

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism 35p



Why does Britain stay?

Inside centre pages

Crime does pay!



GOODMAN

AT LEAST FOR THE RICH

LARRY Goodman is in trouble. And Fianna Fail are running to his aid.

The recent *World in Action* report showed that Goodman's meat firms had:

- Falsified documents to gain export refunds from the EEC;
- Used bogus stamps to upgrade meat;
- Paid employees "under the table" in a huge tax fraud.

HAUGHEY

These revelations are only the tip of the iceberg. Over the past decade Goodman has been linked to millions of pounds worth of fraud.

As long ago as 1981, Goodman's beef was being relabelled as "offal" to dodge the export levy in Britain.

Charles Haughey has backed Goodman for years.

He now watches in horror as the judicial inquiry unfolds.

Meanwhile Fianna Fail claim that they want to protect us from the criminals.

Drug pushers and "dole scroungers" are blamed for society's ills.

GOODMAN

Recently 17-year-old Dubliner Sinead Monahan was jailed for a week because she didn't pay her train fare. She was released a day later when she protested her innocence.

Larry Goodman will receive no such treatment. Fianna Fail will see to that.

The next time they talk about targetting "anti-social elements" we should demand that Goodman's name tops the list.

With Haughey's a close second.



HAUGHEY

GOODMAN'S ROTTEN EMPIRE

TAOISEACH Charles Haughey refused to watch *World In Action's* report on Larry Goodman.

He said he did not like such programmes.

Fianna Fail TDs who saw the report thought it was "over the top with its dramatic music, its theatricality and its innuendo".

They are horrified because they know that Fianna Fail has helped Goodman over the years.

The Fianna Fail government elected in

Fianna Fail Links

1987 gave multi-million pound grants to Goodman. Haughey regarded the beef baron as a shining example to Irish entrepreneurs.

The government underwrote Goodman's beef exports to Iraq and helped him to make

huge profits. Meanwhile hospitals were closing because of "lack of money".

At the same time the state knew that Goodman was up to his neck in dirty deals. There was plenty of evidence that his Waterford plant was involved in major fraud.

Fianna Fail ministers kept their mouths shut. They helped Goodman from state funds and he made regular donations to the party.

Haughey didn't need to watch *World in Action*. He knew about Goodman's dubious activity well in advance



Belfast

Fit Up

Since 1st May the RUC and British Army have intensified their harassment of young people in the Beechmount area. Over the last two weeks a number of young people, ranging from fifteen to nineteen years of age, have been arrested and taken to Castlereagh for interrogation by the RUC.

Mark Prior was told that his mother had had a serious heart attack and that if he signed a statement he would get out in time to see her before she died. He was also told that his sister was in Grosvenor police station and that his niece had been taken into care.

Kevin Mulholland, a diabetic, had his insulin withheld.

Jim McCabe was told that Mark Prior and Liam Coogan had signed statements which named him as involved in the death of a policeman.

SUBJECTED

All of the above were subjected to beatings, physical and psychological intimidation, being burnt with lighted cigarettes, and were refused access to legal advice. After being held for seven days all four confessed and signed statements.

Neither the families of the four accused nor their solicitors know what they have confessed to, because the RUC have refused to release the documents.

In the case of one of the individuals, who has an alibi, the RUC have changed the charges from murder to membership of the IRA.

At the moment the RUC and British Army are targeting young people in the Beechmount area and seem intent on hauling them in for interrogation and intimidation at any cost.

The situation, according to one RUC officer, is "if we can't get them on one charge we'll get them for membership".



Corporation netted £2.1 million in salary and bonuses.

The rest accumulated from millions of shares he owns in Ireland and Australia.

The magazine estimates his total investments are currently worth no less than £200 million.

This wonderful human being owns the *Irish Independent*, the *Daily Star* and the *Sunday World* among others.

He's also one of the biggest shareholders of Waterford Glass. When the Glass workers went on strike, his papers were the most vicious in their position as chairman, abuse.

Again, during the ESB strike, newspapers owned by this obscenely wealthy individual led the charge against workers who dared to ask for a few quid extra per week.

So if you ever see a string of Securicor vans heading towards one of O'Reilly's Irish mansions, it's not a payroll delivery—they're just carrying his wage packet.

SANTA

WORKERS Party TD Pat Rabbitte revealed **Larry Goodman's** "astonishingly long list" of Christmas gifts for 1990.

Customs personnel at Greenore, Carrickfarnon, Dundalk, Waterford and Dublin were all subject to the beef baron's amazing generosity.

"The list also includes a substantial number of personnel in the Depart-

ment of Agriculture, including some agricultural officers employed at cold stores, some vets and a handful of personnel in Industry and Commerce," said Mr Rabbitte.

And Goodman's magnanimity did not stop at the border either. Personnel in the Northern customs and the NI Department of Agriculture also had their stockings filled by Goodman.

Waterford Proteins, a Goodman plant, was closed by the health inspectors. The factory yard stank of rotting offal.

RATS

In Tipperary a man shot 103 rats which were roaming the beef baron's Nenagh plant.

With Mad Cow disease on the loose who could risk buying beef from this man?

STINKING RICH!

LARRY Goodman is no friend of the environment.

A few years ago the Venezuelan government returned a cargo of his meat to Europe because it exceeded their radiation limit.

More recently

problem". He then outdid all the others. He called on the Minister to "address the issue of parental responsibility for children and young teenagers" (whatever that means) and demanded the immediate drafting in of a hundred extra gardai!

CALLING MARTIN LUTHER

MEANWHILE, the Unionist delegation in the Brooke talks (or "process") has announced that it wants a veto over any chairman proposed for North/South talks.

They solemnly declared that they will "closely scrutinise the religion, morals and ethics" of any candidate.

GOODMAN treats his workers like dirt.

When he took over at **Baillieboro Co-op** he sacked half the work force. He had done this in several factories.

At one Goodman plant young workers are employed on a casual basis.

They arrive early in the morning. If they are lucky they are given a few hours' work. Then they have to wait in the canteen, with no extra pay, until they are called again.

them very imaginative.

One **Fianna Fail** councillor has fearlessly declared that he'll have all the old post boxes still bearing the British crown tom out of Dublin's walls to commemorate 1916! Meanwhile his government fully endorses the plan to sack 1,500 postal workers. Who said idealism is dead?

At least one **FF** councillor—**Owen Hammond**—has a broad-minded approach to his duties. He's actually been living in England for two years! You'll be pleased to hear he's arrived back in time to fight for (and hopefully lose) his seat.

In the **Dun Laoghaire** area of Dublin, the usual pre-election crime wave has been "discovered". All the right-wing councillors united to paint a dire picture of a citizenry under siege. Though even the local garda chief discounted it as "pre-election hype", councillor and **Workers Party TD** **Eamon Gilmore** was not going to be left out. He could have attacked

Working for Larry

5TH COLUMN

by Mark Lynch

LOCAL

ELECTIONS

IT'S time for local elections in the South.

Let any issue of the vaguest public interest present itself and vote-hungry politicians home in with the pinpoint accuracy of seat-seeking missiles.

In the last such elections (in 1985), **Fianna Fail** promised to abolish local water and refuse charges—today they're jailing those who refuse to pay them.

Their other promises didn't last any longer.

But don't worry, this time they've got brand new promises—some of

WE THINK

Give them more to feel bad about!

THE Goodman scandal has put Fianna Fail on the rack.

With local elections looming it could not have come at a worse time for Haughey and friends.

Every new piece of evidence about Goodman's dodgy activities will send them reeling. And workers will become even more angry and cynical.

But the anger and cynicism is not just about the beef baron's suspicious actions.

Nor is it just over Haughey's attempt to cover up the allegations.

Workers are angry because of unemployment, poverty and poor public services.

Fianna Fail have persuaded An Post to shelve rural post office closures until after the elections. But 1,500 jobs will still go in the service.

Meanwhile Digital, long regarded as model employers, have pulled out of Clonmel leaving hundreds more on the dole.

Poverty is still on the increase. ESRI studies have shown that 34 percent of the South's population live on inadequate incomes. Their definition of "inadequate" is

£48 per week for a single person.

Poverty is compounded by a massive housing crisis.

Dublin Corporation provided over one thousand dwellings each year between 1980 and 1986. In 1989 they provided none and last year 25 were provided.

In Cork workers have been jailed for refusing to pay unjust local charges.

And Fianna Fail plan even more attacks. Last year a leading business magazine drew up a "privatisation hit-list".

Already the Sugar Company has been privatised and B & I is next in line.

TURBULANCE

Behind the Goodman affair lies a bigger scandal. Fianna Fail are prepared to sell off the public sector to people exactly like Goodman—crooks and gangsters whose sole concern is to make profits.

And while the Progressive Democrats condemn Goodman for fraud they shout loudest of all for privatisation.

At the local elections on June 27th workers should use their vote to protest at this



FIANNA FAIL AFTER THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

state of affairs.

SWM is calling for the biggest possible Left vote. Our article on page 5 explains this in detail.

But far more important than any election are struggles by workers.

The ESB electricians have already shown how to fight on pay. Now bank workers are balloting for action to speed up their wage demands.

In Waterford both nurses and ancillary workers have struck against health cuts.

Postal workers can turn public anger at the Viability Plan into victory if they take similar action.

