

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism 35p

AS THE SCANDALS MOUNT

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FIGHT THE FIANNA FAIL GANGSTERS

SINEAD Monaghan, a Dublin teenager, was jailed for not paying a train fare. 200 people have been locked up in Ireland because they could not afford to pay their fines.

Thousands of the unemployed have been visited by social security snoopers to see if they have been "de-frauding" the state.

But the crooks involved in Ireland's scandals will go scott free. They remain "pillars of society".

The investigations into their activities are very mild. They won't be hauled before the

courts to reveal who is behind the secret offshore companies. The Fianna Fail party will not be forced to reveal who their business backers are.

There won't be any investigation into how Charles J Haughey got his wealth. But thousands are asking: is there any connection between his wealth and the fact that his personal mates can make a fortune by bending the rules to suit themselves?

Scams

Smurfit, Goodman, Desmond have made millions in

scams and property speculation. They have ripped off state companies. They have set up off shore companies to avoid tax.

Smurfit earned more from property deal in Ballsbridge than the average worker will earn in a lifetime. But when he was forced to resign Haughey lavished praise on him.

The scandals show what the rich are up to in this country.

GREENCORE: Comerford and four other directors ripped off the state run Irish Sugar company (now called Greencore).

They first bought a sugar distribution company for £1.7

million. They even borrowed £1 million from Irish Sugar to buy it. And then sold the distribution company back to the state run Irish Sugar for £9.5 million. They kept the super-profits for themselves.

Handshakes

When Comerford was forced to resign, he was given a golden handshake of £1.5 million.

TELECOM: Smurfit got Telecom to buy a site for £9.4 million. He didn't tell them that he had a stake in a property company that bought the same site a year earlier for

£4.5 million.

The deal was done through offshore companies to avoid tax.

He also got Telecom to rent property from another of his companies for *twice* the normal rent.

N.C.B.: These stockbrokers have got millions from Irish taxpayers for "consultancy" and selling off state companies.

But after examining Aer Lingus, they passed on information to a rival company, Celtic Helicopters, owned by Ciaran Haughey —Haughey's son.

The lid has been lifted on what the rich are up to.

Scandals of the market

Sectarian assassins on the loose

Old hands

THE FF cabinet is full of crooks and property speculators.

HAUGHEY'S land in Kinsealy is worth £8 million. He also owns an island in Kerry. But he has never said where he got his money.

In 1969 when Haughey was Minister for Finance he sold off land in Raheny for £200,000—a huge sum then.

But before he did, he changed the tax laws so that no tax had to be paid on the land.

RAY BURKE the Minister responsible for the Telecom scandal is a former estate agent in North Dublin. When he was a councillor on Dublin County Council he proposed that some land in the area be re-zoned. He never told the council that he was involved in selling the land. Burke earned himself a fee of £10,000 for selling off the re-zoned land.

GOODMAN: owes the Revenue Commissioners £4 million in back taxes. Tried to buy them off with a £2 million settlement. Involved in "re-labelling" 10 year old meat to fiddle EEC grants.

Sacked hundreds of workers in the meat industry. Many now work in his firms as contractors. Tried to recruit workers off the dole in Dundalk to break a strike in Bailieboro'.



DESMOND: a sleazy charmer who has risen to become the second biggest stockbroker in Ireland. Got £530,000 for selling off Tara Mines. Privatised Irish Life for a fee of £1.25 million.

Came up with the idea of the tax dodging Irish Financial Services Centre—and then got hold of an office block to gain super profits from rent.

The rogues gallery

SMURFIT: The richest man in Ireland. Bought a penthouse in Manhattan for £3 million. Owns the rich kids leisure park, the K Club in Straffan for which he got a half million grant.

Has cut 4,000 jobs in Telecom. Broke a strike in the US by using scabs with cudgels. One worker killed on the picket line.



GALLAGHER: The only one to be jailed. Property speculator and swindler. Set up Merchant Banking Ltd and then lived off the savings put into the bank.

Owed Dublin Corporation £360,000 but got off scot free. Jailed in Northern Ireland. He wasn't touched in the South because he is Haughey's mate.

What the rich say

"This is only left wing propaganda and begrudgery"—Larry Goodman on the Labour Party and Workers Party T.Ds who first raised his corrupt practices in the Dail.

"Unemployment doesn't mean poverty"—Michael Smurfit, who guzzles vintage wine from his own special decanter at company dinners

"So what did those 22,000 people do? I found out what they did and the answer is, nothing."—Michael Smurfit, who spends most of his time on the golf course, on Telecom workers.

"People don't have a god-given right to a job"—Michael Smurfit who has a god given right to scams.

"We were all organised by Haughey and sent to different tables around the room. The funny thing about my table was that everybody in it was connected with the construction industry"—Former FF Minister Kevin Boland, responsible for house building in the 1960s on FF's old style Mafia, TACA.

Silent man

The most silent man in the Greencore scandal is the SIPTU General Secretary Billy Attley. He sits on the board of Greencore.

He claims workers have to join the boards to look after their interests.

But was he asleep when the rest of his fellow directors were swindling the state run Irish Sugar?

Or it is a case of see no evil, hear no evil...



FIANNA FAIL: Up to their neck in it

THERE is one thread that connects up all the property scams and scandals: Haughey and Fianna Fail.

■ LARRY GOODMAN had attended FF Ard Fheiseanna. He has made hefty donations to the party. This is one reason why in 1987 he was chosen by the IDA in 1987 to become Ireland's main meat exporter. He has received millions in state grants.

■ BERNIE CAHILL is the chair of the scandal ridden Greencore. He is a personal mate of the Haughey family. Goes yachting with Haughey and wife, Maureen. He is the chair of Conor Haughey's mining company, Feltrim Mining.

■ PINO HARRIS a FF supporter who loans out his trucks for free to Sean Haughey during election campaigns. He made a £1.5 million profit on selling off the Carysford College site. Haughey pressurised UCD to buy the property off him for an inflated price.

■ DERMOT DESMOND one of Haughey's closest mates. Gets all the plum consultancy jobs from state companies.

Fianna Fail claims to be the party of the workers and small farmers. Its a lie. The party is a front for big business and property speculators.

INCREASED violence in the North over the last few months has led to heightened sectarian tension. More than any time since the 1970s, people in Belfast are afraid to walk down certain streets, frightened when cars stop outside their houses, slow to open their doors.

The number of people killed by Loyalist paramilitaries has risen dramatically since last year. Loyalists killed 19 people out of the 69 killed by paramilitaries last year. This year, Loyalists have killed 26 of the 61 people who have died.

The Loyalist paramilitaries have also changed tactics. Although ordinary Catholics chosen at random still die at their hands, there has been a significant rise in the number of Republicans killed by Loyalists this year. Nearly a third of their victims were acknowledged Sinn Fein, IRA or IPLO members.

Collusion between the security forces and Loyalist gunmen has led to the new targeting of Republicans. The Sunday Tribune reported last month that Brian Nelson, the British army agent and UDA intelligence officer, made seven copies of every document that came through his hands: there was one for each of the UDA's brigades. But the Stevens team managed to lay their hands on only one set of the hundreds of security files.

