including the team's coach, Jerry Richardson who had previously admitted to the beating up of Stompie at the Mandela home.

After much pressure from anti-apartheid leaders from the black trade unions, ANC and United Democratic Front—and it is rumoured, Nelson Mandela—Winnie Mandela finally announced the disbanding of the body-guards.

At one stage leading anti-apartheid activists in South Africa had virtually disowned Winnie Mandela, demanding that she be referred to by her unmarried name. Young, militant "comrades" from the Soweto township had been involved in pitched battles with the football team which were renewed last month.

This is not the first time Winnie Mandela's name has been linked with embarrassing revelations. Last year she was involved in a murky deal with a US lawyer over rights to sell Mandela T-shirts in the USA and profit from merchandising the jailed ANC leader's name.

And the year before she applauded the "necklace" killings as "our form of struggle"—at a time when the ANC and UDF

were trying to distance themselves from it. The placing of burning tyres over the heads of collaborators from time to time was extended to dealing with those who opposed the ANC from the left.

The Pretoria government is obviously enjoying all this. But it should be remembered that it is the South African army and police which routinely brutalises and murders black children in the townships.

But whatever the true facts of this case, the dominant politics of the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa must shoulder much of the blame.

The ANC and UDF argue that all classes of South African blacks (and "progressive" whites) have an interest in fighting apartheid. They say that workers have no particular leading role and class struggle within the black communities must be suppressed lest it divide and weaken the movement.

But despite the fact that all South African blacks are oppressed by apartheid, there are class differences among blacks. There are lawyers, and businessmen and there are poor workers.

When the movement was on the up a few years ago with the explosive growth of black trade unionism and mass strikes, this problem was not so prominent. But as the regime has got more control on the township risings, internal conflicts have come more and more into the open.

It should not surprise us that in the intensely oppressive atmosphere of racist South Africa, divisions among blacks should from time to time express themselves in gangsterism.

A militant, organised black working class taking the lead of all the black oppressed in a revolutionary struggle against capitalism in South Africa is the only way forward.



The Mojahedin is divided religiously, ethnically and territorially

**THE "PEACE PROCESS" IN THE Middle East has been hailed by Washington and Moscow—and, naturally, by practically every party in Ireland—as a major step towards an honourable settlement of the "Palestinian problem". Yasser Arafat has become flavour-of-the-month in the most unlikely places.**

**Here, DOMINIC CARROLL argues that the West Bank "homeland" which Arafat envisages would merely amount to a Palestinian "Bantustan" and that only a much more radical solution can bring peace and justice to the people of the area.**

**THERE IS A WIDESPREAD and deep confusion about Israel. Many are puzzled as to why such a persecuted people as the Jews should subject another group—the Palestinians—to discrimination and brutality.**

**Others question the Arab world for its seeming refusal to let the Jewish people live in peace in their ancient land. Both views reflect a common misunderstanding about Israel and the Palestinians.**

The establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948 was the culmination of a project initiated in the late 19th century, when "Zionism" as a political ideology began to take shape. Its historical origins were located in the forced dispersal of Jews after the Roman conquest of Palestine around 2000 years ago.

Although scattered far afield, they maintained a strong sense of identity rooted in their religion and reinforced by centuries of discrimination and persecution.

Down through the centuries, this social isolation and economic exclusion led to the Jews being described as a "Ghost Nation". Eventually in 1884, search for a solution that went beyond fleeing resulted in the first Jewish National Conference, where a claim was staked for "a land of our own".

Just over a decade later, the publication of a pamphlet, *A Jewish State*, marked the beginning of the Zionist crusade for the establishment of a national home in Palestine. It also brought to prominence its author, a Hungarian journalist, Theodor Herzl, credited as the founder of the Zionist movement.

Herzl initially favoured purchasing land in Argentina on which to build the Jewish state, regarding Palestine as unfavourable because of its climate and proximity to Europe. Nevertheless, he opted for Palestine since "Eretz Israel" as it was known within the Jewish faith, "was the unforgotten ancestral seat of our people, its name would constitute a programme and it would powerfully attract the lower masses."

Reaction to Herzl's scheme within Jewish circles was generally muted and often hostile, particularly among the rich and powerful to whom his pamphlet was addressed. His negotiations with the Ottoman Empire, which held Palestine as a province, came to nothing.

Beginning to despair of gaining entry to Palestine, Herzl turned to the British, knowing that "England with her possessions in Asia should be most interested in Zionism, for the shortest route to India is by way of Palestine. And so I believe in England the idea of Zionism, which is a colonial idea, should be easily understood".

Britain responded favourably, even offering territory in Uganda which Herzl felt obliged to decline under pressure from within the Zionist movement. Although he died two years later, others continued to pursue his scheme.

#### BALFOUR DECLARATION

The first World War brought about the fall of the Ottoman Empire, with the British marching into Jerusalem in 1917.

Seizing their opportunity, the Zionist Organisation in England persuaded the British to announce the "Balfour Declaration", which committed them to the creation of a national home for the Jews in Palestine. In return, the Zionists undertook to rally Jewish support throughout the world for the Allies.

# ZIONISM FALSE MESSIAH

Churchill ridiculed any suggestion that the government had made a grand gesture out of "crusading enthusiasm or quixotic philanthropy. On the contrary", he continued, "a Jewish State under the protection of the Crown would be in harmony with the truest interests of the British Empire."

The fact that a mere 56,000 Jews lived in Palestine as against a million Arabs was of no concern. Balfour let it be known that "In Palestine we do not even propose to go through the form of consulting the present inhabitants."

Apart from strategic concerns, Britain's primary interest in the area was, and still is, oil. Their control of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, now BP, had given them an edge in the war.

The discovery of new sources in the Middle East prompted an imperialist scramble for control of the entire area.

Post-war negotiations among the victorious powers "entrusted" control of Palestine to Britain in the form of a mandate, supposedly to be exercised until the governed people "were able to stand by themselves".

The Zionists now poured enormous resources into encouraging immigration to Palestine, confident, as Golda Meir, a future Prime Minister put it,

"that if we dig in here, England will come to our aid. It is not the Arabs who the English will pick to colonise Palestine, it is we".

For centuries, the majority Arab population had lived harmoniously with the small Jewish community, but they soon recognised the dangers posed by the new situation. Disputes arose as Arab peasants were evicted from land bought by the Zionists from absentee non-Palestinian landlords.

As violence erupted, the first all-Palestinian congress in 1920 demanded an end to British support for Zionism, the halting of Jewish immigration and for a representative national government. The British responded typically and clashes escalated between them and the Palestinians.

The Zionists increased the tension with the formation of an exclusively Jewish "trade union" the Histadrut, which led the anti-Palestinian activity under the slogan "Jewish Land, Jewish Labour, Jewish Produce". Using violence, they ensured that no Arabs would work in Jewish settlements, and launched attacks on Arab markets to destroy agricultural competition.

Palestinian resistance eventually erupted into open revolt against the British. In 1936, a general strike involving the entire Palestinian population, engulfed the country. When the British High Commissioner reported a "state of incipient revolution", martial law was declared, the air force bombed the countryside, and 20,000 British troops, augmented by the Zionist militia, the Haganah, moved to smash the strike.

After six months, the strike leaders capitulated, putting an end to the most serious challenge Zionism has yet encountered from the Palestinians. Resistance now continued in the form of rural guerilla warfare, only to abate at the beginning of Second World War, when the British sought to pacify the Arabs with concessions and a vague promise of Palestinian independence.