The Goodman scandal will weaken Fianna Fail. Workers' action can stop them in their tracks.

CORK: Force them to drop the charges



JAILED: Protesters Ted Tynan and Paddy Mulcahy

A CAMPAIGN of non-payment continues against service charges in Cork. A number of protestors have been jailed for refusing to pay. Yet groups of workers have already shown that these attacks can be resisted.

There, hundreds of workers marched to prevent scabs from disconnecting supplies in a working class estate. Waterford Trades Council passed a motion calling for strikes if non-payers were jailed. In the end the Corporation backed off.

COERCION

The plumbers' union in Cork Corporation has decided not to disconnect the water supply of non-payers. The charges can be beaten in the same way that similar measures were defeated in Waterford.

Readers are invited to write letters and contribute to Socialist Worker P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8

COPY DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE IS FRI 14TH JUNE

Polish boss

WHO says Eastern European bosses will have to learn from the West?

The antics of Poland's top bosses make Larry Goodman look like a novice.

A list of Poland's millionaires published in the *Economist* magazine shows that most are ex-bureaucrats with strong links to the Communist Party. Take one Mieczyslaw

Wilczat, for instance. A former Minister for Industry, he's made a fortune in the meatpacking business (mostly through shady customs dealings and diverting state resources).

But he hasn't bungled it like our Larry. He's diversifying into consultation.

Along with the former Vice President, Iwenezs Setula, he's set up a mysterious consulting firm called Pol-Nipon.

To teach the Japanese about capitalism, no doubt.

TO THE RESCUE

AN international rescue operation was mounted in Kuwait recently.

Unlike most of the other operations it was swift, efficient and effective. But it wasn't to save any of the thousands of guest workers and Palestinians rotting in camps on the border where they've been dumped.

It was a rescue operation to save four of the Emir's prize thoroughbred horses, who were stuck in his private pleasure gardens in the desert.

Unlike the refugees, the horses had piped water laid on. Equipment was flown in from England to save them.

Meanwhile starving people in Somalia were relying on a single plane provided by the Belgian government to bring them

food. The plane brought ninety tons of food aid a week to the Somalians.

When the Kurdish crisis made news, the Belgian government diverted the plane to Kurdistan. Now the starving people in Somalia can only get 14 tons of food a week.

ideals.

Thurles Labour Party member Denis Ryan was one of the most vocal left-wing critics at this year's Labour Party conference.

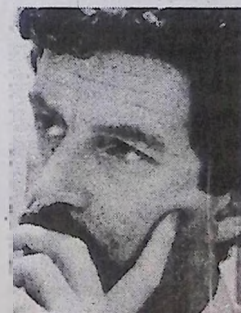
The members who resigned claim that the Labour Party is "refusing to mention even the word socialism".

The group are now committed to building a "genuine local socialist organisation" and are supporting Denis Ryan as an independent Labour candidate in the local elections in June.

Thurles Labour Split

LABOUR'S drift to the right has led to a split in the Labour Party in North Tipperary.

Nine members of the local Thurles branch have resigned from the party because of its abandonment of socialist principles. They claim that the party leadership are hell bent on undermining Connolly's



INTERNATIONAL

INDIA
AFTER
GANDHI

WITH the death of Rajiv Gandhi the Nehru dynasty has come to an end.

The world's leaders rushed to express their sympathy for Gandhi's family as well as to lavish praise on "the leader of the world's largest democracy".

This in itself should be reason to be suspicious of the Nehru record. In fact, since independence the Nehru's Congress Party has ruled India with an even firmer grip than Fianna Fail have Ireland and with the same populist, corrupt and repressive style of politics.

The reason the West loved Gandhi and his predecessors is that they fell over themselves to continue the policies of their former British masters.

Pandit Nehru himself, the first post-colonial leader, compromised with the British, compromised with communalism and failed with land reform.

One of the problems faced by Congress, the party of the Indian national bourgeoisie, has

been the existence of powerful regional conglomerations of rich farmers who have always resisted the centralised plans of Congress.

The response of Indira Gandhi, Rajiv's mother, was the Emergency of 1975-77 when all opposition to her iron rule was beaten back.

Between 1961 and 1968, as the Green Revolution spread through Indian agriculture, the number of people living below the poverty line in rural India increased from 38 percent to 53 percent.

PRODUCTION

At the same time agricultural production reached record levels. Indira's response wasn't to make land ownership more equal or in any way alleviate poverty. Instead she flirted with a programme of forced sterilisation.

One of her last memorable acts was in 1984, when she sent the Indian army in to clear the Golden Temple complex at Amritsar, killing hundreds of Sikhs.

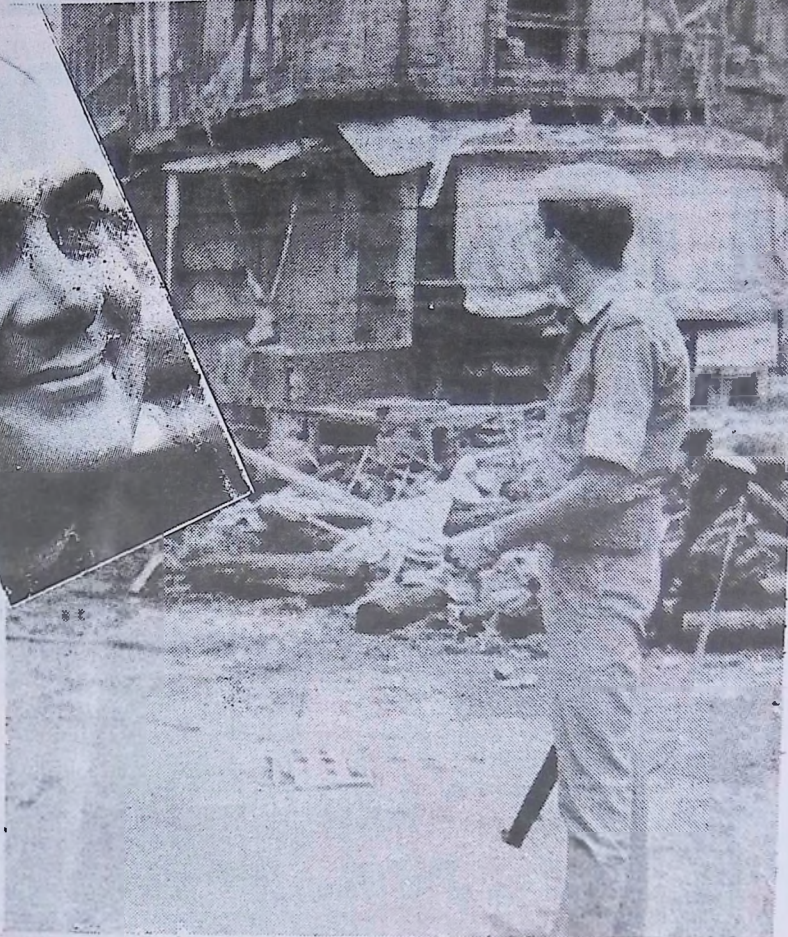
Neither did Rajiv's squeaky clean image last

very long. The Bofors scandal showed that Congress was as corrupt as ever. And his decision to send troops to Sri Lanka to help crush the Tamil Tigers showed that he had inherited the Nehru taste for violent repression.

With growing disillusionment with Congress and the lack of any real—let alone left-wing—alternative, India faces the prospect of falling into inter-communal and caste violence.

The biggest gains in recent elections have been made by the extreme right-wing Hindu chauvinists of the BJP, who preach hatred against non-Hindus. Its core membership is made up of the fascist RSS whose members receive paramilitary training.

Since independence Congress has done a careful balancing act between the different communities, and while quite capable of nurturing Hindu communalism—especially when threatened by workers' struggle, as in the 1960s—the Hindus have never been an elite group protected by a sectarian state. The BJP if fighting to



A Muslim home burned down in sectarian riots

create just that.

Other groups in turn have increasingly tried to turn their poorer members against the Hindus. The Sikhs in particular have seen the growth of racist and fundamentalist parties who target the Hindu community in the Punjab, most of whom are on average poorer than their Sikh neighbours.

The only major split between the Sikh extremists is over whether or not—once you've killed all the Hindus—you should move on to kill non-orthodox Sikhs.

The complex patchwork of caste further adds to the

problem. There are nearly 4,000 different castes and sub-castes, and the desperate poverty created by Rajiv's pro-rich policies has led them to turn on each other. The most recent example was the protests by middle caste students against more government jobs being reserved for lower castes.

COMMUNISTS

It doesn't have to be this way.

Indian workers have frequently been united on class lines despite communal background, for example in the great

Bombay textile strike of 1983. In the 1930s there was a mass anti-caste organisation in Tamil Nadu organised by a militant atheist. Unfortunately the Indian Left, which at times has run individual states (especially the Communist Party) has always found itself tailing "progressive" parties. Thus, in the last elections the CP was in the same anti-Congress coalition as the BJP.

Never was there a clearer need for a truly secular and independent working class politics.

■ JOSH CLARKE

Killing
Fields

THE black townships of South Africa have once more turned into killing fields.

This has happened with the full complicity and approval of de Klerk's regime.

The Inkatha movement is being used by the police force to destroy the ANC's organisation.