Two of the recent Loyalist murders in Belfast took place in the Divis Flats, where British Army video cameras monitor every movement. Even SDLP politician Joe Hendron agreed that the army must have been able to see the murderers. Yet no one has been arrested.

Murder

Time and again local people tell of heavy security force presence in the area just before a Loyalist murder. But the police and British Army are nowhere to be seen until the killers have made their getaway.

The Loyalist terror campaign is designed to create an atmosphere where people see the Northern conflict as only about "sectarian tit for tat killings".

This will give room to the British government to introduce internment—or other repressive measures.

Socialists have to oppose every attempt to equate Loyalist and Republican paramilitaries. The IRA has a mass base

in Catholic working class areas because it fights back against sectarian oppression. It grew because thousands who fought for civil rights found that they had to confront the Northern state.

The difference between the IRA and the UVF is this: the IRA are fighting to overturn a state which created sectarian bigotry—but have not succeeded.

The UVF and UDA are extreme rightwing organisations that have had links with the National Front in Britain. They want a restoration of Orange rule and the return of a Stormont-style regime. They look on all Catholics as "Fenian scum". This is why they can justify random killings as well as assassination.

Loyalist

The IRA has responded by threatening Loyalist leaders and gunmen with a "high personal price". They have killed a number of alleged UVF members. But in the case of one IRA victim, John Hanna, there was a lot of local anger about the claim that he was in the UVF.

Loyalist killings are directly related to the level of confidence and mobilisation of the struggle against the Northern state and British Army.

There is only one way out of the impasse today—a return to mass action. There should be mass demonstrations against the Loyalist sectarian killings. The links with the security forces should be exposed.

The unions have to be pushed to get off the fence. The ICTU should not be let remain silent on the political assassination of republicans. Some time ago Catholic and Protestant workers in the Lisburn Leisure Centre walked out against threats made against a Catholic worker by the UVF. This is the type of action that can isolate the sectarian thugs.

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WE THINK

Fianna Fail on the ropes

OPINION polls show that 68 per cent of Irish people think that Irish business is rotten.

But Labour leader, Dick Spring, doesn't agree. He says that we should 'admire the skills and talents of our entrepreneurs and not grudge them the rewards they have secured'.

Spring believes that only a "small clutch of people" are involved in the recent scandals. He thinks that the scandals are not inevitable under a free market system.

Spring is wrong. The major capitalist powers are rocked by scandals at the moment. The BCCI scandal in Britain, the Savings and Loans scandals in the US, the Recruit scandal in Japan make the Irish scandal look like stealing candy.

Scandal and corruption lubricate the machinery of the free market. When a recession hits the system many bosses are forced to bend the rules to survive.

One of the major links in the Irish scandals is property speculation. When profits from manufacturing drop bosses like Smurfit turn to the property market.

In 1989, £205 million was invested in building offices in Ireland—despite the fact that there was an oversupply.

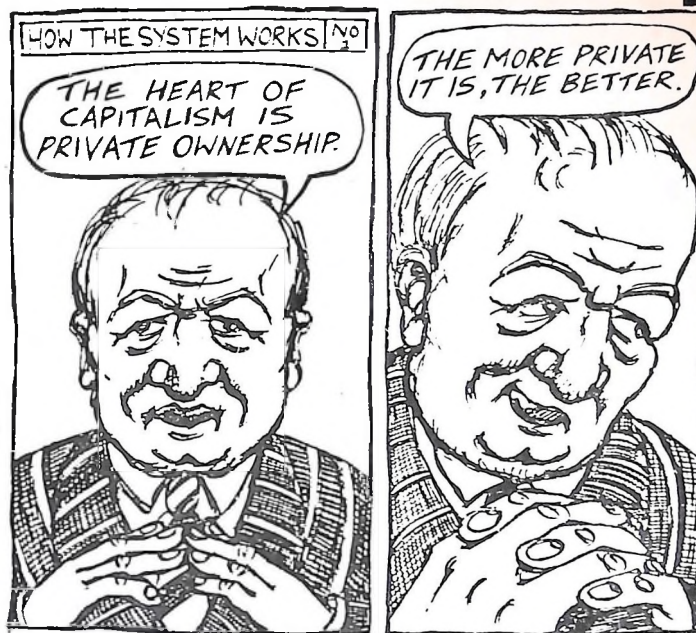
Rent per square foot in an office ranges from £16 to £22 a week in Dublin. Office rents

are higher in Dublin than in Brussels. A boss like Smurfit can make a return of 25 per cent on profits on office renting.

But to guarantee profits from property speculation you have to make sure that the state—or state owned companies, which control vast amounts of capital—will take up your offices or buy your land off you.

This is why the ruling class has had to build close networks between the captains of industry and the top politicians. Greed and scandal flow from the very logic of the system.

The good thing about the present situation is that it shows thousands of ordinary working people how the system really works.



...But can Labour leaders deliver the knockout blow?

THE scandals expose the nature of Fianna Fail to many workers who voted for them in the past.

But the opinion polls show that the vote for the Labour Party has declined by 2 per cent. The Progressive Democrats who trade on a clean capitalist image have gained—despite their coalition with FF.

The major reason for this is the lack of fight in the labour movements. The Labour Party and the ICTU should be calling thousands onto the streets to call for the resig-

nation of the FF gangsters. But they only issue statements and do nothing.

FF are also in trouble over the Programme for Economic and Social Progress. They claim they cannot pay the special claims due to nurses and teachers. They want more sacrifices from workers.

Industrial Relations News, the confidential magazine sent to union officials and bosses, report that FF want to defer the general increase granted under the PESP for seven months to avoid direct confrontation with the

teachers or nurses. FF should be told to send the collecting bowl around to their rich gangster friends.

Signs

But tragically, there are already signs that the union leaders are preparing a retreat.

ICTU General Secretary, Peter Cassells says that there won't be any re-negotiation of the PESP until the tax dodgers are dealt with.

In other words give us a big publicity measure—and we will make more sacrifices.

Neither the Labour Party nor the union leaders can take advantage of the situation, because they believe in the free market system. They want to tinker around with a few changes. They don't want an all-out fight against FF or capitalism.

For that we need a very different type of party. Now is the time to build outside the Labour Party and the Workers Party. The SWM exists to do just that.

★ Marxism in Ireland '91

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- ★ Is the 'free market' the answer
- ★ What way forward for socialists today?
- ☆ Speakers from Ireland and abroad.

Every year the Socialist Workers Movement organises a Marxism weekend. This is the premier socialist forum in Ireland. This year with the collapse of the stalinist order Marxism has the emphasis firmly on uncovering the real socialist tradition.

For more details of Marxism in Ireland '91 including programme, price of tickets (planned to be about £6 waged and £2.50 unwaged), details of creche facilities and venue fill in this slip and send to Marxism in Ireland '91, PO Box 1648, James's St, Dublin 8

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EASTERN EUROPE IN CRISIS

THE Romanian revolution is not over. Last month thousands of demonstrators stormed the parliament shouting "Iliescu, your time has come!" Iliescu, the Romanian president, is a former communist who backed Ceausescu.