#### HOLOCAUST

The carnage in Europe, during which six million Jews were murdered, not unnaturally fuelled Zionist ambitions for an independent Jewish state. Yet at the outbreak of war, Zionism was still a minority cult among Jews as a whole.

The millions who had fled pogroms and persecution over three generations had headed west, particularly to America, with only a minority opting for the promised land. The Zionists therefore sought to direct the new stream of refugees to Palestine.

Ben Gurion, the 'founder' of modern Israel, had earlier opposed a British plan to accept thousands of German Jewish children. He said "If I knew it would be possible to save all the children in Germany by bringing them

over to England, and only half of them to Eretz Israel, then I would opt for the second alternative.

For we must weight not only the life of these children but also the history of the people of Israel." After the war the Zionists reacted to the preference of Jewish people for America by declaring that the "people must be forced to go to Palestine".

The US had emerged from the war as the strongest power eclipsing the British not least in the Middle East. The prospect of a Jewish state dependent on its survival and devoted to US interests appealed to Trumann who manoeuvred the UN into partitioning Palestine.

55% of the country was allotted to the Jews who made up only 30% of

the population. The Arab world was incensed but their governments responded with a half hearted declaration of war that never went beyond isolated attacks.

The Palestinians were left alone to face Zionist terror. The most notorious attack was on the village of Deir Yassin, where the entire population was murdered by a future Israeli Prime Minister and Nobel prize winner, Mnachem Begin.

As the atrocities mounted, Palestinians fled in horror. In all the Zionists forced out a million Palestinians and occupied 80% of the country. On May 14th, 1948 the State of Israel was proclaimed.

#### AMERICA'S WATCHDOG

For forty years its survival has been guaranteed by its US sponsors, whose subsidy of four billions dollars a year ensures the upkeep of Israel's defence forces. Its role is summed up in an Israel newspaper shortly after the foundation of the state:

"Israel is to become the watchdog. There is no fear that Israel will undertake any aggressive policy against Arab states when this would contradict the interests of the US and Britain. But if for any reason the Western Powers should sometime prefer to close their eyes, Israel could be relied on to punish one or several neighbouring states whose discourtesy to the West went beyond the bounds of the permissible".

Today Yasser Arafat is stalking the corridors of the UN, desperately ingratiating himself with American diplomats in the vain hope that they will pull Israel into line.

Even if his request for an independent state on the West bank were granted, it would be like a South African Bantustan, providing cheap labour for Israel, yet dominated economically, politically and militarily by its Zionist neighbour.

The only real solution lies in the smashing of the Israeli state. The dispossessed Palestinians resident in Israel and the occupied territories cannot achieve this alone. The key to success is the mobilisation of the working class throughout the region, challenging their own rulers and taking on the task of dismantling the Zionist state.

In its place, a secular socialist Palestine can provide Jews and Arabs with a peaceful and meaningful beyond the horrors of today.



Forty years of Israeli brutality

# War of Independence

ARGUMENTS ABOUT national independence divide republicans and socialists in Ireland.

A look at the the 1919-21 "War of Independence" can teach us a lot about these important questions.

Even before the Soloheadbeg ambush in Tipperary in January 1919—which most see as marking the start of the "War of Independence"—the nationalism of the emerging Irish capitalist class had established itself as the dominant ideology in the new struggle against Britain.

In this, it had been helped rather than hindered by the labour movement.

After 1916, the labour movement had declared itself officially "neutral" on the question of Irish independence.

This was justified on the basis that 'taking sides' would divide the working class since Protestant workers in the North East opposed national independence and that trade unions should concentrate only on economic issues.

The failure of the labour movement to play an independent political role in the years after 1916 was a disaster. It need not have happened. Working class militancy was increasing. In September 1918 Dublin papers were comparing the labour situation with that of 1913.

At the beginning of 1919, industrial struggles were more noticeable even in Southern Ireland than the guerilla campaign getting under way in the countryside of the south-west. Between 1916 and 1920 membership of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union went up from 5,000 to 100,000.

Meanwhile, Belfast in January 1919 was on the verge of a general strike. Along with the 'Red Clyde', Humberstone and Tyneside, the Belfast engineering workers struck for a forty four hour week. At the height of the strike 40,000 workers were out.

What was happening in Belfast affected the workers' movement throughout Ireland. In Dublin the Trades Council called a conference to discuss the campaign for shorter hours.

The Irish TUC (precursor of the ICTU) followed suit and adopted a wage target of 150 per cent above 1914 wages and a 44 hour week. Limerick building workers struck; they were followed by laundry workers, Dundalk dockers, Donegal roadworkers, Derry shipyard workers and Monaghan Asylum workers.

As mainly Protestant workers in Belfast faced British army machine guns, the First Dail met

*This year sees the seventieth anniversary of the First Dail and of the War of Independence.*

*Here GORETTI HORGAN looks at the experiences and discovers that the lessons for those of us who are involved in the struggle for freedom in Ireland today.*



Thomas Johnson, Thomas Farren and J. H. Thomas investigate hunger strike

in Dublin. But it seemed the Dail hadn't an inkling of the confrontation which paralysed the North and not a word was spoken about it.

Yet if the Republicans had found a way to associate the new Dail with the workers' demands, there was at least a chance that they would have had a sympathetic response from the Belfast workers.

Throughout the War of Independence, the workers' movement grew in strength and in boldness. When in April 1919 the British authorities attempted to regulate entry to Limerick city by a system of 'passes', 15,000 workers downed tools in response to the local trades council call for a general strike. For two weeks the strike committee controlled the city in what became known as the Limerick Soviet.

No goods were moved nor work carried out without a permit from the strikers. At the first sign of profiteering a list of permitted prices was drawn up and circulated throughout the city.

Most of the prices were lower than they had been—for example milk was reduced from 7d a pint to 3d. The Trades Council even printed tokens which were used as currency.

The Catholic hierarchy was, understandably, outraged at the "Limerick Soviet" and made its opposition known in the traditional manner. Irish TUC officials hurried to Limerick and manoeuvred some of the workers into returning to work, but the military climbed down.

In May 1919, Congress declared Mayday a 'general holiday' as a gesture of international workers' solidarity and in support of self-determination for all

peoples.

It was, in effect, a call for a one-day general strike on 1st May, although in the Belfast area it took place on 3rd May.

The RIC warned that red flags would be treated as Bolshevik and illegal. The result was their appearance in places where they had never been seen before.

In Co. Waterford alone, there were marches in Lismore, Dungarvan, Cappoquin and Kilmacthomas. In Kilmacthomas, the march was led by a red banner which read "A Workers' Republic".

## "WORKERS' REPUBLIC"

Maynooth workers carried the red flag to Killock. In Monaghan, pickets toured outlying workplaces; in Portlaoise, the stoppage was complete and red flags flew defiantly. The pattern was similar all over the country.

Most of the workers' action was about wages and conditions.

Building workers, transport workers, dockers and seafarers, shirt factory workers, tailors, miners and quarrymen, engineers, shipbuilders, mechanics and shopworkers, all were involved in industrial action at some time between 1918 and 1921. But trade union conflict was not confined to the urban industrial working class. The 1919 "land campaign" run by the ITGWU saw the majority of agricultural labourers accepting that the goal of higher wages was more attainable than was land ownership.

And that goal was, in most cases, attained as the urban working class extended its solidarity to its rural sisters and brothers.

In Drogheda, Dublin and Belfast, dockers refused to handle cattle which were driven by scabs. The cattle were returned to pasture and the farm owners agreed the wage rise.