The mob that butchered thirty people in the Swaniville camp was escorted there by the security forces. They looked on as Inkatha spent over four hours attacking people and destroying their homes. At no point did they intervene. When it was over they escorted the killers away again.

Considering the record of the South African security forces, this is not difficult to believe. Thousands of blacks have been tortured and murdered in police custody. We know who killed Steve Biko. We know who carried out the massacres of Sharpeville and Soweto.

Which makes it all the more frustrating to hear Nelson Mandela call for greater numbers of police in the townships. The ANC has dropped its demand for the resignation of Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok. While suspending negotiations under pressure from its rank and file, the ANC leadership is still delaying any effective fightback.

INITIATIVE

Meanwhile the government can maintain its initiative. Vlok is already talking about banning all political organisations. He wants to reimpose a state of emergency in the townships. These measures will inevitably make it harder to organise a fightback.

It will be easier for Inkatha's leader, Gatsha Buthelezi, to win a strong position at the bargaining table if his movement is not stopped now. But the only way to stop Inkatha is to organise resistance.

This means two things. Firstly, the people who are prepared to take on Inkatha must be organised by the ANC. It will mean openly defying the state's ban on weapons. And it will mean challenging the state's right to impose law and order through states of emergency, curfews, etc.

This is linked to the second, and more important, tactic. This is to use the power of the black working class to undermine de Klerk—which is why COSATU's threat of a general strike is most important.

Strikes and demonstrations have the power to stop the killing and to undermine de Klerk's confidence. The ANC can't afford to delay much longer.

MARNIE
HOLBOROW

■ STEVE GREEN

Crisis in USSR



THE struggle in the USSR has reached a crisis point. Boris Yeltsin's support for Gorbachev's clampdown will have confused many striking workers.

In the past, those looking for social reform tended to support the liberal democrats, who

promised democracy with the market. Gorbachev's anti-crisis programme promises the market but no democracy. But Yeltsin has gone along with it, hoping he can deliver the support of the strikers to the ruling class.

As the crisis deepens, the polarisation between the working class on the one side, and Gorbachev and the army on the other, has deepened.

It was precisely the attempts of the Gorbachev wing to push through price rises and marketisation that started the April strike wave. In conservative Byelorussia, hundreds of thousands came out

to protest. While Yeltsin posed as the democratic alternative to Gorbachev, his economic aim was the same—privatisation.

But as the crisis deepens, Yeltsin's democratic credentials are exposed. He is increasingly forced to take sides.

The economy has gone into free fall: Soviet GNP in the first three months of 1991 was eight percent lower than it had been for the same period in 1991. Imports dropped by 45 percent. The budget deficit is out of control as the republics refuse to hand over tax revenues to the Union. There is less agricultural land this

year because of shortage of seed corn, petrol and equipment.

The plans for transforming the military-industrial complex into consumer goods production are paralysed. Workers' living standards are increasingly squeezed. Most workers have to live on around £7 a month.

STRIKES

One worker expressed the widely felt resentment: "I earn 200 roubles a month. I am alone with two children. How can I feed them when all the goods for children have become several times more expensive?"

Yet workers face this situation with struggles behind them. The miners' strike of 1989 put some independent workers' organisation into place. The strikes this year—from Minsk to Kemerovo, from Vorkuta to Tbilisi, from mines to car and tractor works, and the linking up of the Urals' huge metallurgical works with the striking Kuzbas miners—give Gorbachev and Yeltsin very little room to manoeuvre.

Any lull in workers' militancy will be seized upon by the regime. But the severity of the crisis will put pressure on workers to defend their living standards. The deal between Gorbachev and Yeltsin

THE Workers' Party has joined the rush to the Right. At their conference over a month ago, they voted down a call for state control of the banks and the financial institutions.

It was a significant decision. One delegate, Kieran Bradley from Derry, had argued that "If the State does not control the banks, the banks will control the State".

It was a perfectly correct point of view. Without public ownership of the banks, no government is in a position to even know the exact ownership of the major investments in the country.

But the TDs who lead the party have a very different agenda today. Fearful of a resurgence of right-wing Labour, they want to tack to the electoral wind. Throughout the WP Conference, they emphasised that there was a need to drop "hard left language".

SHIFT

However, the shift in direction of the Workers' Party goes well beyond a change of language. One of the authors of the Workers' Party's new programme is Proinseas Breathnach. Writing in the party's theoretical

journal *Making Sense*, he spelled out the party's new strategy.

CLASS

The blue collar workers, Breathnach claimed, are "politically conservative" and are in a long term decline. Socialists now had to look to white collar workers who "are unlikely to be responsive to the narrowly

economic concerns of traditional socialism" Hence the need to drop talk of the class struggle.

Now this is pure nonsense. Bank officials, for example, are balloting on strike action over pay. ESB clerical workers walked out in support of the electricians in big numbers because they want to pursue their pay claim. Some of the lowest paid grades are

now found among white collar workers. Breathnach claims that white collar workers are really interested in "socially aware issues". This seems to be a code word for issues such as divorce, gay rights, and information on abortion.

ISSUES

These issues have certainly to be raised

by socialists. But the people who will fight on these issues will be precisely the "hard left". At the WP conference de Rossa persuaded delegates to vote down a call for a "secular" Ireland. The word might lose too many votes!

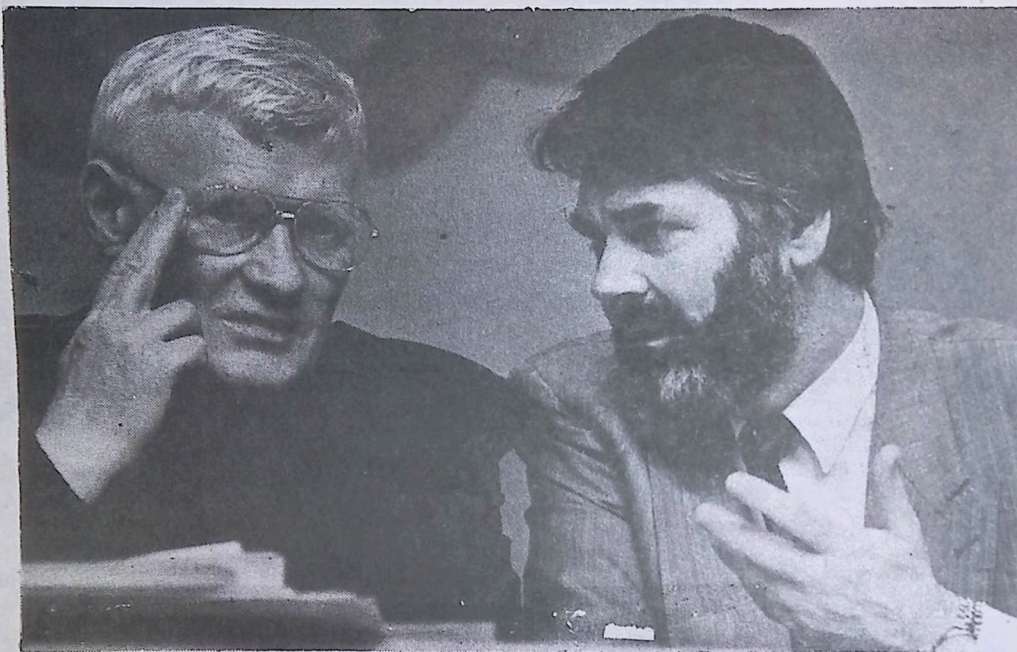
The one good sign at the WP conference was the resistance of a section of the delegates to the drift rightwards. Delegates

voted to include references to "revolutionary socialism" and the "class struggle" in the new party programme against

the leadership's wishes. But unless this sentiment is turned into an open fight against the party leadership, it is meaningless.



WP: tacking to the electoral wind



Sean Garland and Proinseas de Rossa— Workers Party

THE central weakness in the Workers Party's policies has always been its view on the North. The party used to believe in the rigid "stages" approach to the Northern issue: first, there had to be a Bill of Rights passed in the North; then, after a period, there could be a move towards a united Ireland; only after the completion of this second stage could the struggle for socialism commence.

Now, however, the party is dropping any references to ending partition. A resolution calling for a "unitary Republic" was withdrawn from the conference floor.

Henry Patterson, explained that "it would give the wrong impression to Unionists who were showing flexibility at the moment".

The party's position now is simply for devolution. Direct Rule

from London should be ended and power transferred back to Stormont

PRACTICE

In practice this means a return to a Stormont type regime. It also means that all prospects of working class unity are indefinitely deferred.

Any step back towards a Stormont style regime would occur only through tremendous repression in nationalist areas. It would restore a tremendous confidence to loyalism. No Bill of Rights implemented by a sectarian RUC police force could alter that.

In reality, of course, the Workers Party policy in this area is pie in the sky. In practice it only serves to make the party among the most enthusiastic supporters of repression and loyalism.

KIERAN ALLEN

MARXISTS regard local and parliamentary elections with a large dose of cynicism. The important decisions are taken not in elected chambers but by unelected police chiefs, army officers, civil service mandarins, bureaucrats and company directors.

If bourgeois democracy is such a puny thing—the question arises: why vote? Shouldn't Marxists simply call for a campaign of boycotting the polls?

The problem with this approach is that it ignores the way working class consciousness develops.