The free market has brought no solutions to Romania. Inflation is running at a staggering 160 percent. Gross domestic product has fallen by ten percent in 1990.

In response to this the government of Petre Romane tried to cut living standards further. Early in the year agreement was reached with the IMF. Subsidies on food were cut back. The budget deficit was to be brought down from 230 billion lei to 25 billion lei in one year.

The response from workers has been very militant. Many believed that the revolution of 1989 would bring a real improvement in their lives. When it did not, they fought back.

In Brasov last year 30,000 workers from the free union Fraternity struck against the raw materials crisis. In March, 15,000 people marched in Bucharest and forced the Finance Minister to resign.

This time the fight was led by the miners. The same miners had been hoodwinked by Iliescu last year when he called on them to smash student-led demonstrations calling for democracy. Then Iliescu told the miners that "student reactionaries, gypsies, were stealing the revolution".

The miners have learned. They know that

ROMANIA: The revolt is not over

'Iliescu, your time has come' - demonstrators, storming the Romanian parliament last month

nothing has really changed in Romania. Only four Securitate members have been sentenced. Iliescu has set up a new secret police force—the "Romanian Information Service". The same old communists remain in the top jobs.

Workers hold the key to Romania's future. They need to chase the old CP bosses out of the factories. They need to establish workers' councils to organise supplies of food and raw materials. Only then will they stop Iliescu and Romane imposing "order".



CIVIL WAR IN YUGOSLAVIA

Why E.C. must keep out

by SIMON GILBERT

THE escalation of the bloody civil war in Yugoslavia has already left 400 dead. The ceasefire negotiated by ex-NATO boss, Lord Carrington, has been stillborn. Now some EEC leaders are pushing for direct military intervention if war flares up again.

Sending in British or French troops would only cause more deaths and destruction. The EEC states have no interest in the welfare of the people of Yugoslavia. Instead some of them want to carve out spheres of influence.

Already Germany and Austria have come out firmly on the side of separate Slovenian and

Croatian states. They want to be able to exploit this more developed region.

Yugoslavia has already suffered a bloody history of imperialist intervention. The Balkan wars of 1912-13 were caused by big power meddling. The Nazi occupation in World War II led to the massacre of thousands. In the 1980s, the IMF imposed crippling interest repayments on the country.

Peace can only be guaranteed when the right of self-determination of all people in Yugoslavia is recognised. This has to be combined with guaranteed rights for minorities within each republic.

But the depth of the economic crisis led the rulers of Yugoslavia to beat the nationalist drum to hang on to power. First Serbian leader, Slobodan Milosevic,

whipped up a racist campaign against Albanian speakers in Kosovo. In Croatia, Franyo Trudjman copied his methods to build up support.

Now Milosevic promises to create a "greater Serbia". In Croatia, Trudjman has revived the memories of the Ustashe—the Croat fascists who ruled with the Nazis. The flag of the new Croatian republic is the same chequered symbol used by the Ustashe. *The Financial Times* explained the motives of Milosevic and Trudjman like this: "Any retreat by Mr Milosevic would immediately focus attention on the economy because poor living standards would come under scrutiny, thus undermining his political authority. The same incidentally applies to Mr Trudjman."

Yugoslavia shows the dangers, facing the

workers of the USSR. Yugoslavia was the first East European country to turn to the market for a solution. In the early 1980s, the western press held it up as a showcase.

But integration into the world market could do nothing to stave off the crises in the 1980s. Yugoslavia became Europe's economic basket case.

Any hope for a break in the Yugoslav civil war has to come not from Yugoslavian armies but from Yugoslavian workers. There have been positive signs. In Serbia mothers have protested against conscription. In Croatia, there is growing cynicism about Trudjman who was elected on a minority vote.

But there is a long way to go. Workers have to break from the nationalists and fight for rights to self-determination.

U.S.S.R.: Yeltsin has no solution

THE Soviet Union is dead. Every real socialist should be dancing on the grave of Stalin's empire. But with the defeat of the coup, where are Russia and the other republics heading?

The smashing of the CP and the seizing of its assets were small steps in the right direction. But the power of the old ruling class is not broken. The old hierarchies of the armed forces and the state are still intact.

The liberals, who now dominate the Russian parliament, have no solution to the economic crisis. Already, Siloyev, the Russian prime minister, has been forced to resign. The Russian parliament has attacked the failure of Yeltsin's economic measures.

Yeltsin is frightened of unleashing popular revolt against the bureaucrats. In March, when Russia's miners went on strike demanding Gorbachev's resignation, Yeltsin first promised support. Yet within weeks he had united with Gorbachev to introduce a law banning all strikes.

Today he aims to build up his own power as Russia's president. He hopes to win over the heads of the army, police and KGB fully to his side. He has restored the old tsarist system of "prefects" who have direct executive power in local areas. Yeltsin supporters now admit that the market and democracy do not go hand in hand.

The new rulers will soon need the new powers. When the free market begins to bite Yeltsin will become as unpopular as Gorbachev is now. Supporters of the free market admit that anywhere between 24 and 38 million people will be unemployed.

Including their families, this will mean 100 million people will be added to the 70 million already living below the poverty line. Prices will rise beyond most people's reach and health care will become an impossible luxury.

The old CP bureaucrats are waiting in the wings until mass disillusionment spreads with Gorbachev and Yeltsin. Schevadnadze, the ex-Foreign Minister of the USSR, has warned that "the meance has not been removed". In Tajikistan the CP already mobilised their supporters to prevent the seizure of their assets.

There is an alternative to state capitalism or the free market.

It lies in the working class of Russia and the other republics. They have seen the failure of state capitalism. They are about to witness the misery of the free market.

The solution to both lies in direct workers' control of the factories and the wider economy. In Minsk last April, during the miners' strike, a virtual workers' council came into existence to run the town. In the battles ahead, this example will have to be repeated throughout the former USSR.

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RACISM IRISH STYLE

by GER TUOHY

TRAVELLERS suffer racist discrimination in almost every aspect of their lives.

Last month the barman in Bowe's pub in Dublin refused to serve Michael Collins, the Glenroe actor, because he is a Traveller. He was also refused in each of the next four pubs he visited. This is the daily experience of Travellers in pubs and shops.

Travellers are forced to sign on at separate times at dole offices around the country and Travellers in Dublin may not collect payments from their local health centre but must travel to Castle Street in the city centre, even if they live on the outskirts of the city.

'The black and white thing - we have it here with Travellers'

Michael Collins summed up the situation: "When I see pictures like *Mississippi Burning* or pictures about South Africa I really know what they are saying... the black and white thing, we have it here with Travellers."

Frequently, the intimidation is more brutal. Maggie Wall has finally been allowed to move into the house at Ballywaltrim Heights allocated to her and her ten children by Bray UDC. The house had been occupied by 26 people and picketed by 50 others to prevent her from moving in because she is a Traveller.

The "compromise" was reached when it was agreed to set up a liaison committee to ensure she "integrated" properly into the community. Nobody else has ever had to suffer this humiliation.