In 1919 alone, Irish workers amassed the proud total of one and a half million days on strike.

But the "Limerick Soviet" wasn't the only time workers applied direct industrial action in support of the struggle for independence.

In November 1919 the Irish Automobile Drivers' and Mechanics' Union struck when the British tried to introduce permits for vehicle drivers. The measure was designed to root out republican lorry-drivers and so deprive the IRA of potential transport.

On 5th April 1920 60 men in Mountjoy jail, who were being held without charge, went on hunger strike and on 12th April the labour movement called for a general strike in their support.

## RELEASE

After three days of strike action, and when the prisoners were on the tenth day of hunger strike, the government abruptly caved in and ordered their release.



Collins and De Valera: Sinn Fein saw land seizures as "a threat to stability"

In May 1920 Michael Donnelly, a Dublin dock worker and veteran of the Irish Citizen Army, was inspired by the refusal of London dockers to load munitions for use against Soviet Russia.

He called on Dublin dockers to black British ships carrying war materials for use against the IRA.

The leadership of the ITGWU wanted to limit the action but through rank-and-file initiative it spread to railway workers who refused to transport soldiers under arms or any war supplies.

As a result of this, the British were forced to travel in lorries through guerilla country. There can be little doubt that without this action by transport workers, the "flying columns" could not have been so successful.

## LAND OCCUPATIONS

At the end of the nineteenth century, the land question had largely been resolved by the transfer of land from landlord to tenant, with the express purpose of creating a conservative class of owner-occupiers.

By 1916, 64 per cent of all farmers owned their own land. But the poorest farmers and the landless labourers were still taunted by thousands of acres of untenanted land.

Early in 1920 they took advantage of the weakening of the social order to seize and break up the remaining huge estates—this was, after all, no more than they had been promised in the "Democratic Programme" of the Dail.

# Independence

But that was not how Sinn Fein saw it. The seizures were condemned as a "threat to stability" and republican land courts were set up to end them.

The first session of a land court was held in Ballinrobe, Co. May.

The womenfolk of the unsuccessful claimant immediately resumed forcible occupation of the property but in order to crush the resistance, the republican police force seized the sons of the most defiant tenants and held them until the women gave in.

Between May 1920 and the summer of 1921, the land courts—applying British law—dealt with around 400 cases of "illegal" seizure. Griffith declared that these courts had "prevented the land question being used to divert the energies of the people from the national issue".

Austin Stack condemned those who were "out to create a state of anarchy which ought to be put a stop to" Peadar O'Donnell and other left republicans argued against this policy. But the alliance with the landlords was too important to the Sinn Fein would-be government.

Thus, in the midst of the 'war of liberation' many landless families were evicted by a republican police force, based on the IRA.

The situation was later summed up in the Dail: "All this was a grave menace to the Republic. The mind of the people was being diverted from the struggle for freedom by a class war... There was a moment when it seemed that nothing could prevent wholesale expropriation."



De Valera's new order

But the crisis was overcome thanks to the policemen of the IRA and the unwillingness of the labour leadership to take on the emerging state.

It would be wrong to imagine that socialist revolution was on the cards at this time. The working class was still very tiny and industrial struggles, however militant and political, were on a small scale.

While in the 19th century the peasantry had had an interest in social revolution, the effective settlement of the land question by the 1903 Land Act, had removed from the working class the option of an alliance with the peasantry.

While the land seizure movement was militant and offensive, the majority of those taking part were small land-owners and it is in the nature of small land-owners

to want to become big land-owners—not to spearhead a thoroughgoing social revolution.

What is clear is that the continuing absence of an organisation clearly opposed to British imperialism, but vigorously representing working class interests, gave the republican movement free rein in dampening down class struggle, and ensured the success of the Unionist leaders in containing the Protestant masses within Orangism.

The disastrous repercussions are still felt today. It meant that in 1920-22 when the future shape of Ireland was being negotiated the only Irish interests being considered were those of Northern capitalism and Southern potential-capitalism.

These interests, with the ready agreement of Britain, partitioned the country between them.

## The real First Dail

JUST OVER seventy years ago on the 21st January 1919, the first Dail met.

The majority of the deputies elected at the 1918 election came from Sinn Fein.

They had refused to attend Westminster and instead organised the first Assembly of Ireland or Dail Eireann.

The Dail was boycotted by the Unionists and supporters of the old Home Rule party. Thirty four of the Sinn Fein representatives were in prison.

On the day itself, only twenty seven deputies attended. Nevertheless it was to launch the fight to win Irish independence from the British empire.

The decision to proclaim a fight for an Irish republic represented a major blow to British imperialism—then the most powerful empire in the world.

It was the equivalent in our day to the launching of the Vietnam war against US. As such it was something which every socialist would celebrate.

At the commemoration meetings, however, launched by Sinn Fein in January, the Programme of the First Dail was announced as a socialist programme that simply needed to be updated for the workers' movement today.

One speaker at the Dublin commemoration meeting claimed that the programme was "an edition of the Communist Manifesto made suitable for Irish conditions".

Nothing could be further from the truth.

The Sinn Fein party which dominated the First Dail was fully committed to the development of Irish capitalism.

By the time of the 1916 rebellion, Sinn Fein had been reduced to one central branch with less than a 100 members.

Its principal ideologue was Arthur Griffith who had opposed the 1913 lock out. Griffith hated the socialist movement and attempted to equate it with imperialism.

He wrote that Sinn Fein was opposed to "the man who injures Ireland whether he does it in the name of imperialism or of Socialism".

Griffith took no part in the 1916 rebellion. Yet his party was to become the focus of the political opposition to the British empire.

In October 1917, a

massive convention was called in the Mansion House to re-organise Sinn Fein.

One thousand delegates attended. Griffith withdrew from the Presidency in favour of the main survivor of 1916, Eamonn De Valera.

But it was to be his politics which continued to dominate the movement.

At the Convention De Valera argued for the classic stages approach.

He said: "This is not the time for discussion on the best forms of government.

"But we are united on this—that we want complete and absolute independence. Get this and we will agree to differ afterward".

But this did not stop Sinn Fein openly calling for a capitalist Ireland. The 1917 Convention adopted much of Griffith's earlier programme of protectionism and encouragement for Irish manufactures.

The pamphlet *Sinn Fein Policy* called on County Councils to invite Irish American millionaires to develop the country economically.

The reasons why a number of radical formulations were used in the 1919 Dail programme were entirely tactical.

They were, firstly, a pay off to the Labour Party who had pulled back from the 1918 election in favour of Sinn Fein.

They were also a recognition that support for an Irish republic internationally was predominantly coming from the Left.

The Bolsheviks were the first government to recognise the republic and even the more reformist labour movements had granted it recognition at their congress in Berne.

Nevertheless, the radicalism of the First Dail programme was extremely limited. The programme was a

drafted by the leader of the Irish Labour Party, Tom Johnson, who was a socialist only of the most moderate variety.

He had, for example, supported Britain during the First World War and opposed Connolly's attempt to hold anti-war meetings in Belfast.

But even Johnson's draft was found to be too radical for republican tastes. It was re-worked by Sean T O'Kelly and half of it was removed.

Johnson had included a sentence from Patrick Pearse's *Sovereign People* which said that "no private right to property is good against the public right of the nation". This was removed.

So too was a sentence in Johnson's draft which demanded that it "be the purpose of the government to encourage the organisation of the people into trade unions and co-operative societies, with a view to the control of industries by workers engaged in industries".