Capitalism—the rule of a tiny minority—could only survive provided the mass of the population—the working class—acquiesce. This acquiescence is expressed in ideas that the set-up is inevitable, natural, reasonably fair, and that nothing can be done about it.

These illusions are



carefully fostered by the ruling class's media, and as Marx said, as long as the working class are relatively disorganised, the ruling ideas in society are those of the ruling class.

Chief among these illusions is the idea politics is a job for the political elite, that the mass of people have no business taking things into their own hands.

But nonetheless, the experience of the mass of people under capitalism—even if they would not express it in these terms—is one of oppression, exploitation, hardship and a lack of fairness.

In most advanced countries as the working class has developed, so also parties that base themselves on the working class have grown up, seeking to limit expressions of working-class discontent within the system.

These reformist parties, are contradictory in their nature. Lenin described them as "bourgeois workers' parties". The leadership consists of middle-class careerists, trade union bureaucrats

Why Vote Left

These people regard themselves as better able to rationally run the system than the leaders of the openly-capitalist parties. They dream of reforming away the worst features of capitalism without confronting the capitalist class.

MEDIATE

So instead they seek to mediate between capital and labour. In any decisive conflict they side with the bourgeois order.

But they are able to play this role precisely because the reformist parties have another side. What attracts workers to Labour-type parties is a crude awareness of the distinctive class interests of the working class.

Just as the day-to-day conditions of exploitation at work forces workers to organise in trade unions, so the longing for a political solution to class oppression points masses of workers in the direction of political action.

Very often, the more politically aware workers will be drawn towards the idea of working class political representation so that issues of vital concern to working-class people can be fought for in a national arena. The promise of winning reforms through the gentle and "safe" mechanisms of parliament appears a more "realistic" option than revolutionary politics.

CONVINCE

Revolutionaries, who wish to convince the mass of workers that they must take power through their own efforts, have to devise tactics that can hope to prise open the contradictions of reformism.

On a day-to-day basis, revolutionaries support the fight for reforms, arguing that the best way to assure victory is mass, working-class action and that only workers revolution can finally win irreversible improvements. In elections the tactics must be adapted accordingly.

In those countries where mass reformist organisations exist—such as Britain—we say "Kick out the Tories—Vote Labour with no illusions". The point is that revolutionaries are still not numerous enough to pose their politics as an credible immediate alternative to reformism. But we still stand on the side of those who hate the Tories.

But we take no political responsibility for the Labourite leaders either. Once in power, the record shows, they will behave every bit as badly as the Right. We are not saying they are the lesser of two

evils—any constitutional government, faced with the depth of the current crisis, has no alternative but to attack working-class organisation and conditions.

Many left-wing workers do not yet understand this. We say "Let's put them to the test of government." We stand with our class while attempting to show through experience the superiority of revolutionary politics.

In other parts of the world things are more complicated. Anti-imperialist, nationalist movements are not organised on a working class base. Indeed the essence of their politics is an all-class alliance which says all classes of the nation should suspend class struggle and unite to win national liberation.

This key idea links such diverse movements as the South African ANC, the Sandinistas of Nicaragua and the Provos. Revolutionary socialists support these movements—including voting—against the imperialists while pointing out that to really finish with imperialism, working class politics are necessary.

In Ireland, partition and the rural legacy has created a significant, but misshapen social democracy in the South and left Northern

politics entirely dominated by the nature of the Six County state.

At election times in the North therefore, we call for a vote for Sinn Fein, not because the Republicans offer a solution or are socialist—neither is true. But we stand with those who oppose British imperialism and the sectarian state and for the moment look to the Provos for a lead.

In the South, we call for a Left vote—in the first instance the Labour and Workers Party. We want to encourage workers to break from Fianna Fail. Although we criticise these parties we recognise that an enlarged vote for the Left and the effect this would have on working-class consciousness would make it easier for us to raise genuine socialist politics.

Secondly we support the protest of those voting Sinn Fein as a sign that significant numbers of people do not regard themselves as being part of "the consensus".

In all cases we point out that voting in parliamentary or local elections cannot change society, that the parties we call for a vote for cannot lead the way forward. For that you need to build a revolutionary socialist alternative.

■ KEVIN WINGFIELD



NORTHERN IRELAND:

A rotten statelet

MANY people see the Brooke talks as the means to a lasting settlement of the Northern Troubles. Loyalist intransigence appears to be the only obstacle.

But will a constitutional settlement improve the lives of both Catholic and Protestant workers? Why has Britain stayed in the North and why are they now so anxious to find a solution to the Troubles? Here GORETTI HORGAN examines these questions and also looks at what might happen if Britain left.

Will the talks bring peace?

IN the course of the Brooke talks, Brooke and the British government have played the part of the "honest broker", the disinterested party which only wants the best deal possible for all sides. Peter Brooke said last year that Britain now has "no selfish interest" in staying in the North.

But if Brooke really meant that, why are British troops still on the streets? What is the British interest in Northern Ireland?

While a few Republicans cling to classic colonial explanations of why Britain is in Ireland, most are willing to admit that it's a long time since the British ruling class extracted any profit from the North. However, most Republicans also continue to talk of the North's "strategic" importance to the British government and to assert that Britain does have a specifically British interest in the Six County state.

Because Republicans see the most important divide in society as being between nations, it's understandable that they should insist on this British interest. Marxists, on the other hand, see the division between classes as the way to understand the world and, looked at in this way, Britain's role in the North starts to make a lot more sense.

In short, Britain remains in the North not to protect its own British interests but to protect the interests of the capitalist class in these islands

and throughout Europe.

Of course, British imperialism wasn't always so unselfish. When it founded the Northern state in 1922, it was to keep the profits of the shipbuilding, textile and engineering industries of the North East. The Orange capitalists who owned those industries depended on British markets and feared the protectionism promised by the Southern Republicans. So the best interests of capitalism, and particularly of British imperialism and the Unionist bosses, were served by the foundation of the Northern Ireland state.

Unionist control over most of industry and over the state allowed the Orange bosses to foster sectarianism by discrimination against Catholics, gerrymandering and wholesale repression.

DIVISION

And the division of the working class—between North and South, Catholic and Protestant—made the job of the state easier. Because, as Lenin pointed out, the job of all capitalist states is to ensure the most efficient "exploitation of wage labour by capital".

But if the 1921 Treaty was being negotiated in 1991, the Northern state would not be created. The economic basis for it no longer exists. Orange industry—textiles, engineering, shipbuilding—has collapsed. Shipbuilding, for example, still employed 30—35,000 workers in the 1950s. Today it employs about 2,500.

It is multinational companies which now exploit wage labour in the North of Ireland. Such com-

panies don't care about the religion of the workers they're exploiting; they're only interested in the level of return on their investment. Discrimination against Catholics is now an embarrassment. Today, a "normal", stable, democratic state would serve the interests of capitalism better.

This doesn't absolve British imperialism from its responsibility for the continuing oppression of Catholics. More than ever it is the British state that props up the rotten state of Northern Ireland.

Meanwhile, the South has been integrated into the modern world economy. Its ruling class is now a bona fide member of the capitalist club. This was seen clearly during the Gulf War when the Fianna Fail government allowed the refuelling

of US war planes at Shannon. This marked the end of any remaining argument about Britain or NATO having a "strategic interest" in the North.

Economic and social changes North and South mean that partition no longer helps capitalism to prosper.

There's no doubt then that Britain has no fundamental objection to leaving. But the risk of political instability is high. No government will want to be seen to give in to "terrorists". And there is always a fear of loyalist resistance. The British can't pull out until some kind of settlement is reached which will ensure stability on the island. And that's what the Brooke initiative hopes to start moving towards.

Bloodbath?

WHENEVER socialists or republicans call for the British to withdraw from the North, politicians of virtually every party say that if this were to happen, there would be a bloodbath.

The "bloodbath" argument says that the Unionists would take up arms against any form of united or federal Ireland. The nationalist population would bear the brunt of this revolt as indiscriminate sectarian murders multiplied without the British army there to stop them.

Many of the families of those killed by loyalist gangs would question just who it is that the British army is protecting; there have been frequent reports of heavy security force activity in areas just before sectarian murders. But the British

army and police are nowhere to be seen until the killers have made their getaway.

Indeed, it is the security forces themselves, the RUC and especially the UDR (which is a regiment of the British army) which are most likely to indulge in mass murder.

The UDR is frequently involved in UDA/UVF murders. There are nearly 13,000 RUC and 6,500 UDR in the North, all armed. There are 100,000 legally-held firearms in Northern Ireland. Most are held by Protestants, many of them trained in the use of arms in the B Specials, UDR or RUC.

STATEMENT

We cannot know whether these guns would be used in the event of a British withdrawal but we can be sure that a clear British statement of intent would seriously undermine the strength of loyalist resistance. The fizzling out of coherent opposition to the Anglo-Irish Agreement illustrates how this could happen.

THE parties involved in the Brooke talks seem to have difficulty in agreeing even the shape of the table they're going to meet around. Yet virtually all the participants in all the "strands" of the talks want some

The economic changes which have taken place over the last twenty years have undermined the stranglehold of extreme loyalism and, with it, the possibility of a bloodbath. When the Six County state was "a Protestant state for a Protestant people", Protestant workers were pretty much guaranteed a job in industry, local government, public bodies or the civil service—since all were under Unionist control.