This followed the recent eviction of 200 Travellers from the nearby Ballywaltrim GAA pitch. There is no official halting site for them in all of Co Wicklow. The only other county without an official halting site is Co Mayo, constituency of Padraig Flynn, the Minister responsible for housing and accommodation.

In Ballybeg Estate in Waterford, Travellers have traditionally had an excellent relationship with the other local people. Now Fianna Fail councillors are trying to drive a wedge between the two communities.

Local Fianna Failer Tom Murphy says that it is now the turn of other wards in the city to take their "fair share" as if Travellers were a problem to be shared around. He omitted to reveal that it was other FF

councillors who refused to allow a halting site to be built in the other wards.

Local Workers Party councillors did not counteract this, and the last council meeting voted to build an earth mound to prevent Travellers settling in Ballybeg. This was seen as a better use of scarce Corporation funds than the outstanding maintenance work on the estate.

The council's stance has had a frightening effect for some Travellers who have lived in the area for years and have now become the victims of insults and taunts of "go back to your camp fires".

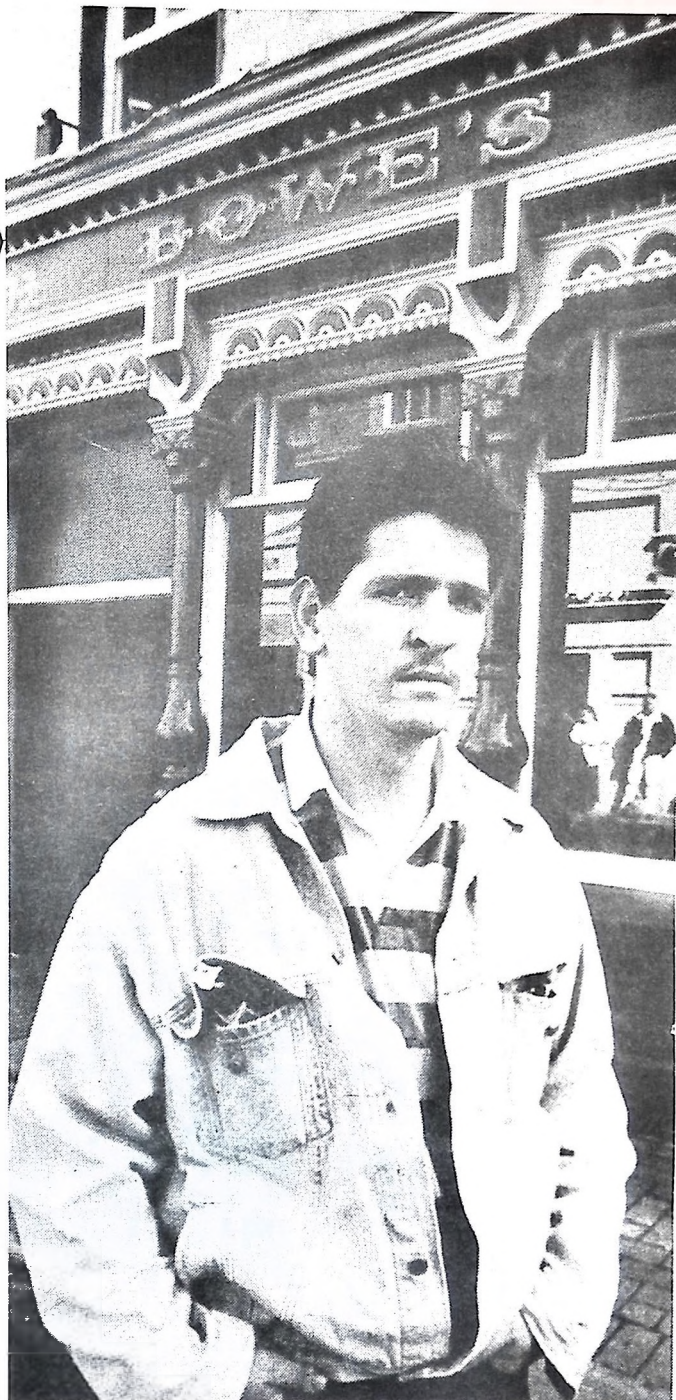
The Navan Combined Residents' Association has called Navan the "Traveller camp of Ireland". Their spokesperson Stella Jackson denies that the group is anti-Traveller although it was set up around the slogan of "No! No! No! to Halting Sites". She blames Travellers for the high level of unemployment in the town.

The Labour Party in the town has stayed silent. A committee has been set up by SWM members to actively support Travellers who wish to live there.

The racist lie that Travellers are the cause of every social problem creates a climate where attacks on Travellers become acceptable.

Earlier this year Travellers staying in the GAA grounds in Tullow, Co Carlow were sprayed with foul-smelling cattle slurry. A local garda described it as a "minor incident".

The state frequently evicts Travellers, as it did in Castleblaney last year when the guards and the army removed twenty families who had parked in a holiday park.



Michael Collins of "Glenroe" outside Bowes pub in Dublin. Travellers are routinely banned from pubs in Ireland.

IRELAND'S THIRD WORLD

"THE circumstances of Irish travelling people are intolerable. No humane, decent society once made aware of such circumstances could permit them to persist."

So concluded an ESRI report on Travellers in 1986. It describes Travellers as "the most underprivileged group within Irish society".

Between 16,000 and 20,000 Travellers live in the Republic. Forty-seven percent of these live in local authority housing. The remainder live on halting sites, 13 percent of which are serviced; 87 percent live in caravans and trailers on unofficial sites without water, sanitation or refuse collection. These sites are often located in rat-infested, muddy fields.

Travellers do not choose to live in these conditions, but are forced to do so because of the lack of adequate housing and hard stands.

When hard stands have been built there has been little prior consultation with Travellers. The halting site in Killybeg Park in Roscommon is built on the site of the town dump. There is only one family there at present because of the flies and the stench.

The halting site on the Headford Road in Galway is also built beside the city dump, despite protests from Travellers. They could see "cattle carcasses, dead fish and lorryloads of sewage among the refuse left at the dump".

Imagine

One Traveller, Mrs Barret, said "just imagine bringing a newborn baby onto that site which is only twelve yards away from the dump. They just want us out of the town, they don't care where they put us".

These horrendous conditions take their toll on Travellers of all ages. The infant mortality rate (deaths of infants in the first year of life) is three times higher for Travellers than the general population.

The Review Body established by the government in 1983 found that the majority of these deaths are due to respiratory diseases and infectious gastroenteritis associated with harsh living conditions. Death from these diseases is mostly prevalent in "Third World" countries.

Travellers who survive infancy still have the odds stacked against them. Traveller women in general live twelve years less than their settled counterparts and Traveller men live ten years less than settled men.

Travellers are only now reaching the life expectancy reached by Irish people in the 1940s and only 1.7 percent live to 65 years of age. This higher than average mortality rate is indicated in the "youthful" age structure of the Traveller population, over half of whom are under 15 years of age.

The World Health Organisation has identified eight elements which are essential for primary health care, all of which are either inadequately met or totally lacking for Irish Travellers.