A further clause of Johnson was also removed. This called for the nationalisation without compensation of land, mineral deposits and other forms of productive wealth that had been "wrongfully used".

The vague radical sentiments that remained only got through the Dail because many of the Sinn Fein leaders were in prison. One delegate Piaras Beaslai claimed that it would never have been passed if the members present thought it was to be implemented.

The truth was that the Irish struggle for independence was in the words of Kevin O'Higgins led by some of the most "conservative revolutionaries in the world".

Socialists still gave it support for what it was: a struggle against imperialism.

It is only later day republicans that now want to paint the picture red. They wish to pretend that the Sinn Fein leadership of the struggle did not represent the aspiring capitalist class.

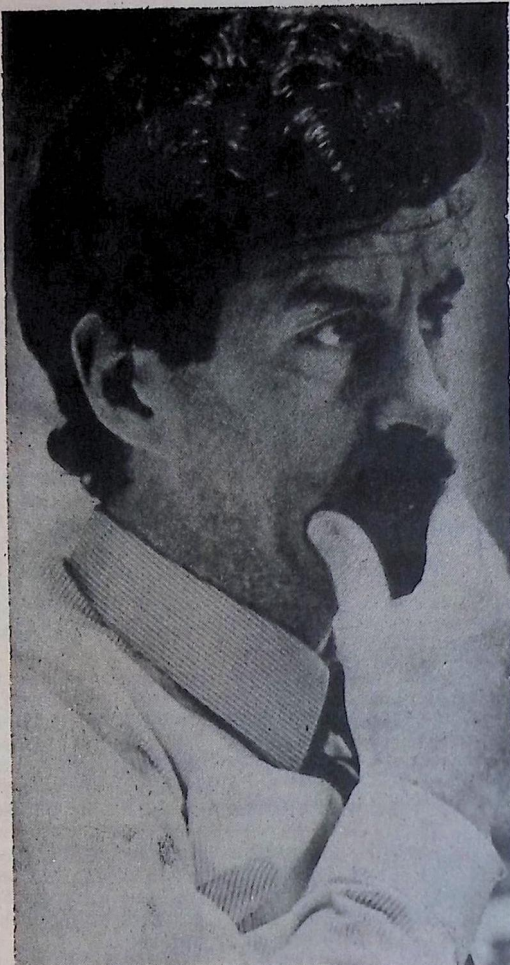
They do so in order to hide the fact that republicanism itself is not a working class ideology.

That, in fact, every time workers have placed their faith in republican politics with all its vague formulations they have always lost out to another class of Irish republican—the Irish rich.



"A grave menace to the Republic"

## ANALYSIS



Dick Spring may attack Haughey for being "uncaring" but Labour in Coalition started the cuts.

# Labour's rush to capture the middle ground

**THE LABOUR** Party abandoned Coalition in 1987, pledging "never to return".

When Fianna Fail and Fine Gael entered a virtual bosses coalition committed to drastically cutting services and reducing workers living standards, the Labour Party had a real chance to present itself as a socialist alternative.

By October 1988 Labour had climbed to eight per cent in the opinion polls.

In Dublin over a quarter of those polled said they would vote for one of the left wing parties.

In the Leixlip local elections, the Left—organised around TD Emmet Stagg—came from nowhere to take 40 per cent of the vote.

Today, however, all the opinion polls show Fianna Fail continuing to gain support while the Left again drop back.

As the Labour Party meets in conference in Tralee, socialists have to ask why the working class continues to turn its back on Labour and to support an openly bosses' party like Fianna Fail?

In 1987 Fianna Fail's popularity *did* decline as tens of thousands protested against the first of the cuts.

But the signing of the "Programme for National Recovery"—or National Plan as it is better known—proved a turning point for Fianna Fail as resistance to the cuts was sabotaged by the trade union leaders themselves.

Officially, Labour opposes the National Plan. Before it was signed, even Barry Desmond said the Party could not accept a Programme that would mean 10,000 jobs lost in the Public Service.

Nonetheless, no effort was made to instruct Labour Party members to fight the deal through the unions.

Dick Spring may attack Haughey for being "uncaring", but it was *their* Coalition government that started the cuts. And their argument with Haughey is about whether the cuts are being properly planned or whether "the burden is shared equally".

Last Summer's Labour Party document on the economy *Labour's Alternative* showed the extent to which, despite the occasional use of left-wing rhetoric, the Labour leadership is determined to be 'respectable' rather than Red.

Instead of the traditional Labour approach of attacking the private sector and advocating nationalisation, the document favoured a mixed economy where "the appropriate relationship" between public and private sectors would be established.

State-run enterprises should, the document argued, be governed by the laws of the market. If a state company wasn't profitable, it would face rationalisation and possible closure.

The most radical proposal from Labour was that the tax on companies should increase from 2.5% to 7.5% of the total taxes collected. This piece of radicalism would bring Ireland in line with Reagan's America!

Even right-wing economist Paul Tansey had to admit that "no one will see red after reading through Labour's alternative."

## WITCHHUNT

Maintaining the "respectable" image also involves attacking the Left.

Last year, Labour Youth branches in which *Militant* members dominated were disbanded. In the Dublin West constituency the whole branch was disbanded after they selected Joe Higgins, a prominent *Militant* supporter, as their election candidate.

The Party's Administrative Council blocked his selection. This move was supported by "left-winger" Emmet Stagg.

Stag's supporters inside Labour Youth have led the attack on *Militant*. Since its foundation, *Militant* have dominated Labour Youth.

Much of the time, the organisation would not have existed, had it not been for *Militant* activists.

But at last year's Labour Party conference, *Militant* lost the position of chair and vice-chair and only managed to retain four places in an executive of 21.

A motion at this month's Labour conference in Tralee calls for the expulsion of anyone who supports *Militant* in any way.

This might have been seen as the Right within the Party organising against the Left.

But a motion from the other major Left grouping in the Labour Party, the *Labour Left* led by Emmet Stagg, calls for an 'enquiry' into *Militant*—and as ex-

Fail's attacks. That is the real reason why they want to tame the Left *now* by pushing *Militant* out.

Tragically, not only have the *Labour Left* gone along with the *Militant* witchhunt, they have consistently failed to lead an all-out attack on the National Plan.

Too many of their supporters in the trade union bureaucracy would be antagonised by such a move.

Already in advance of this month's conference, the *Labour Left* have compromised with the leadership and agreed to attach their economic policies to those of the leadership.

Further, *Labour Left* cannot move too far left as long as they oppose the fight against the Northern state.

Like *Militant*, they refuse to campaign against extradition and continue to defend the Southern state against "the terrorists".

But Spring's concern with 'respectability' will not help Labour to grow.

Like Thatcher in Britain Fianna Fail, and their partners in Fine

Knight of Columbanus— could declare that "the Seventies will be Socialist".

But even if Labour does benefit from a resurgence in workers' confidence, its growth will be limited by the weakness of the South's economy and by the trade union leaders' collaboration with Fianna Fail.

Nowhere else in Western Europe has the trade union movement accommodated to an openly right-wing party the way the ICTU has through the National Plan.

Last year, union leaders even invited Haughey to their commemoration of the 1913 Lockout. Imagine the British TUC and the Tories coming together to remember the 1926 General Strike!

Revolutionary socialists take no joy from the continued weakness of the Labour Party or from its domination by Dick Spring. We defend the right of *Militant* to organise in the Labour Party.

But it is also clear that if Spring can get away with attacking the Left now, the



ICTU leaders sign the National Plan with Fianna Fail

perience in the British Labour Party has shown, 'enquiries' into *Militant* have tended to be evidence-gathering events with which to further the witch-hunt.