Protestant workers are still top of the queue for jobs and housing but the guaranteed job is no longer there. While they're doing well compared to Catholic workers, overall they're not doing well at all. The jobs that are on offer are no longer the well-paid, highly skilled jobs in the shipyard or engineering firms. Now what's on offer are mainly low-paid, service sector—probably government—jobs.

Living standards in the North are far lower than in the UK generally. When size is taken into account, the purchasing power of households in Northern Ireland is about three-quarters of the UK average.

All of this means that significant numbers of Protestant workers have seen their living and working conditions worsen. In this situation, they are less likely to see the state as "theirs" and so less likely to fight to defend it.

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Brooke and Haughey: friends or enemies?

variation of the same outcome.

They want to find a way to allow the Catholic middle class to come together with moderate Unionists in a power-sharing regional government. Giving the Dublin government a role will seem to guarantee civil rights for Catholics, while Britain will continue to guarantee to Protestants that there will be no united Ireland without their consent.

It's not surprising that the British and Irish ruling classes would want such a deal. It is not the case that Brooke is dancing to Haughey's tune as loyalists like to think, or that Haughey is dancing to Brooke's, as republicans claim. Both are dancing to the same tune—that of keeping Ireland safe for capitalism. Political stability is the best guarantee of that.

To the Unionists, the talks offer an escape from the corner into which they painted themselves on the Anglo-Irish Agreement. They would have a say again in running the Six County state and be able to return to the receptions and other junkets which they have boycotted since 1988. Despite their rhetoric, Brooke's tactic of issuing "take it or leave it" ultimatums actually suits the Unionist leaders as it allows them to go along with the process without ever having to agree to it.

ECONOMIC

The SDLP would also get a say in running the state and, by doing so, it hopes to enhance the political and economic status of those it represents—the Catholic middle class. That class has played an important role within the Catholic community since the foundation of the Six County state. Catholic lawyers, teachers and businessmen have long serviced the nationalist population, while working with the Catholic Church to stifle the voice of rebellion.

Since the early sixties, with free education and the expansion of the health service and welfare state, the Catholic middle class has grown considerably. The continuing expansion of the public sector under

direct rule has further enhanced its size but its influence has been constrained by the fact that it continues to serve almost exclusively the nationalist community. Power-sharing would give it a bite at the real cherry of power.

While it is impossible to predict the outcome of the talks there can be little doubt that, if a power-sharing formula is agreed, the chances of a settlement working are better than at any time in the past. The Sunningdale Agreement was brought down by mass loyalist action. The failure of the campaign against the Anglo-Irish Agreement showed that it is increasingly difficult for Unionist leaders to mobilise a similar level of resistance.

ATTEMPT

Ian Paisley's attempt earlier this year to organise a picket of Haughey's address to the Institute of Directors' conference in Belfast brought no more than a hundred protestors onto the streets. Other similar protests have also been tiny.

These failures reflect the fact that the hold of loyalism on Protestant workers has been weakened by the economic and social changes of the last thirty years. Many working class Protestants have been forced to wonder whether Northern Ireland is "their" state any more.

But even if a formula is found to which all parties, including the Unionists, can agree, will this mean an end to "the Troubles"? The answer is, almost certainly, no. The problem which any initiative produced by Brooke's talks faces is the same as that faced by all the previous attempts at reform. That is the irreformability of the Northern Ireland state.

As long as the Northern state is in existence, Catholic workers will be oppressed. While there has been some improvement in the level of economic discrimination against Catholics, reform of the security forces has proved quite impossible.

The "armed bodies of men" on which the power of all capitalist states depends will not be reformed. The UDR, for example, was set up when the B Specials were abolished. By linking the regiment to the Brit-

ish army, it was hoped that the abuses of the Specials could be avoided. It didn't work.

The Anglo-Irish Agreement was supposed to ensure "impartial" policing of Orange marches. Yet the British government couldn't force Sir John Hermon, the RUC Chief Constable which it had appointed, to re-route the 1986 Portadown march away from Catholic areas.

When the "shoot to kill" policy became an embarrassment to the British government, John Stalker was sent to clean up the RUC. Hermon not only refused to cooperate, he warned the British government that any attempt at reform would result in mutiny.

The British need a police force to hold the Northern state together and the RUC is the only one they've got. So they were forced to back down.

As long as the Northern state remains, as long as there is partition, there'll be discrimination, poverty and repression in the Six Counties and support for armed resistance will continue.

The problem is that the armed struggle offers no alternative to working class people, Catholic or Protestant. The last twenty years have shown that, far from encouraging the kind of mass movement that could shake the foundations of the Northern state, the armed struggle has taken the masses off the streets.

Only a strategy that links the question of the Northern state to the question of which class is to rule in Ireland can succeed in ending the violence and poverty which is the lot of most workers, North and South, Catholic and Protestant.

Is Southern Ireland a Neo-Colony? by Kieran Allen

Available from: SW Books P.O. Box 1648 Dublin 8 £2 incl. p&p

EAMONN MCCANN

YUGOSLAVIA:

TEARING APART



Croatian President, Franjo Tudjman

YUGOSLAVIA is coming apart at the seams, and the effect is being felt all over Europe.

The main reaction of many watching on television must be a mixture of bewilderment and horror. Members of different national groups pour out hatred of one another.

Some, like the Croats, are led by extreme right-wingers who openly admire George Bush and blame all their ills on "communists".

Other national groups, such as the Serbians, follow an old-style stalinist leadership and denounce their rivals as "fascists".

But all speak in the same language of national hatred.

Each Republic has its own armed forces. The Federal army, the only effective Federal institution, is Serbian dominated but with large contingents of other nationalities intermingled through it. Nobody knows how it would react if ordered to impose Federal authority on an individual Republic.

If the Federation were to fall apart there would be serious implications for the entire region. There are Hungarian communities in northern Serbia and in Croatia, and Albanian communities in southern Serbia, for example. Both these countries, themselves in crisis, could be destabilised further if drawn into the Yugoslav chaos.

SERIOUS

Potentially more serious still is the position of Macedonia. The Yugoslav Federation has provided Macedonia with a high degree of autonomy in the southern Macedonian Republic. If Yugoslavia were now to break up, the Republic would opt for separate statehood.

Such a state would immediately attract the loyalty of the millions of Macedonians who live across the border in Greece. That is, the territorial integrity of a member of NATO would be threatened.

All this illustrates the

artificiality of national borders in Europe and of the many states created in this century as a result of two world wars. Many of these entities could only be maintained by the oppression of large groups within them, and the repression of the population generally. The result was the stoking up of resentments and grievance which would burst bloodily forth once the state structures began to crack—as was eventually certain.

This process can be observed right across the USSR and Eastern Europe, as well as in the Middle East and elsewhere, as the world crisis of capitalism puts stress on existing political structures. Yugoslavia is merely a particularly clear example.

The two groups most energetically preparing for civil war are the Serbs and the Croats. The Serbs are led by the stalinist Slobodan Milosevic, the Croats by the Thatcherite Franjo Tudjman. Each denounces the other in terms of racial contempt.

MEASURES

But the differences arise in large measure from the fact that for centuries the Serbs were ruled by the Turkish Ottoman Empire, the Croats by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. As a result, the Serbs today follow the Eastern Orthodox rite in religion, the Croats are Catholic.

Although they speak basically the same language—Serbo-Croat—the different empires imposed different scripts which survive to this day.

After the collapse of both empires in World War One, Yugoslavia was formed as a single state dominated by the Serbian monarchy. The state's rule was never acknowledged in large areas and when the Germans invaded at the beginning of World War Two, the country fell apart.

Civil war raged between Serbian royalists, the Chetniks, and Croatian fascists, the Ustasha. The Ustasha formed a "Republic" which allied to the Germans. At least a quar-

ter of a million Serbians were slaughtered in pogroms. Meanwhile, the Chetniks massacred Croats.

However, it was the stalinist partisans led by Tito who emerged victorious from the war, largely because they had been able to build a broad coalition, involving members of most national groups, against the Nazis.

After the war, Tito tried to hold the country together, but by the usual stalinist methods of repression combined with playing one nationalist group off against another. Thus, national consciousness remained dominant in each area, despite the nominally "communist" nature of the state.

And the tendency towards national distinctiveness has grown significantly in the last twenty years as Yugoslavia tried—ahead of most Eastern European states—to integrate into the world capitalist market.

EMPHASIS

Each Republic put the main economic emphasis on increasing trade with the West, so as to earn hard currency.

Inter-regional trade fell from 27.4 percent of total trade in 1970 to 22.2 percent in 1980. One effect was an increasing divergence between rich and poor areas, which in turn boosted national resentments.

It was in this situation that the right-wing Croatian Democratic Union swept to power in 1990. Meanwhile, the stalinist apparatus in Serbia held on to power—by echoing the Croat right-wing and beating the Serbian nationalist drum.

One thing which should be clear from all this is the totally fraudulent nature of the Yugoslav stalinists' claim to be "communist". They have never based themselves on the working class, or appealed to workers across national boundaries for class solidarity.

Yugoslavia was never a "workers' state" in any meaningful sense of the phrase. It was an artificial state capitalist monstrosity.

The current chaos demonstrates not the failure of socialism, but the necessity of socialism.

In Yugoslavia, and elsewhere, no solution can be found within the existing boundaries and political structures. Looking to the working class, and to class solidarity across boundaries, is not a matter of socialist preference, but of practical necessity.