We say: Fight for Travellers' rights

IRELAND is clearly a racist society in its treatment of Travellers. The dangerous myths that Travellers are lazy, criminal and dirty are no different from those about black people, Pakistanis etc.

The acceptance of such right-wing ideas has served to shift the blame for worsening living conditions away from the real culprits and onto the greatest victims.

Unfortunately, the left-wing parties have a disgraceful record and have

never taken a clear stance on Travellers' rights. While making vague noises about building more halting sites they have pandered to prejudices and called for "quotas" of Travellers in particular areas.

SLOGAN

This happened in Mulhuddart last year when the racist slogan of "10 not 30" was raised.

No attempt was made by

Workers Party councillors Liz McManus and Dermot Tobin to prevent the evictions in Bray—they feared they would lose votes in the future.

Travellers must be welcomed in any area they choose to live. Only in this way can fear and prejudice be broken.

Unemployment, poverty, poor health care and the housing shortage all exist with or without the presence of Travellers, who suffer most from all of these things.

What so really sto



THE revelations about what went on in the USSR are terrible. Capitalism may not be great but didn't it at least bring democracy?

NO. The right to vote was never granted willingly by the capitalists. It took the demonstrations and struggles of groups like the Chartists in the 19th

century to terrify the rich into giving us all the vote.

Even today the market does not bring democracy for most of the world. Competition means that each capitalist has to exploit workers more. When this brings extreme poverty and misery, our rulers offer turn to police-state methods.

In the West, the democracy we have won is very limited. You elect someone every four years, but you have no control of them once they are in office.

The FF election manifesto at the last general election promised not to bring in privatisation. But when they were elected they privatised Irish

Life, Irish Sugar and, as is now revealed, were planning to privatise Telecom.

But you cannot chuck FF out of office at the moment. You have to wait until they decide to grant you an election -- hoping by then that you will have forgotten what they have been up to.

By then the "free press" will be working all out for the re-election of FF or Fine Gael. But that press is owned by people like Tony O'Reilly or Michael Smurfit who stand to gain from privatisation.

Parliamentary democracy is limited for the simple reason that parliament does not control whole areas of society. The rich are supposed to pay taxes, for example. But they set up offshore companies and launder money from property sales to avoid paying.

The elected government in a capitalist society does not interfere with the "rights of property." It doesn't know, or want to know, what they are up to. As a result, companies only pay 3% of all taxes in Ireland. Scandals are a normal part of the system.

DOESN'T Marxism mean an end to democracy? Won't we be living in a one party state just like the USSR?

NO. It was only Stalin and his followers who claimed that a socialist society had to be ruled by one party.

Marx, himself, was called an "extreme democrat". The first paper he edited, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, was known as "an organ of democracy".

He attacked censorship claiming that it was only the party of "Quiet and Order who want to abolish the competition of free opinions in the press". For his pains he was exiled from Germany after the failure of the revolution of 1848.

Marx got an insight into the future socialist society by looking at what the workers did when they seized control of Paris in 1871. In the Paris Commune, workers elected delegates who could be re-called if they were not carrying out their mandate.

All officials, including judges were elected, and paid at the same rate as the people they represented. The standing army was abolished and replaced by a militia.

This became Marx's basic model for how a socialist society would work. Marx stood for an extension of democracy. Because the working class made up the vast majority of society, they could rule in a far more democratic way than the rich who are a tiny minority.



SOCIALISTS are for a planned economy. But doesn't the USSR show that planning is inefficient?

THE USSR was never a planned economy. It is more correct to call it a command economy.

To plan what is to be produced, you need information on what people want, what resources are available, what sort of shortages there are. But the level of repression in the USSR made this impossible.

Photocopiers and printers for computers were controlled by the KGB. The telephone directory was a virtual state secret. How can you transmit the information for planning in these circumstances?

Instead the "plan" was dictated by the top bureaucrats. They set detailed monthly norms for every industry. In Stalin's time, you lost your life if you did not meet the norms.

The result was a situation of what USSR workers call "storming". At the beginning of the month, factories worked slowly because of delays in arrivals of parts. But at the end of the month there was a rush to reach the target—regardless of the quality of the goods.

A worker in a television factory once explained that "We never use a screwdriver in the last week. We hammer the screws in". Not surprisingly the average soviet television had to be repaired twice in its first year.

This is not planning—it is bureaucratic command.

Also, the overall economy in the USSR did not aim to provide for the needs of working people.

In reality, it was directed by the same blind law of competition as the Western economies. The USSR sought to compete militarily with the West. It had to match every missile, submarine, bomb produced by the USA with its own from an economy that produced half as much.

The result was that the military industrial complex in the USSR reigned supreme. Investment in resources in agriculture -- in producing tractors, for example, were robbed to make better missiles.

BUT isn't a modern society too complex to be planned?

QUITE the opposite modern society desperately needs planning.

Take the terrible destruction to the ozone layer. We need a systematic plan whereby CFC's are wiped out and where knowledge on how to build fridges without the use of CFC's is shared with countries such as India and China.

But what happens in a market system. Multi-nationals such as Du Pont or ICI not only actively prevent the spread of this knowledge, lest they lose "market share", but they also continue to use CFC's to boost their profits.

Or look at the spread of AIDs. In a rational society humans would share their knowledge and resources to find a cure for this deadly disease.

But look at what happens with the market. The Louis Pasteur Institute in Paris spends years fighting a legal battle with the US scientist, Robert Gallo, over who discovered what. Why? Because there are super pro-

cialists and for



often know far more than management about how to do a job efficiently.

The ESB recently saved £3 million after they ran a competition to get ideas from workers. If workers were genuinely in control of their own offices and factories rather than being treated like school children thousands of these ideas would come to the surface.

BUT won't experts be needed?

OF course. You need highly qualified chemists to run a pharmaceutical plant. You cannot have a debate and a vote about how the heart surgeon will carry out the operation.

But the problem is that such experts today work at the direction of the bosses whose aim is profit. They could just as well work under the democratic control of a workers council whose aim is to satisfy the needs of the majority.

In fact this is the only way that their skills and expertise is not debased and corrupted. You look at the medical profession today and it is disgusting.

A consultant—trained at working class tax-payers expense—earns over £50,000 but still many of them spend three or four afternoons a week in their private practice treating rich patients. Medical practice is not decided by human priorities but by the power of the cheque book.

Many experts today know that their knowledge is not serving a useful purpose. Under a socialist society the values of the rat race will come under systematic attack. Over a period, many experts can be convinced to break from the corruption of their profession.

WHY do socialists have to organise themselves into a party?

THE rich and powerful in our society are highly centralised. Look at the massive propaganda campaign mounted across Europe and the US to build support for Bush's war machine in the Gulf war.

To face this, you need a party that gives people the confidence to argue against these ideas. In

very workplace and college you need to have people who have heard about the US role in Vietnam; how the Middle East has been robbed and so on.

But you also have to be able to initiate events. The SWM played a central role in getting thousands onto the streets against war.

It is often the organised minority that begins to move events. The party is that organised minority.

You also have to look at what happens in a revolutionary period. For the first time thousands want a real change. But people still look to prominent figures and parties who make more left noises.