It is obvious that Spring & Co. hope to revive the Labour vote in order to be in a better position to bargain for a new coalition sometime in the future.

They have no intention of supporting the scale of struggle necessary to stand up to Fianna

Gael, appear to be 'doing something' about the economy. Spring can offer no alternative.

This doesn't mean that the Labour Party cannot grow in the future. In the late 60s, an upsurge in workers' confidence led to Irish workers topping Europe's strike league.

With the upsurge in workers' struggles came an upswing in Labour's vote. With almost a fifth of the vote (19%), even Party leader Brendan Corish—a

pressure will be far greater when a general election is on the cards.

As Kinnock has shown in Britain, the left will be beaten into the ground in order to capture the elusive "middle-ground".

The Labour Party will not—can not—deliver socialism. It will always either assimilate or isolate the Left within its ranks. For these reasons, socialists must build a strong independent organisation now to provide a real alternative.



# S.W.M. BRANCH MEETINGS

## Dublin Branch

Meets 8 p.m. Wed., Bachelor Inn pub, Bachelors Walk

March 8th: "The Catholic Church and the Left in Ireland" Speaker: Brian Hanley

March 15th: "Do Socialists defend Irish Culture?" Speaker: Kieran Allen

March 22nd: See notice for Public Meeting

March 29th: "Class Struggles in Eastern Europe" Speaker: Ger Francis

April 5th: "What is Historical Materialism?"

## Belfast S.W.S.S.

### Meetings

Thursday, 1 p.m.

March 9th: "Violence against women— who's to blame?" Speaker: Goretti Horgan J'town

Students Union, Seminar Room

March 16th: "The revolutionary road to socialism" Speaker: Mary Smith QUB Students Union, Fitzwilliam Room

## Cork Branch

Meets every Tuesday, 8 p.m., Anchor Inn, George's Quay

## Derry Branch

Meets every Monday, Dungloe Bar, Waterloo Street

### For details of regular branch meetings in

**GALWAY, DUNGARVAN, PORTLAOISE**

and **WATERFORD**

### contact:

S.W.M., P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8.

## BOOKS



**RUSSIA: THE MAKING OF THE REVOLUTION** by Steve Wright  
Looks at the years 1905-1917, when workers' struggles and the building of the Bolshevik Party brought the world closer to the achievement of socialism than ever before, or since. £1.20

# News from SWM

The Socialist Workers Movement met for Annual Conference at the beginning of March.

100 comrades discussed the problems of building a revolutionary party in today's conditions.

Reports from around the country show us growing and laying the basis for solid organisation in the future.

Despite the unpopularity of left-wing ideas and the mood of relative demoralisation among the many workings, progress was reported. The SWM had grown by a fifth over the last year.

It was agreed that the key in the future was to convince individuals to overcome their isolation and join with us.

The Socialist Workers Movement extends an invitation to all individuals who are interested in building a revolutionary party to discuss with us in further detail the political way ahead.

Write to: SWM PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

# LETTERS

send to Socialist Worker PO Box 1648 Dublin 8

## Raising morale at work

SINCE working in my present job, I couldn't help noticing that most workers' demands were individual and isolated from the unity of the work force.

Discouragement and pessimism gain ground under such a climate.

When the annual pay negotiations came round, instead of the official pushing us forward and encouraging us to take our share of the cake, the "realist choice" as it was put, was to take the crumbs.

There was much anger on the shop-floor and sometimes it was directed at fellow workers rather than the boss. In order to channel this anger, we set up a works committee which met weekly, independently of the official. This provided a focus for shop-floor grievances. Soon there was a great improvement in morale with workers willing to fight for the low-paid and part-timers.

It was suggested that four members should represent the staff to hammer out problems with management. I argued that the committee would be used as an arm of management.

I was proved right. Management welcomed the committee hoping to use us to control the members. I could see how easily we could be influenced in the same way as the union bureaucrat, if we didn't have the politics based on class.

Also, working day-to-day on the shop-floor we did not have the power and privilege of the union official, but were in daily contact with our fellow workers, unlike union bureaucrats, whose privileges remove them from the real world.

SW READER, Dublin

## Two new pamphlets from the SWM

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# What we stand for



The Socialist Workers Movement is a marxist organisation fighting for a workers' republic in Ireland and for socialism internationally.

### FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

We begin from the proposition that what determines the nature of any society is the system by which its wealth is produced. In the system we live under, capitalism, production is geared to profit, not to human need. Among its inevitable features are poverty, war, racism and sexism. Capitalism cannot be destroyed and these evils thus eradicated by piecemeal reform. It can only be destroyed by revolutionary action by the class which creates all the wealth, the working class. The machinery of the capitalist state—parliament, courts, army, police etc—is designed to protect the interests of the ruling capitalist class, not to regulate society in a neutral fashion. At most, parliament can be used, sometimes, to make propaganda against capitalism. It cannot be used to smash capitalism. Only a workers' revolution can do that and establish a truly democratic society in which workers hold power directly through delegates elected from workplaces and areas and are re-callable and replaceable at any time by those who elect them.

### NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

This kind of socialism does not exist anywhere today. Workers do not have control in Russia, China, Cuba etc. Instead, power is held by a state-capitalist class. A workers' revolution is needed in these countries too. We are against NATO and the Warsaw Pact and all weapons of mass destruction. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

### FOR AN END TO PARTITION

The Northern State was created by British imperialism in its own interests. Sectarianism and bigotry were built into it and will continue to exist for as long as the state exists. The marginal privileges given to Protestant workers are just that: marginal. It is in the immediate interest of Protestant as well as Catholic workers to fight against their exploitation. It is in the interest of all Northern workers to unite against the state and aim at socialism in Ireland. We support all forces struggling against imperialism and the Northern state, regardless of differences we may have with them.

The interests of the Southern ruling class are no longer in fundamental conflict with those of imperialism. Southern capitalism is a junior player in the world capitalist system. The Southern state too, props up partition, despite occasional nationalist rhetoric.

The "national question" can be solved only by mass working class struggle against both states. Republicanism, by limiting the immediate struggle to the achievement of "national unity", and by appealing for all-class alliances in pursuit of this goal, can never lead the working class towards the defeat of imperialism.

### FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

We oppose all forms of oppression which divide and weaken the working class. We are for full social, economic and political equality for women. We fight for free contraception, abortion on demand and the right to divorce. We oppose all discrimination against gays and lesbians. We stand for secular control of hospitals and schools. We fight for the complete separation of church and state.

### FOR A FIGHT IN THE UNIONS

Trade unions exist to protect workers' interests under capitalism. The role of trade union leaders is to negotiate with bosses over workers' position within capitalism. To destroy capitalism, we need a rank and file movement in the unions separate from the leaderships and fighting for workers' interests regardless of the needs of capitalism.

### FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To destroy capitalism and achieve socialism the most class conscious sections of the working class must be organised in a revolutionary party. The SWM aims to build such a party through spreading its ideas and through its activity in the working class movement.