ANALYSIS

Should pornography be banned?

PORNOGRAPHY reflects the exploitation of women in our society. It suggests that the subordination of women is natural. Therefore we oppose it.

But is pornography the main cause of women's oppression?

Some feminists have argued that pornography is the theory, rape is the practice: "It is the anti-woman propaganda in society which consolidates male dominance and causes violence against women."

This attitude has led feminists like Dworkin and McKinnon in America to line up with right-wingers to bring in anti-porn censorship. Irish feminist Clodagh Corcoran has in turn argued that more specific anti-porn legislation is needed so that women are protected.

The problem is that even the most specific laws are ultimately interpreted by judges. Judges have no interest in the promotion of progressive causes. The "specific" anti-porn laws drafted by McKinnon and Dworkin can be used to prosecute gay bookshops just as before.

SEXUALITY

This opens the way for the moral majority to clamp down on sex in society. They look back to a golden era in the 1950s when sex was not mentioned in society. They see porn as threatening the nuclear family and traditional values.

Unfortunately some feminists have fallen into the trap of equating femininity with virtue and nurturing. The "male" sphere of violence, aggression and rationality is counterposed to the "female" one of caring, dependence and gentleness.

But in the words of James Baldwin, most women are not gentle, nor are most men strong. The feminist view leads them to see male sexuality in itself as a threat to women.

This view is not far removed from that of the Right: men lust, and women are lusted after; women of course need to be protected from the threat of unbridled male sexuality. This parallels Dworkin's view that heterosexual sex in itself is oppressive of women.

Socialists argue that sexuality is structured in a way that relates to something deeper in society.

If oppressive relationships only reflected male heterosexual desires, why would women also

be attracted to the idea? Why would they reappear in gay porn?

To explain the eroticisation of dominance in our society we need to look at the reality of alienation. Why do working class men oppress women? Because they benefit from this? No. This would imply

within the family.

Yet the alienation persists, so even if people manage to have some sort of relations with other human beings, they still need something beyond themselves.

The gap between human aspirations for sexual fulfilment, fed by a consumer society, and



that those who are better off would be most sexist, in order to preserve their privileges.

In fact it is often among the most oppressed that the most explicit sexism has an appeal. Consider the lyrics of black rap. Bands like Public Enemy are not known for their progressive views on sexuality.

The less control over their lives people have, the more likely they are to identify with images of power.

Yet this is mediated by the reality of people's lives. Men are expected to provide for wives and children, women are expected to care for and bring up families. If women work they are also expected to fulfill the role of homemaker. And it is expected that this economic relationship can be justified in terms of romantic involvement.

Because people are alienated, they are much more in need of another person on whom to project all their needs and desires—the secular alternative to God. This leads to romantic illusions and ultimately disillusionment as the reality of trying to survive creates tensions which can only be expressed

the reality of that society, in which people are all alienated, creates a market for images of "the other" or God or whatever—something on which people can project their fantasies.

When you feel powerless as an individual, identifying with what appears powerful may seem the next best thing. Some people look to pornography. Unfortunately, this process creates a vicious circle: when men and women see the relations which divide and oppress them as natural and desirable, the possibility of any kind of sexual fulfilment decreases.

EQUALITY

So too does the possibility of changing that society. Only by removing the root causes of alienation—the emancipation of the working class by the working class—can relations based on equality begin.

State ownership does nothing to change women's material conditions. In Ireland it should be clear that censorship is used to oppress women—a state which bans information on abortion has no interest in improving the status of women.

What is porn?

PICTURES of women and men aren't oppressive. Only social relations are oppressive. What porn does is to make certain social relations which are oppressive seem erotic and desirable.

Feminist Alison Assiter has defined porn as "the erotic-

isation of dominance".

Women's romantic novels, for instance, present precisely the same relations as porn. But they are far more widely consumed in society. And they are socially accepted. These novels make submission and dependence seem both glamorous and uniquely female.

INTERNATIONAL SEX SHOPS



Both of these degrade women

Censorship of pornography actually makes it easier for the state to censor abortion information.

Where representations of sex (however distorted) are totally repressed, it becomes harder to challenge the domination of SPUC and the Catholic Church. Right-wingers who want porn censored are also against sex education, contraception, gay rights and abortion.

In drafting anti-porn legislation in Indianapolis, Catherine McKinnon worked with politicians of the far Right, including one, Beulah Caughenour, who was a leading activist in the Stop ERA (Equal Rights Amendment) campaign. Another, the Rev Greg Dixon, has declared contraception, abortion and homosexuality to be crimes against society. His other main campaigning front is promoting the criminalisation of all gay sex.

Clodagh Corcoran is mistaken if she thinks that feminists can successfully "use" the moral majority, much less win them over. She argues that "while the real fundamentalists seem to have been able to pick up our rhetoric, it appears that some of them have come to a new understanding in this area. Our vigilance, our past experiences, and our work at other levels will ensure that we don't get corrupted by fundamentalism".

But finding common ground with the Right means down-playing or ignoring certain basic facts.

The majority of men jailed for sex crimes and crime in general in the US are black. Yet blacks are among the lowest users of porn in the US. Even if all the blacks locked up were found to accept sexist ideas, this would not explain or justify their being locked up. This has to do with the poverty and criminalisation of blacks in America.

SEX

Similarly, the Hite report on male sexuality found that most of the men surveyed did not think that the representation of women in porn said anything about the way women really were. This reflects the fact that people are aware of the difference between fantasy and reality. In real life women and men talk, argue and fight with one another to try and change themselves and others.

Porn shows sex in an alienated, objectified form. People look to it to fill a gap in their lives. The way sexuality is structured under capitalism makes this gap inevitable. The solution is not to drive porn underground through censorship but to destroy the system that created it.

SWM meetings

To conclude, socialists are against all ideas that make the domination of women seem desirable; this was the position of the early women's movement; it is a sign of the weakness of the women's movement today that it focuses exclusively on pornography.

Women are not better off where porn is censored. Lifting the ban on porn would not make them worse off.

Censorship from below should not focus exclusively on representations of sex. As for censorship from above, state censorship, socialists must be clear that giving more power to the state merely perpetuates class rule.

It becomes harder for socialists then to fight back against the real cause of women's oppression, the capitalist system. We are totally opposed to state censorship.

BELFAST BRANCH

Meets every Monday at 8 p.m. in Castle Mews Bar.

3 June: Child abuse—what do socialists say?
10 June: Is apartheid finished?
17 June: Why do we have recession?

24 June: *Public meeting (venue and time to be announced)*
Are the Brooke talks the answer?
1 July: Class struggle in the US

BRAY BRANCH

Meets every Tuesday at 8.00 p.m. in Hibernian Inn, Marine Tce.

4 June: Socialists and the IRA
11 June: Pornography and Censorship
18 June: Cuba Today Speaker: Barbie Russell (Australian International Socialists)

CORK BRANCH

Public meeting: Wed. 19 June
Are the Brooke talks the answer?
Grand Circle Bar, Emmet Place, 8 p.m.

Branch meetings held every Tuesday in the Anchor Inn, George's Quay.

DERRY BRANCH

Meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m. in Badger's, Orchard Street.

4 June: Why the working class?
11 June: Child abuse—what is the socialist answer?
18 June: The role of the revolutionary paper (Speaker Chris McKay)

25 June: *Public meeting (see posters for venue and time)*
Eamonn McCann on the Brooke talks

DUBLIN BRANCH

Meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. in the Batchelor Inn, O'Connell Bridge.

5 June: Socialists and the IRA (Speaker Kieran Allen)
12 June: Should pornography be banned? (Speaker Catherine Curran)
19 June: Cuba today (Speaker Barbie Russell, Australian International Socialists)

26 June: *Public meeting in Kinlay House, Lord Edward Street, 8 p.m.*
The North: The Socialist Answer (Speaker Eamonn McCann)

For more details of regular meetings in **NAVAN, DUNDALK, DUNGARVAN, GALWAY, KILKENNY, LIMERICK, PORTLAOISE AND WATERFORD** contact: SWM, P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8 or SWM, P.O. Box 418, Tomb Street, Belfast BT9 5PU.



VIOLENCE

THE 1970 Johnson Commission in the US found no connection between porn and sexual violence. It recommended scrapping all anti-porn laws. It was immediately rejected by President Nixon.

The Meese Commission concluded in 1986 that porn was harmful. Great censorship was called for. But the Meese Commission was the product of Reagan's Moral Majority. Its chairman, Ed Meese, had previously "helped" women by cutting funds for women's refuges.

Seventy-seven percent of the Meese Commission's witnesses called for greater control, if not the elimination of, sexually explicit material. Sixty-eight of the 208 witnesses were vice cops, politicians and spokespersons for conservative anti-porn groups—Citizens for Democracy Through Law and the National Federation for Decency.

ARGUMENTS

Yet the scientific research is inconclusive and contradictory. It is clear that in societies where porn is banned, women are not necessarily better off. Societies like Saudi Arabia, Iran and Ireland, which ban porn, are not less oppressive of women.

In fact, in societies where representations of sex are repressed, any revolutionary upsurge would see a huge demand for pornography. In the Portuguese revolution the two bestsellers were Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?* and *Playboy*.