In Romania in 1989 people fought to get rid of Ceausescu and his system. But their revolution was stolen because there was no organised minority who would keep shouting: Clear the old CP bosses out. Seize control of your workplace.

A party is made up of conscious socialist militants who want to convince others to fight. It tries always to point to the next step in the struggle.

Why should it become a dictatorship? If we are to win socialism the party has to grow into a mass organisation.

It has to be able to act in a united way. But it has to be democratic. Democracy means that party members can bring up arguments that they meet in their workplaces and colleges. And that is essential if a party is to be able to put across clear ideas on how to take struggle forward.

The right wing press pretend that this leads to dictatorship. But that is because they don't believe that ordinary people can ever control their lives.

International Socialism

The new edition of the SWP (Britain) theoretical journal

In Defence of October

Price £3.00 including post from: SW Books, PO Box 1648, James St, Dublin 8

Eyewitness Report

Israel's terror campaign

RAMALLAH is a Palestinian town just north of Jerusalem. Its main street is ravaged. Soldiers of the Israeli army swagger down the centre of the street. Shop front shutters are covered with blacked-over graffiti. Any Palestinian caught near a wall slogan is picked on at random by the Israelis and ordered to go and buy a tin of paint to cover it.

Curfews are still imposed at a moment's notice in Ramallah. The streets are empty after eight at night. People fear being stopped, arrested, detained.

There are different coloured car number plates for people in Palestinian areas. Motorists caught in Jerusalem with the wrong coloured number plates are charged and arrested. Road blocks cordon off the town.

This is the reality of the occupied West Bank.

Students have been singled out as particular targets for the Israeli Defence Forces. They began the Intifada—the Uprising. They have not been forgiven.

Schools have been turned into military camps and detention centres. In the Ramallah district, Kufur Malik Girls Preparatory School was used as a military camp to settle soldiers and detain people. When students and teachers returned to school six months later the playground had been dug up and the school wall broken down to let military trucks through.

A teacher told of how, one Saturday this month, soldiers invaded the school on the pretext of two glass bottles being found within the wire netting of the police station. They ordered students out of the classroom. They picked out a student and beat him with their rifle butts, as a lesson to the others.

During the Intifada, students have been deported, arrested and shot. Fifty percent of all Palestinians arrested were students. Two thousand today are still being held in "ad-



ministrative detention". Eight hundred of those killed during the Intifada have been students and 45,000 students have been wounded.

Meanwhile, Israeli settlements continue. The Palestinian town of Bethlehem has four settlements surrounding it. Shmir's "seven star" policy plans seven new settlements along the "green line"—the old border between Israel and Jordan.

One small Palestinian village in Galilee, Ramyah, close to an Israeli settlement at Carmiel, had its lands "expropriated" last month. The 17 Palestinian families who lived there had to vacate by 16th September. Their land had been earmarked for the construction of housing for the many Russian immigrants.

The US is using the peace conference to impose its solution on the Middle East. During the Gulf war workers in Morocco, Jordan, and Egypt demonstrated in their hundreds of thousands against Bush. They have tremendous sympathy with the Palestinian "revolution of stones". Bush is looking now for a general solution to ward off future instability in the region. In that way he hopes to keep the area safe for oil profits.

BLOCKED

The racism is not hidden. The Labour Party mayor of Carmiel, Edi Elkdar, blocked the rental and sale of lands to Palestinians. He said that Carmiel was to be "a pure Jewish city", as part of the "Judaisation of Galilee". Palestinian land is expropriated under the Lands Order dating from 1943. This permits the Treasury Minister to take over any land for what he judges to be the requirements of the "public". Today 40,000 Palestinians live in sub-standard conditions, with electricity, water, sewage systems, roads denied them by the state as a means of pressuring

them to leave their homes.

Yet the Palestinians are not cowed. The spirit of resistance is everywhere. The Intifada began over four years ago and still continues. The stone throwers still fight pitched battles against Israeli tanks.

But, tragically, the courage of the Intifada is not matched by the politics of the PLO. The PLO leader Yasser Arafat has recognised the state of Israel and has supported a two-state partition which would reduce Palestine to 18 percent of its original territory.

He has also welcomed the US-sponsored peace conference in October—despite the fact that the Israelis refuse to talk to representatives of the PLO.

The way forward for the Intifada lies in linking up with the Arab working class of the region. This means using the authority of the Uprising to call on Arab workers to fight the puppet regimes of the area.

STALINISM:**Was Lenin to blame?**

THE downfall of the Communist Party in the USSR is a great victory for workers everywhere. But right-wing commentators insist that socialism itself is now finished. They claim that Lenin's leadership of the revolution in 1917 led to the dictatorship created by Stalin in the late 1920s.

Yet the Russian Revolution was not a coup carried out by would-be dictators. The events of 1917 involved masses of workers and peasants.

In February 1917 Russian workers overthrew the Tsar but left power in the hands of capitalists and rich landowners. The new Provisional Government continued the war against Germany, despite workers' longing for peace.

Prices rose 2,300 percent between February and October. Real wages were cut in half. Soldiers deserted the front, workers occupied factories and peasants seized the land.

The only democratic body in Russia at the time was the soviets. These were made up of delegates of the workers, soldiers and peasants who had to be elected and could be recalled.

The Bolsheviks were the only party in the soviets to demand immediate peace; to support land seizures; to campaign for workers' control of the factories.

In August the Right staged a coup led by General Kornilov, who said he was ready "to hang all soviet members". The coup was defeated by workers. The crisis could not last forever. Either the Right would win, and mass terror would result, or workers would win and take control of society.

By October the Bolsheviks had won majority support in the soviets. They argued for insurrection. But the insurrection was the crowning act of the mass revolution, not a party coup.

Even opponents of the Bolsheviks were forced to admit that the insurrection had mass support.

One such opponent, Sukhanov, wrote: "To talk about military conspiracy instead of national insurrection—when the party was followed by the overwhelming majority of the people, when the party had already de facto conquered all real power and authority—was clearly an absurdity."

The Bolsheviks' support rose from a bare majority in October to two-thirds support in the soviets by mid-1918.

Lenin did not move to institute a one-party state. As Belgian revolutionary Victor Serge observed: "In the years of the greatest peril the soviets and the central executive committee of the soviets includes left revolutionaries, maximalists, anarchists, Menshevik social democrats and even right social democrats."

"Far from fearing discussion, Lenin seeks it. He feels he has something to learn from merciless criticism."

LENIN'S faith lay in the power of workers. That power was shown time and again across Europe in the years following 1917.

In 1918-23 there were revo-



Statues in Russia are daubed with anti-Communist slogans

lutions in Germany, soviet republics in Hungary and Bavaria, and factory occupations in Italy.

In Dublin, 10,000 people marched in support of the Russian Revolution.

The term "soviet" was used to describe councils set up by workers in Limerick and other parts of Munster in 1918.

Lenin had every reason to believe that the workers could take power in countries other than Russia. Otherwise the revolution of 1917 would have seemed like a utopian dream—Russia was far too backward for socialism to be built there in isolation.