## Join Us!

I would like to join the SWM

I would like more details of the SWM

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Send to SWM PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

**FESTIVAL OF THE OPPRESSED** Solidarity, reform and revolution in Poland 1980-81

by Colin Barker

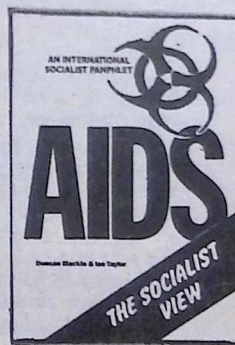
On the night of 13 December 1981 the Polish military moved in to suppress the Independent trade union Solidarity. In the brief sixteen months of its existence, Solidarity had proved itself the most impressive working class movement the world had seen for over half a century. The Polish workers' movement had vividly and dramatically revealed the possibilities open to an advanced working class when once it challenges the structures of domination in modern society. £5 including postage

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# REVIEWS



# THE NORTH: Impossible reforms

**THE GREAT** strength of Bob Rowthorn and Naomi Wayne's book, *Northern Ireland, the political economy of conflict*, is its detailed analysis of the economic situation in the North East of this island and, in particular, the effect which discrimination has had on the relative positions of Catholics and Protestants.

They describe the Northern economy and living conditions for Catholics and Protestants alike.

The description is clear evidence of the way in which Protestant workers too have suffered because the deep divisions in the working class caused by sectarianism and discrimination have led to a lower standard of living for all workers.

Catholics suffer worse housing conditions, higher unemployment, and repression. But even the best paid Protestant workers earn less than their British counterparts and average consumption in Northern Ireland remains some 12 percent below the UK average.

The book gives the lie to the "convergence of misery" theory so beloved of those economists who would like to think that Northern Ireland has become a "normal democracy".

This theory says that as the economic crisis deepens, manufacturing industry declines and unemployment grows, the effects of discrimination against Catholics slowly disappear until eventually Catholic and Protestant workers will be equal in their misery.

Rowthorn and Wayne show that while it has risen a great deal in recent years, unemployment

amongst Northern Ireland Protestants is not especially high by UK standards. Unemployment among Catholics, on the other hand, has risen faster and is several times greater than among Protestants.

Male unemployment among Catholics in Northern Ireland is considerably higher than among Blacks or other ethnic minorities in Britain.

The great weakness of the book is in its attempt to totally separate the economics of the Northern Ireland situation from the politics. As a result, although they did not intend to, Bob Rowthorn and Naomi Wayne provide some very strong arguments against the possibility of a peaceful, capitalist united Ireland.

When the book was published last November it was hailed by left nationalists as providing the economic arguments for a "stages" approach to the achievement of the Workers' Republic.

The argument was simple: the other options—devolved government, an independent Northern Ireland, repartition—cannot bring peace or economic regeneration. The only remaining option is that Britain accepts the need for a united Ireland, negotiates with the parties concerned and then withdraws.

It is, of course, true that there cannot be a peaceful solution to the conflict in the Six Counties as long as the artificially created Northern state continues to exist, as long as British imperialism continues to prop up that state.

It is also, of course, possible that the Dublin and London governments could stitch up some kind of deal, perhaps with EEC aid, which would bring about some kind of formal unity—probably of a federal nature.

What Rowthorn and Wayne's book shows quite clearly is that

such a solution would not involve the total dismantling of the Northern Ireland state or, if it did, would involve such economic sacrifices for Protestant workers that it would be amazing if they did not fight.

In Rowthorn and Wayne's scenario for a united Ireland the RUC would not be disbanded; they would not even necessarily be disarmed. Once the pay and pensions of policemen was guaranteed, they explain, there is no reason to believe they would not obey government orders.

The inability of the British government to deliver on even the mildest of the policing reforms promised under the Anglo-Irish Agreement shows that Rowthorn and Wayne are living in a political cloud-cuckoo land in their attitude to the RUC.

A vital element of the Anglo-Irish deal was to be a change in police practice designed to encourage better relations between the RUC and the Catholic population. This was put to its most searching test in the first year of the Agreement.

Tom King assured Peter Barry that when it came to the loyalist bigotry parades through Portadown in July 1986, a deliberately provocative parade along the Garvaghy Road would be banned.

RUC chief John Hermon refused point-blank to implement the ban, arguing that, following violence during the enforcement of a previous, similar ban, relations between his force and Loyalist extremists were already under severe strain.

Similarly, the plan to have all UDR patrols which might be in contact with civilians accompanied by RUC men was never implemented because the UDR and RUC have been "unable" to organise themselves to carry it out.

If well-paid, pensionable

policemen were unwilling to obey the British government, what chance would there be of them agreeing to the dictates of an all-Ireland one?

There is not enough space in this review to deal with all the arguments put forward by Rowthorn and Wayne as to why they don't foresee an armed loyalist backlash to the announcement of a British withdrawal.

Their laid-back attitude to the 100,000 guns, legally held by Protestants in the Six Counties—to say nothing of the 20,000 members of the UDR and RUC—is not shared by those of us who live in the nationalist ghettos of the Six Counties.

The problem with Rowthorn and Wayne's united Ireland scenario is that there is nothing in it for Protestant workers. It's not even clear that there's anything in it for Catholics beyond a sentimental re-union with the other three green fields—they say that "the fair employment legislation would have to be enforced much more strictly".

A united, capitalist Ireland offers more unemployment, more poverty and fewer civil liberties (like divorce etc.) to Protestant workers. The promise of "peace" is not enough to overcome the strength of the loyalist ideology which ties them to the Northern Ireland state.

Only the possibility of a totally different kind of united Ireland—a Workers' Republic where there are decent jobs and houses for all, where there is complete separation of Church and state—could hope to break Protestant workers from loyalism.

We in the SWM are often accused of being Utopian in seeking such a society. Anyone reading Rowthorn and Wayne's book will quickly see that a Workers' Republic is far more realistic a proposition than a peaceful capitalist united Ireland.

GORETTI HORGAN

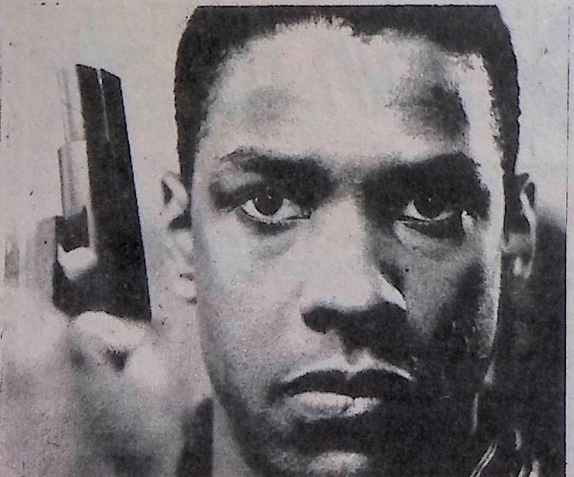
## Films of the month

Reviewed by EVE MORRISON

### For Queen and Country

MY FIRST reaction to the film *For Queen and Country* was amazement, followed by excitement that a movie like this had actually been made. A major film that gives a truthful account of the

brutality and violence of racism—it's about time! Director Martin Stellman has skillfully combined political insight with good film making—an all too rare combination these days. The film works on two levels. It is a scathing



Denzil Washington slowly going over the edge.

indictment of Thatcher's Britain as poverty-stricken and racist. It's also a brilliantly paced, highly enjoyable political thriller.

Set in present-day London, it tells the story of Falklands War veteran Rueben James (played by Denzel Washington) who returns home after nine years in the British army. Things have changed.

He is constantly harassed by racist police. His old army buddy is crippled and impoverished and his other friends have turned to crime.

Washington gives a virtuoso performance as we watch Rueben slowly going over the edge after he is denied a renewal of his British passport.

It is undoubtedly one of the best films of the year. Don't miss it.

### The Accused

WHEN I saw the trailer for this film I was sceptical, to say the least, the minute "from the makers of *Fatal*

*Attraction*" flashed across the screen.