While socialists argue against sexist images, we have to recognise that people in the process of liberating themselves may turn to porn as a reaction against the sexual repression of the old regime.

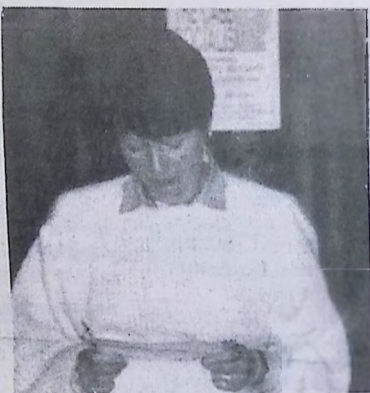
Because pin-ups in workplaces are intimidating to women workers, we argue against them. We are for removing them.

But campaigns against bookshops and newsagents—removing material from the shelves—is tokenistic and futile.

Winning arguments with workers about sexism can help change society. Taking porn off the shelves cannot.

CATHERINE CURRAN

News from SWM



River Valley striker

DURING the month of May SWM was involved in a number of activities:

Our Waterford Branch organised a May Day Social for striking workers at the local hospitals. Over 300 attended.

At the May Day Rally in Dublin we collected for the River Valley strikers, one of whom spoke to the

rally.

Also in Dublin:

We collected hundreds of names for a petition demanding the release of Ji Yao Lau, a Chinese dissident held in Mountjoy jail. He had been illegally held for six months and was finally released in May. Mr Ji (21) fled to Ireland because of its "reputation as a neutral country". Once here he was locked up simply because he was a refugee.

The SWM is a small but growing organisation. We actively intervene in workers' struggles, North and South.

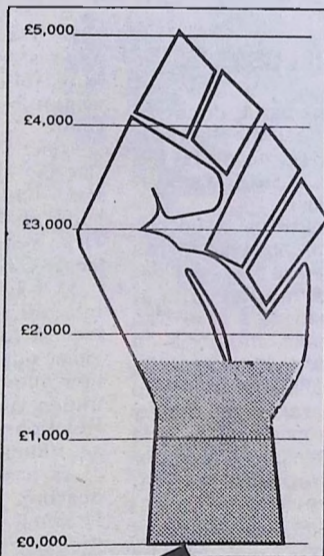
In the past two months we have printed special bulletins on the campaign against An Post's viability plan, the ESB strike and the fight against local charges in Cork.

To enable Socialist Worker to replace worn-out equipment and meet the battles ahead, we need money.

We are currently running an Appeal to raise £5,000 for these purposes. By late May the Appeal had received £1,503.79.

donations to:

SW Appeal, PO Box 1648, James's Street, Dublin 8.



SW Books

The SWM has a comprehensive book service. For a full booklist write to:
SW Books,
P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8

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.

REVIEWS

History's revenge

THE second half of 1989 saw huge upheavals in the so-called "communist" world.

It started with the revolt by Chinese students in June of that year. The culmination was the overthrow of

Ceausescu in Romania.

The Right welcomed all this by proclaiming the "death of socialism". Western rulers gloated as workers fled East Germany for the West.

The reaction of most of the Left was

The Revenge of History Alex Callinicos £9 incl. p & p Available from: SW Books, P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8

bewilderment and horror. What many had regarded as "really existing socialism" was collapsing. Intellectuals have

abandoned Marxist ideas: Reformists, like Labour and the Workers' Party in Ireland, have moved to the political centre.

The Revenge of History by Alex Callinicos takes up these issues.

Callinicos does not run for cover like other socialists. His conclusion is that:

"The collapse of Stalinism should be less the moment to abandon socialism than to resume unfinished business".

Callinicos can say this because he does not regard the "socialist" countries as socialist.

In fact they are as capitalist as the West. The only difference is that instead of private enterprise the East has state capitalism.

To back up his argument, Callinicos deals firstly with the rise of Stalin's regime in Russia.

He explains how the bureaucracy became a new ruling class. It abandoned revolution and tried to compete with the West.

Caught up in capitalist competition, the Russian system went from growth in the thirties to crisis in the eighties. The crisis led to the revolutions of 1989.

River valley VICTORY

THE case of the River Valley workers has been a victory for class struggle and strike action.

After four months, the eleven part-time women workers at River Valley Products, Glasnevin, Dublin, have won recognition of their rights.

At the beginning of May hard-line boss Ralph Howard finally recognised the Labour Court ruling and agreed to pay compensation for unfair dismissal.

Since January the women have picketed the premises day after day, learning who makes the laws and who benefits from the restrictive laws against strike action.

As Bernie Farrell, shop steward at River Valley, noted: "Everything seems to be in favour of the employer... the whole system is for the

employer." Likewise the attitude of small businessmen: entrepreneurs "don't want unions... don't want strikes".

The women were to go on trial on 30 May for "unpeaceful" picketing and for attempting to block River Valley products in the shops. Obviously Mr Howard realised that even with the false affidavit he could lose more than the court case.

The Labour Court recommendation that the women be compensated or reinstated in their jobs had been successfully ignored—until now.

Bernie Farrell said she is "relieved it's all over", but delighted they fought back. "It was all worth it," she told *Socialist Worker*.

EMMA CREAM



Demonstration in Moscow

Why workers have power

The Struggle for Workers Power. Charlie Kimber 75p

THE Struggle For Workers' Power is one of a series of pamphlets covering basic socialist ideas.

Without glorifying the working class, Charlie Kimber outlines their struggle for change under capitalism. He then argues the need for a socialist revolution.

This may sound utopian but Kimber explains

workers' power in terms of present day reality.

"The fact of workers' power is indisputable," he argues. The pamphlet deals with recent strikes by British engineers and miners in Niger to illustrate the point.

STRIKES

Kimber portrays strikes, however small, as the essence of workers' power.

He also shows how workers' unity in action challenges oppressive ideas like sexism and racism.

This short pamphlet puts the simple case for socialism from below. Where so many have said that the working class is finished, Kimber makes it clear that workers' potential to change the world is stronger than ever.

EMMA CREAM

ILLUSIONS

The book does not just deal with Stalinism. It also defends the classical Marxist tradition.

Callinicos is uncompromising in his attacks on those who call for "the market with a human face". He also attacks illusions in western democracy.

Callinicos points to the waste caused by the market system. He explains how workers' democracy is far superior to what passes for democracy today.

At the same time Callinicos shows that we are not entering a period of peace and stability. In fact the world is more unstable following the collapse of Eastern Europe.

Indeed, "old Europe", the Europe which twice pitched the world into war, is back from the grave.

The Revenge of History is very accessible and readable. It is vital for understanding the state of the world today and the importance of Marxist politics.

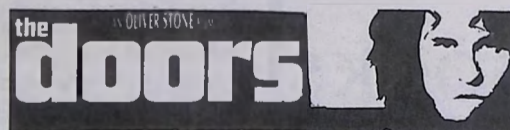
STEWART SMYTH

Mystical bullshit

"Jim Morrison was my god"—*Oliver Stone*

I HAVE to admit to knowing very little about the Doors before the opening of Oliver Stone's new film. But after seeing *The Doors* in all its pretentious glory (almost three hours of it) I know very little more.

The film is built around the character of Doors lead singer Jim Morrison.



Stone portrays Morrison as something of a human black hole. He drags everything and everyone in the film into himself but gives out very little.

This could have been the film's greatest strength but Oliver Stone is to blame for it being its greatest weakness.

Gods are for the most part inexplicable

and unexplainable. Jim Morrison, in real life, was neither. In the film he is both.

Instead of exposing Morrison's character, Stone presents him as he was and then drowns the entire film in mystical bullshit.

Presumably the mystical bullshit is the "key" to Morrison's character. If so it fails to unlock any "doors of perception" for this reviewer.

"The Doors" is a very powerful film. It is one of the few films shot in wide screen format.

But a great deal of the film's potential power never reaches the audience.

Sexist and macho attitudes run riot across the screen and Morrison is at the centre of it all.

This reviewer spent most of the film wondering why all this is happening. Stone does not even ask the question, let alone answer it.

This, in the end, is the film's greatest failing. It is a flaw common to many of Oliver Stone's films.

MICHAEL ENNIS

WATERFORD:

Hospital fight

THE Waterford hospitals strike ended in May, following intervention by the Labour Court.

About 300 domestic, catering and portering staff had struck for better staffing levels. They were members of the ATGWU.

The Labour Court intervened without a request to do so from either side. The court is now allowed to do this under the Industrial Relations Act "if the situation is serious".

As a result of the hearing, St Otteran's Hospital in Waterford

was given two extra temporary staff. The four hospitals involved were promised an inquiry into staffing levels.

By taking action the workers won at least some of their demands. They have shown that health cuts can be fought.

ON 22 May, 330 nurses staged a 24-hour stoppage at Waterford Regional Hospital. They plan to take further action if an additional fourteen nurses are not appointed immediately.

Join us!

If you would like to join the SWM or want more details, complete and send to:
SWM PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

Please send me more details of SWM
 I want to join the SWM

NAME.....
ADDRESS.....
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INDUSTRIAL

Post workers fighting back

THE Communications Workers Union (CWU) has stepped up its campaign against post office closures.

The CWU has petitioned over 250,000 people to oppose the An Post Viability Plan. Public meetings have drawn huge crowds across the country.