"It is not open to the slightest doubt," Lenin insisted, "that the final victory of our revolution, if it were to remain alone, would be hopeless."

But across Europe the revolutions were defeated. What was missing in every case was a party, like the Bolshevik Party, which could lead workers to take power in society.

INSTEAD of the revolution spreading, soviet power in the USSR had to contend with invading imperialist armies and four years of civil war.

The world's rulers knew that if the Russian Revolution survived it would act as a beacon for workers everywhere.

In 1918 Japanese, British, French, American and other forces invaded Russia to crush the new workers' state.

The invaders gave new life to right-wing forces within the country. Former Tsarist officers and landowners led "White" uprisings. Leading Bolsheviks were assassinated. Lenin himself was shot and wounded. In 1919 there were 200,000 foreign troops in Russia.

The White armies practised systematic terror. In April 1918 between 10,000 and 20,000 Bolshevik sympathisers were killed by Whites in Finland. The generals ordered pogroms against Jews, murdering 150,000 in the Ukraine alone. They gave orders to "hang all arrested workers in the streets".

It was not fear of the "Red Terror" that made a US sergeant serving in northern Russia confide: "The majority of people here are in sympathy with the Bolsheviks. I don't blame them."

In order to win the civil war the Bolsheviks resorted to harsh measures. Conscription was introduced and the peasants were forced to hand over grain to feed the towns.

AGAINST all odds the Red Army won the war. But the effect was devastating. On top of those who died fighting, seven million were killed by disease and millions more starved.

The working class had almost disappeared. In 1917 there had been three million industrial workers—in 1921 there were only 1.2 million.

The workers' state was gradually giving way to a bureaucracy.

The Bolsheviks had relied on Tsarist officers and careerists to hold the state together during the civil war—these people now came to dominate.

Lenin had been forced to sacrifice many aspects of workers' control to win the civil war. Now he tried to

put mass democracy into action again to prevent bureaucracy taking hold. Lenin's main opponent at this point was Stalin.

They came into conflict over the role of workers and peasants in overseeing state affairs. The Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate

(Rabkrin) had been set up to fight bureaucracy. But Stalin had taken control of Rabkrin and those involved had themselves become bureaucrats.

Left-wing historian Isaac Deutscher said Stalin had transformed Rabkrin "into his private police within the government".

Lenin proposed reforming Rabkrin in order to dilute Stalin's power. His fight proved hopeless. Only workers' action could enforce his reforms—but the working class barely existed.

LENIN lapsed into ill health and died in 1924. On his deathbed he recommended that Stalin be replaced as Party General Secretary.

But Stalin took control and eventually forced Trotsky into exile. Defenders of Trotsky were also exiled and later murdered.

None of this happened without a struggle. Indeed Stalin's brutality reflected his fear of the opposition. By 1937 none of the old Bolshevik leadership remained—except one, Stalin.

Instead of workers controlling society, Stalin imposed a dictatorship on the workers. Instead of

seeking to spread the revolution, Stalin tried to industrialise Russia by super-exploitation of workers.

The Chinese Revolution of 1927 offered new hopes of spreading the revolution. But Stalin sided with the nationalist Kuomintang who butchered Chinese socialists.

Under Stalin, the non-Russian republics were once more oppressed, even before Lenin's death. The Baltic states were taken over again when Stalin signed a pact with Hitler.

Lenin had argued for harsh temporary measures to defend the revolution. Stalin resorted to brutality to defend a new layer of privileged bureaucrats.

The prison camps which had held 100,000 opponents of the revolution at the height of the civil war were swelled to hold five million.

Stalin destroyed the party that Lenin had built.

After the revolution the Bolsheviks had renamed that party the Communist Party. For Lenin communism meant a society without inequality—under Stalin the word "communism" became synonymous with one-party dictatorship and KGB terror.

Now that Stalin's party has fallen it is time to rebuild on Lenin's ideas.

■ DAVE McDONAGH

BOOK OF THE MONTH**Trotsky 3**

Fighting the rising Stalinist bureaucracy: 1923-27

by TONY CLIFF

£7.00 post free from: SW Books, PO Box 1648
James's Street, Dublin 8

The scandal behind prison riots

MARK McCann became the twenty-fourth person to die in custody in the Irish Republic in the past three years.

He was HIV-positive and his suicide from drug overdose came only two weeks after he had tried to hang himself by using bandages.

There are two units for prisoners identified as being HIV-positive in Mountjoy—a segregation unit and the "B" basement section where Mark McCann was being held.

One HIV-positive prisoner in the basement section, Kevin Burke, said in an open letter sent to the Prisoners' Rights Organisation:

"The sewer channels run level with the basement and are always blocked. Raw sewage lies outside the windows of the cells. In hot weather the smell is quite appalling. No wonder people with the virus have the most hospital appointments."

Previously Mark McCann had tried to escape from St James' hospital, where he was taken from prison for treatment.

Overcrowding in Irish jails means that in Mountjoy three to a cell is common. Some prisoners are locked up for 24 hours.

However, the plight of HIV-positive prisoners in Mountjoy is not an isolated case. The annual report on prisons documents that "because of overcrowding prisoners are at times held in cor-



rugated steel cabins with no ventilation. On hot summer days we (the visiting committee) have observed up to eighteen men detained there from morning until late evening".

Suicide

The female prison in Mountjoy has also had suicides among girls of between 15 and 19 years of age. Apart from Victorian conditions,

there are allegations that male officers strip search female inmates.

The annual prison report documents that male officers in helmets and visors with riot shields chased and batted female prisoners in enclosed areas. The reason was a disturbance which involved prison articles being thrown in the recreation area. It was new year's eve and the prisoners had no access to cigarettes. Sean Rooney, a

prisoner serving a three-year sentence, describes three punishment cells in the basement known as "the dungeons" as concrete boxes which are so cold that prisoners can only be left there for eight hours.

No Daylight

In the female prison the newest detention cells, built in 1988, have

no daylight or emergency bells and are the size of toilet cubicles.

Survey after survey links crime to social deprivation. Ireland has the highest youth population in jail in Europe.

It costs £80 per day to keep someone in jail, yet two hundred people are in prison for non-payment of debt and a third of the overall prison population are in for non-payment of fines. These are our hardened criminals. No wonder they riot!

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.

Catholic workers in the North are systematically discriminated against by the state, but Protestant workers derive no benefit from this. 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.