But don't let the advertising put you off. *The Accused* is undoubtedly one of the most important films made about rape.

What sets it apart from other films dealing with the subject is the character of the victim—Sara Tobias, played by Jodie Foster.

Because—when judged by the most prevalent attitudes towards rape victims in this society—she asked for it.

She walked into a bar alone, dressed in a mini-skirt, got drunk and openly flirted with the men present.

But when she clearly states that enough is enough, she is gang-raped on a pinball machine amid a crowd of cheering men.

What is important about the film, with its graphic depiction of the rape and the following trial, is that it explores—and explodes—the myth that a woman ever asks to be raped.

The attitude of the judges is predictable. Tobias is treated with contempt. She is



One rape is reported every four minutes

the one put on trial. Her attorney—Katherine Murphy, played by Kelly McGillis—accepts the plea-bargaining of the defence lawyers despite very clear physical evidence of rape.

Tobias, you see, is a "weak witness" and the case would lose if a rape charge was brought against her attackers. Murphy accepts the absurd charge of "reckless endangerment" instead.

Murphy soon come to realise her mistake and decides to prosecute the men who cheered on the rapists. The film shows that although the attorney comes to

empathise with, and even admire, her client, they have very little in common.

Tobias is working class, her lifestyle contrasts sharply with that of her yuppie lawyer. The point is clearly made that if Katherine Murphy had been raped rather than her client, she would have been treated very differently indeed.

The film ends happily, but before the credits roll you are confronted with two chilling statistics.

One rape is reported every six minutes. One in four rapes are committed by two or more persons.

## INDUSTRY

# Crisis at the Glass

A DECISIVE confrontation is shaping up between workers and management at Waterford Glass following last month's crisis announcement.

Trading in Waterford stock became jittery amid takeover speculation as the Company admitted that:

- Stocks of product had been "overvalued" in the Company's books;
- Multi-million pound high-tech machinery was producing an enormous amount of expensive reject product;
- The factory was short of skilled labour following the massive redundancies of

1987 and was now employing hundreds of workers on contract.

Seventy per cent of the company's shares are held by the major financial institutions—including Irish Life, Standard Life, Friends Provident, Investment Bank of Ireland and Globe Investment Trust.

It was the shadowy portfolio managers of these institutions who backed former Ford hatchet-man Paddy Hayes to become chairman and chief executive in the 1987 restructuring.

But as the bonanza profits have failed to materialise the major shareholders have summoned Hayes and his cronies to confidential

"briefings" to tell him that they are getting impatient.

John Brindle, investment manager with Standard Life told the press that they were prepared to back out if the Glass did not soon turn the corner.

Baked Beans Boss and chief of Independent Newspapers, Tony O'Reilly is rumoured to be interested in some sort of takeover. One possibility is a "leveraged buy out". A speculator would borrow funds with high-interest, low security "junk bonds" to buy the company, sell off the assets to repay the borrowing and emerge several million pounds richer.

Waterford Glass workers have traditionally been



Glass stewards Jimmy Kelly and Tom Morgan

among the best organised in Ireland.

In 1987, the US dollar fell and profits from this lucrative market declined. It was then that the financial institutions put their money

on the new, aggressive management style of Paddy Hayes.

The new management inflicted a major defeat on the Glass workers.

A wage freeze and a

thousand redundancies were forced through, cutting by a third the workforce, in a £50 million new-tech package which would "secure the future of the company".

Despite the dominant position of Waterford Glass in the lucrative US market and full order books, Hayes is back insisting on more concessions from workers at the factory.

Management are demanding:

- Complete flexibility, re-employment and an end to all demarcation

- A cut back in union representation so that the supervisors become the main link between the shop floor and management

- All workers on piece-rates

- A deepening of the two-year old wage freeze to eliminate all wage rises

- Replacing overtime payments with shift work

- And a free hand to introduce new technology and working procedures at will

But the prospects for successfully resisting these latest attacks are promising.

Although the workforce conceded massive redundancies in 1987, basic union organisation has remained intact. As each new technology has been introduced the workers have been able to gain concessions.

For example, although a wage freeze has been in effect since 1987, the union has been able to win the principle that skilled workers are paid on average earnings during the introduction of new techniques. Together with overtime payments due to the shortage of skilled men, earnings rose by an average of 8 per cent last year.

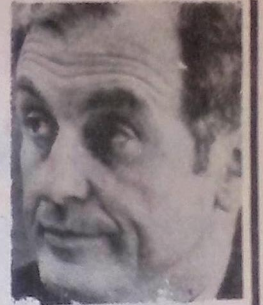
In addition, the full order books and shortage of labour have encouraged morale among the workers. A wage claim of up to 9 per cent has been put in for 1989.

When management threatened to withdraw payment of average earnings to craftsmen and impose piece rates, shop stewards were able to threaten immediate strike action. Management backed off.

The willingness to resist exists. Shop stewards won overwhelming support from the workers for resisting management's plan at mass meetings.

But the mood of defiance needs to be built on. The Company responded to the workforce's rejection of its plan by sending each worker a personal letter pleading the poor mouth.

Shop stewards have, quite rightly, refused to allow management to ad-



Tough-guy Hayes

dress the workforce directly at mass meetings. But Shop Stewards, mistakenly, engaged a consultant accountant to check the company's books. He reported—not surprisingly—that the Glass was not currently profitable.

The danger is that morale will be sapped by the feeling growing that the Company is right, there is no alternative, more sacrifices must be made or the factory will close.

Shop stewards, militants and socialists must argue that if there is a crisis of profitability at the Glass it's management's responsibility. If the workforce allows itself to pay for the crisis as it did in 1987, management will be back next year or the year after with more sacrifices the workforce must make on the holy altar of profitability.

## OWNING

They must argue that whoever the gang of capitalists that end up owning the factory makes no difference to the workers. Their only defence is their union organisation and fighting morale.

One shop steward told *Socialist Worker* that there is no gulf between the shop-stewards and the shop-floor and that unlike the redundancy situation the shop-floor will have to stick with the stewards.

"They have nowhere else to go," he said.

That mood of solidarity cannot be taken for granted. In the past it has all too often been that gulf opening up between the stewards and the workers which has led to defeat.

Regular mass meetings, report backs and involvement of the rank and file are now of the first importance. A defeat at Waterford Glass would give a shot in the arm to all the reactionaries in Ireland.

And a victory would demonstrate to workers throughout the island that it is possible to fight back and win. More than the future of Waterford Glass is at stake.

WATERFORD SWM

## Unions merger stitch-up



Attley and Carroll toast the stitch-up

IT HAD been known for some time that amalgamation talks were taking place between the ITGWU and the FWUI.

But the announcement that the deal to set up anew union—Services, Industrial, Professional and Technical Union (SIPTU)—had been finalised came as a complete surprise to most members.

As yet details of the structure of the proposed new union are very sketchy. The proposed rule book is not available. Members who have looked for further information have been fobbed off with the assurance that details will be available to all "in due course".

The details that have been announced give a good indication that the formation of SIPTU, far from being the rebuilding of Connolly and Larkin's "One Big Union", will in reality result in an even stronger and more

entrenched bureaucracy than before.

- The six existing general officers will continue in their posts or move to a higher post until their retirement.

John Carroll of the ITGWU will hold the post of General President for the full total of six days. No doubt he will get a substantial golden handshake for these heavy duties.

Billy Attley of the FWUI will be the other joint General President. He will later become the General Secretary—a post he will hold until 1998.