In Dublin a meeting was organised jointly with the Labour Party.

CWU official Chris Hudson said at the

meeting that the main issue was jobs. Not only will 1,500 jobs go in An Post, but more losses will follow in Irish Rail as the post office changes over to road transport.

Hudson called for "people power" to defeat the Plan. But so far the executive have failed to call for action by postal workers themselves.

The union is already mandated to strike over

a six percent pay award

Dublin Postal Outdoor Branch were expected to put an emergency motion to CWU conference to carry out the mandate. But the motion never materialised.

The public support for postal workers means that a strike would be difficult to isolate. But without a strike the public campaign will be weakened.

Bank Workers Ballot

BANK workers in the South are balloting on industrial action over pay.

This follows a motion which was passed unanimously at the Irish Bank Officials Association (IBOA) conference.

Bank workers are not new to strike action. In the 1960s and 1970s they were among the

most militant workers in the country.

Management at the main banks have tried to push back hard-won gains in the past few years. Redundancies have gone hand in hand with the recruitment of low-paid "yellow pack" workers.

Now AIB and Trustee Savings Bank plan to merge. With TSB already on longer hours, this could mean further attacks on AIB workers.

Meanwhile senior management have seen their salaries grow by 65 percent between 1985 and 1989.

Boycott 7 plus

WITH the Tories' 1988 Education Reform Act, tests on children of the ages of seven, eleven, fourteen and sixteen have been made compulsory in Britain. Since the tests look certain to be introduced in Northern Ireland next year, there is a need to organise against them now.

In Britain the campaign against the education changes has involved not just the teachers' unions but parent groups as well. This is essential if the campaign is to be a success.

Socialist Worker has been told by INTO members that while most teachers are against the tests, they would be reluctant to boycott them. Many teachers, like health workers, feel their duty is to carry on with their work in the interests of

the children, however strongly they might feel about an issue.

If parents show that the best interests of their children would be served by teachers (and many of them are parents themselves) challenging the education authorities and refusing to take part in these tests, then an effective campaign could be built.

MANY

The tests will brand many of our children failures from the age of seven. They will reinforce the class bias of an already unfair

system.

In Derry the SWM is initiating a campaign of parents against the tests. Public meetings in schools and local community centres are needed to build the campaign and give people a chance to discuss the issues.

Teachers need to be encouraged by parents to pressure their unions to boycott the tests.

Anyone interested should contact the Derry Branch of the SWM or talk to the people they'll see leafletting outside some of the schools.

ANITA VILLA



Marnie Holborow

AVERAGE

AIB executive directors received an average of £258,000 in 1990. Bank of Ireland felt their executives could survive on slightly less with £224,000.

IN 1988, both AIB and Bank of Ireland reduced their entry grade salaries to £7,250 and £6,750 respectively.

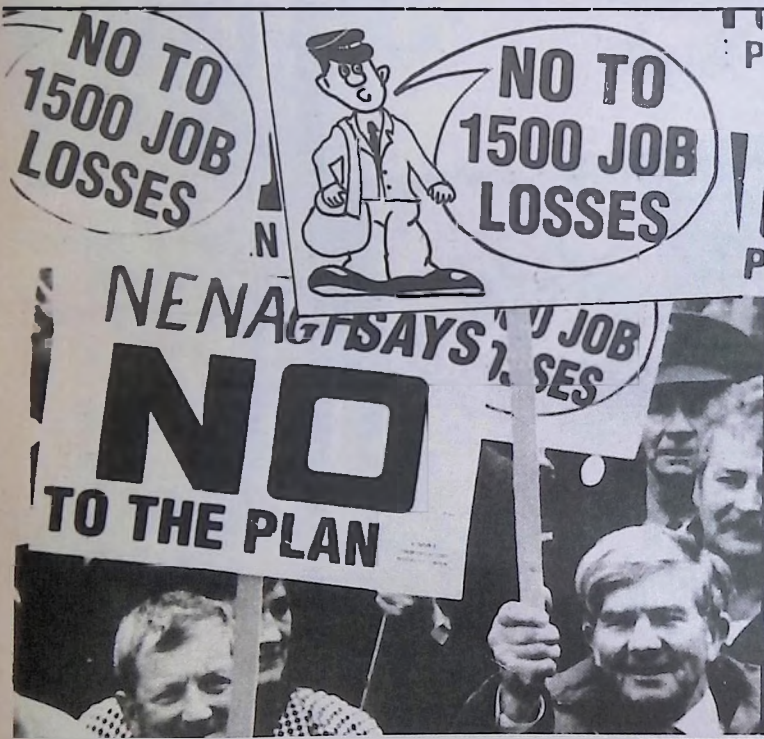
Quite rightly, bank workers have rejected claims that they are overpaid. And they appear ready to fight for more.

SIPTU

election

SWM member Marnie Holborow polled 312 first preference votes in the SIPTU regional elections. She stood for the Dublin State Sector Regional Committee.

Despite not being elected, Marnie proved that it is possible to build a small but significant base against deals like the PESP and for basic trade union principles.



BELFAST:

H&W Strike

MORE than 1,700 shipyard workers staged a one-day strike at Harland and Wolfe on 22nd May.

It followed two half-day stoppages the previous week.

The workers have turned down an 11 per cent wage offer. They are demanding 15 per cent and a 2-hour reduction in the working week.

Kilkenny nursing home dispute

ELEVEN domestic staff in Avondale House private nursing home in Callan, Co Kilkenny have been on strike

since 16th May for union recognition.

After informing their employer in January that they wanted to be represented by their union SIPTU they were given 24 hours to leave the union or

lose their jobs.

They were promised pay increases and improved conditions if they left the union. They refused to do so.

One shop steward who was offered a position of

domestic supervisor if she left the union was suspended on 19th April.

The constant harassment and intimidation of union members has led to a great fightback by the domestic staff.

Industrial Notebook

by PAUL O'BRIEN

Jail threat to ESB strikers?



TALK of legislation to prevent strikes in key essential services reminds me of the last time it was tried during the 1968 ESB strike.

Under the ESB Special Provisions Act ESB workers were jailed for defying a ban on picketing.

The jailings made the

situation worse and the ESB were forced to negotiate a settlement under which the strikers were released from jail and the ESB paid for

the taxis which brought them back to their homes. The ESB Special Provisions Act has not been used since.

Despite the Federation of Irish Industry's call for a ban on strikes in essential services, nobody proposed using the existing legislation for fear of the consequences.

GAELTACHT SWINDLE

THE perception of Ireland as a low wage economy seems to have caught on with the German-owned Ruibeal Moitear Teo. At their car components factory in Dungloe, Co Donegal, some staff have been earning as little as £40 a week.

The factory was on

the brink of a strike after employees found that their full wage was less than half what they were paid during their training period.

The mainly female work force is paid solely on piece rates. But the SIPTU industrial engineer called in by the staff judged the new piece-work targets to be unattainable. The German owners disagreed and want to engage their own work study con-

sultant to examine the targets.

Talks broke down, but strike action was averted when Udaras na Gaeltachta executives agreed to reintroduce the training grants which provide a guaranteed £90 a week.

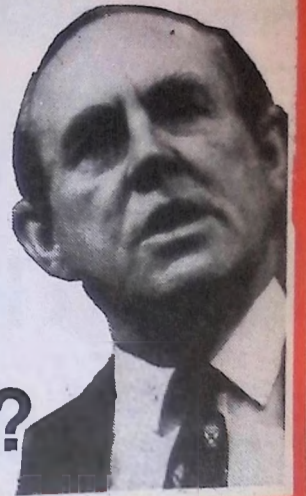
Udaras feels that £120 a week would be a more realistic wage and has been trying to explain to the German owners that £40 does not go very far these days.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism 35p

The Brooke Talks: are they the answer?

Inside centre pages



Save the NHS



The fight for our health services is on!

THE Tories are running down the Northern Ireland health service.

The Royal Victoria Hospital is opting out of the NHS. It now looks as if Craigavon Hospital will do the same.

Local hospitals are being hit by a series of harsh cutbacks.

The Eastern Health and Social Services Board is forcing £600 thousand worth of cuts in the North Down area. This will affect three hospitals—Ards, Ulster and Bangor.

Already Bangor Hospital has lost one hundred beds.

Unions fear that Bangor and Ards hospitals will be closed down completely.

In Derry ninety jobs are being cut in Altnagelvin Hospital, as services are contracted out.

If the opt-outs go ahead in the Royal Victoria and Craigavon hospitals the effects will be disastrous for workers and patients.

It will mean:

—Wages will be cut.

—Redundancies will be enforced.

—Longer hours will be introduced.

—National agreements with trade unions will be ended in favour of local agreements.

—Whole departments will be closed down.

—Many more services will be contracted out to private firms.

—“Unprofitable” preventative medicine, such as cancer screening and cervical smears, will be hit particularly hard.

—Patients will be forced to leave hospital early as convalescing patients generate no income.

—A two-tier health service will be created—one

for the rich and one for the poor.

In May we had a glimpse of how the cuts can be stopped.

Over two hundred workers at the Royal Victoria Hospital occupied the boardroom of the King Edward building.

They disrupted management's official launch of their opt-out application.

The demonstrators confronted manager Michael McKee and made it plain that they would not accept attacks on their jobs or conditions.

INSIDE:



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