- The national executive will remain in office from 1990 to the first national conference in 1995. The executive will not be elected by the full membership of the new union, but will be made up from existing executive members of the two unions.

- National conferences will be held every two years instead of yearly.

- The proposed regional structure has been presented as a method of increasing participation in union affairs. The country

would be divided into eight regions. Two of these will be in Dublin.

Each regional executive will conduct all union affairs including local strike sanction.

On the face of it this appears reasonable. But it will also have the effect of regions concentration solely on local issues and of further distancing members from national policy.

The Six Counties will form a region. Although this has not been said, a possible result could be that attempts to raise the question of the Six County state, repression, etc in the rest of the union could be ruled out of order as matters relating to another region.

With a package like this it is no wonder that Fianna Fail labour minister Bertie Ahearn gave it such a warm welcome in the Dail.

The desire for trade union unity is a good one. It is a recognition that the divisions between unions only weaken the working class. But it looks as if this One Big Union is just One Big Stitchup.

## Mitchell bows out

The campaign for the reinstatement of John Mitchell was called off last month when Mitchell told the High Court in Dublin that he and the IDATU executive had "settled their differences".

This was a deplorable outcome. The issues at stake—to do with the North, union democracy, the "national agreement" in the South etc.—should have been fought right through to the union's conference at Easter.

In this way, a basis could have been laid for rank and file resistance in the future to the right-wing union bureaucracy.

Instead, those who did put their energies into the Mitchell campaign have been left demoralised and embittered.

This is the result of John Mitchell's style of trade union leftism, which sees union activism as a matter of bureaucratic manoeuvre and delegate head-counting, rather than creating a solid foundation for rank and file struggle.

When the projected head-count looked unpromising, Mitchell "settled".

The task of building a politically-conscious rank and file presence in IDATU still remains.

## KILKENNY: SMITHWICKS JOB LOSS

SMITHWICKS Brewery in Kilkenny recently announced plans to close its bottling plant with the loss of 59 jobs.

Representatives of the ITGWU held a meeting in the brewery last month to

organise a campaign of resistance to the threatened job losses.

In recent years Smithwicks management have sought redundancies and 146 jobs have gone over the past six years.

# Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

*House searches, harassment and loyalist death-squads ..*

## Thatcher's bully-boys

**AS MEDIA commentators waxed lyrical last month about a "new mood" and improved prospects for peace in the North, loyalist death-squads re-emerged to gun down Catholics in Belfast and in the mid-Ulster area.**

Meanwhile house-searches and harassment escalated still further in Catholic working-class areas as the Thatcher Government stepped up the effort to find a "military solution".

Although these developments might seem to contradict each other, in essence they all stem from the same source—the fact that the Northern State is proving as irreformable as ever.

The fact that the Duisburg talks could be hailed as a breakthrough—when they didn't even arrive at a basis for negotiations on an internal settlement—shows how far the "constitutional parties" still are from agreement.

Similarly with the Molyneux-Paisley-Hume delegation to Thatcher to press the case for keeping the Belfast shipyard open: this led to widespread spread speculation about the possibility of a coming-together on constitutional matters as well, despite the fact that this wasn't on.

On the same day as the shipyard talks at Downing Street, "Women Together" held a series of "peace rallies" across the North.

In Belfast, Alliance, the Worker's Party, Joe Henderson of the SDLP and maverick ex-Unionist mayor John Carson called for a massive turn-out.

Every newspaper in the North did likewise. But apart from schoolchildren bussed-in for the occasion, only handfulls showed up.

It isn't that there's no yearning for peace, more that the vast majority of working-class people knew that the rallies were sheer wishful thinking.

In the absence of any political progress towards a settlement which might isolate Republicans, UVF and UDA death-squads have reorganised and resumed their traditional strategy of trying to terrorise the Catholic community into submission.

By mid-February three Catholic workmen, the solicitor Pat

Finucane and SF councillor John Davy had been assassinated.

Statements from Tom King and RUC chiefs describing these killings as "mindless" were themselves mindless.

Such killings reflect very accurately the sectarian ideology on which then Northern State was built. Their immediate purpose is to encourage "croppies" to "lie down".

Moreover, the Loyalist death-squads have good reason to believe that they are merely augmenting the efforts of the British security forces.

Blanket house-searches and mass harassment are used to "punish" communities which give support to Republicanism.

The UVF and UDA can reason that they are merely going a little further.

After all "respectable" loyalist leaders, like Paisley, John Taylor, Sammy Wilson and Ken Magennis are constantly urging the RUC and the British Army to "go on the offensive", and denouncing the Thatcher Government for not putting the boot even harder into the "areas these people come from".

The British want a settlement involving the SDLP in a Northern administration. But since they can't achieve this—on account of the sectarian character of the State the British themselves created—they resort to trying to crush opponents of the state by military means.

### MIDDLE GROUND

And when the military means they deploy don't work, UDA and UVF move in.

In this situation socialists don't try to find a thin ribbon of "middle ground" to stand on.

We do not condemn equally the IRA campaign against the State which targets those involved in the machinery of the State and the British Forces/Loyalist campaign in support of the State which, in the case of Loyalist paramilitarism, targets Catholics at random.

We argue, that the State itself is the source of sectarian hatred.

In this we are on the side of the IRA.

But we also argue, that a campaign which of its nature is confined to the Catholic ghettos, cannot succeed in smashing the Northern State.

In this we are vehemently opposed to the politics of Republicanism.

As the gruesome cycle of pain

and death continues it is a tragedy that there is no major political force arguing that no section of the working class has a real interest in sustaining the ugly Northern State and which tries to reach out both

to the threatened workers of Harland and Wolff as well as to the mass of oppressed Catholics, linking the immediate struggle of all workers into a strategy aiming

at achieving socialism throughout Ireland.

Without a mass socialist anti-imperialist movement the prospects for the immediate future are grim.



Kitchen wrecked after British army search. Nothing was found and repairs took three weeks

## Students fight cuts

**TWO THOUSAND students from colleges and universities all over the North marched in Belfast last month against Tory proposals for further education.**

These include the implementation of a loans system to eventually replace diminishing grants, the stopping of benefit in the summer vacation and the removal of housing benefit.

The obvious result will be to make post-school education accessible only to those who can afford it. As it is, less than 20 per cent of students are from low income groups.

With the introduction

of loans, working class families will find it virtually impossible to send their kids to further education.

The main march began at Queen's University and terminated at the City Hall where several speakers addressed the rally.

Representatives of the Union of Students in Ireland and the National Union of Students made strong attacks on the Tories' proposals but gave no indication of future action needed to strengthen the students' hand.

Paul Hudson, President of the Association of University Teachers, spoke about the declining

morale of students and lecturers alike.

Members of the AUT have seen their salaries fall by 20 per cent in real terms during ten years of Tory rule. They have now been offered a 3 per cent pay rise for 1988/89 in the face of 7 per cent inflation.

Unfortunately there was no linking of this to the fight against loans, and AUT members, like MSF technicians, were not approached to join the demonstration.

With student elections now taking place in the colleges there seems to be confusion as to how to continue the campaign. Students North and South have a common interest in

stopping the Tory proposals.

A USI national march in Belfast, similar to the recent NUS demo in London, needs to be organised. Pressure must be put on MSF and AUT union activists to mobilise their members in support.

Meanwhile canteen meetings and white line pickets should be called to build the march.

After Easter students will have their attention diverted from the loans threat to exams. It is therefore vital that the anger is not wasted and a fight is given to protect our education.

MARK HEWITT, Queens University Belfast SWSS.