<p>The Socialist Workers Movement holds branch meetings throughout the country. Each meetings includes a political discussion. These meetings are open to anyone interested in the politics of the SWM.</p> <p>For more details of the SWM write to PO Box 1648, James's Street, Dublin 8 or PO Box 418, Tomb Street, Belfast BT9</p>	
<p>BELFAST</p> <p>Belfast meets every Monday at 8.00pm upstairs in the Castle Mews Bar</p> <p>October 8 See Public Meetings: Note different venue and day</p> <p>October 14 Explaining the Soviet Crisis: the Theory of State Capitalism</p> <p>October 21 Socialists and Education</p> <p>October 28 Why we say 'Brits Out'</p> <p>November 4 Did Lenin lead to Stalin?</p>	<p>DERRY</p> <p>Derry meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in Badgers, Orchard St.</p> <p>October 9 See Public Meetings: Note different venue and day</p> <p>October 15 Should socialists defend Articles 2 and 3?</p> <p>October 22 Do animals have rights?</p> <p>October 29 Yugoslavia, What are they fighting about?</p>
<p>BRAY</p> <p>Bray meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Hibernian Inn, Marine Terrace.</p> <p>October 11 See Public Meetings: Note different venue and day</p> <p>October 15 Is Fianna Fail a Tory party?</p> <p>October 22 China Today</p> <p>October 29 What is happening in Yugoslavia?</p>	<p>WATERFORD</p> <p>Waterford meets every Thursday at 8.00pm in ATGWU Hall, Keyzer St.</p> <p>October 3 Did Lenin lead to Stalinism?</p> <p>October 10 Louise Michell and the Paris Commune</p> <p>October 17 What is the real Marxist tradition?</p> <p>October 24 Yugoslavia,</p>
<p>NAVAN</p> <p>Navan meets every Tuesday at 10.30am: Contact national address or paper sellers for details.</p> <p>October 8 What causes recession?</p> <p>October 15 Does Revolution lead to Tyranny?</p> <p>October 22 Is Human Nature a barrier to Socialism?</p> <p>October 29 What did Marx really stand for?</p>	<p>DUBLIN</p> <p>Dublin meets every Wednesday upstairs in the Bachelor Inn, Bachelors Walk, by</p> <p>October 9 Yugoslavia: What is the fighting about?</p> <p>October 16 What is the real Marxist tradition?</p> <p>October 23 What hope for a Middle East peace conference?</p> <p>October 30 Explaining the Soviet Crisis: the Theory of State Capitalism</p>
<p>CORK</p> <p>Cork meets every Tuesday at 8.00pm in the Anchor Inn, Georges Quay</p> <p>October 8 Yugoslavia: What is the fighting about?</p> <p>October 15 Do working class men benefit from women's oppression?</p> <p>October 22 What hope for a Middle East peace conference?</p> <p>October 29 Explaining the Soviet Crisis: the Theory of State Capitalism</p>	<p>SWM Public Meetings</p> <p>Stop the bigots: DEFEND THE BROOK CENTRE</p> <p>Speakers: Goretti Horgan (SWM) Margaret Keenan (Campaign for Information and Choice)</p> <p>Belfast: Tuesday October 8th, 8.00pm Central Hall, Rosemary Street</p> <p>Derry: Wednesday October 9th, 8.00pm Heritage Library, Bishop Street</p> <p>Bray DEFEND TRAVELLERS' RIGHTS</p> <p>Speakers: Eamonn McCann and a speaker from the Travellers community</p> <p>Friday 11th October, 8.00pm</p> <p>See posters for details of venue</p> <p>Socialist Worker Appeal</p> <p>Many thanks to all those who contributed during September to our Appeal</p> <p>Send all donations to address below</p> <p>For details of meetings in Dundalk, Dungarven, Galway, Kilkenny, Limerick and Portlaoise contact SWM PO Box 1648, James's Street, Dublin 8</p>

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

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THE COMMITMENTS

by JASON McELIGOT

The Commitments is classic film-making. Alan Parker's is the first film about Dublin (and perhaps Ireland) to be realistic and unpatronising.

The story revolves around a young Soul lover who decides to form a band, advertises and recruits eleven hopefuls. It shows how they work hard together to make it with their band — *The Commitments*.

I'm not a Soul fan but I loved all the music in the film. Andrew Strong has a terrific voice. The songs were recorded live, and it shows. You've never heard "Try a Little Tenderness" sung like this!

Strength

Every second word in the film is "fuck", "bastard" or combinations thereof. Their usage doesn't offend. It's funny, and they are used as "boring repetitive words for a boring repetitive life". The only people offended will be priests and SPUC bigots.

The strength of the film is that it shows what it's like to live on a crappy Northside estate, with unemployment, drugs and vandalism problems.

The band members come together to escape their shitty jobs. Deco is a bus conductor

Don't sit back

while the others work in a chippy, a meat plant and a fish factory. "It feels better being an unemployed musician than being an unemployed flitter," one of them says. There is no romanticism in the depiction of areas like Kilbarrack and Ballymun.

Amazing

Every character is being shat on, but they show amazing resistance. Humour is their main weapon. The slagging and fighting between them are some of the funniest moments.

Joey "The Lips" Fagan and the manager go the Mansion House to meeting the great Soul-man Wilson Picket. Here we see the suntanned rich, with their Mercedes and portable phones. "Fuck 'em," Joey says.

The film ends on an unexpected note, but there's no sadness. You're sure that these kids and the others like them in Dublin in over a thousand bands will be back again soon, singing, fighting and laughing.

The message of this film is—don't sit back and be shat upon. See it or die!



Andrew Strong belts it out

Spike Lee's best

JUNGLE FEVER

Spike Lee has become one of the most important and controversial film makers in America. *Do The Right Thing* caused uproar for its portrayal of racism and police brutality.

Lee was accused of heightening racial tensions when the film was released in New York, because he portrays everyday situations facing black people in the US.

Despite his considerable talent as a film maker and his insistence on confronting head-on the inequalities endemic in American society Spike Lee is sometimes a hard man to defend. He is arrogant, sexist and even legitimate criticisms of his work are treated as a racist attack.

His latest offering, *Jungle Fever*, is

probably his best film to date. It is dedicated to Yusef Hawkins, the black teenager who was killed in a racist attack in Bensonhurst (an Italian suburb of New York) after being mistaken for the boyfriend of a local girl.

Jungle Fever's subject is inter-racial romance, when a seemingly happily married black architect, Flipper Purify, has an affair with his working class Italian secretary, Angie. Flipper's wife finds out and promptly throws him out.

Reactions

The rest of the film goes on to deal with the reactions of both Flipper's and Angie's families and friends to the relationship. It portrays the hostility of both communities to the relationship that in the end destroys it.

Spike Lee must first of all be commended for being one of the few

film makers to address such a controversial issue. But the film has definite weaknesses that are the result of his essentially shallow perception of racism. He can loosely be described as a black nationalist. While he doesn't condemn inter-racial relationships, he believes they can only bring suffering and constant abuse. This is because he sees no hope of fighting and destroying racism. Instead throughout the film there are various references to black businessmen—clearly no solution.

But despite the problems in the film it is by far the best (and practically the only) film around dealing with the subject. Spike Lee's success has given a whole generation of young black film makers a foot in the door. Hopefully many more (and better) films by black artists are still to come.

■ EVE MORRISON



LETTERS

Write to: PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

Browned off over Green's Greene

WHATEVER is happening to the Green Party? Recently one of their newly elected councillors, Richard Greene, in Dublin wrote a letter to the *Irish Times* to say that the Rape Crisis Centre should not be funded.

He said that there were greater priorities. But I suspect he is joining up with some of the SPUCists who want

to victimise Rape Crisis Centres.

I don't know why the Green Party are accepting ex-Fianna Fail right wingers into their ranks.

I would like to see a left wing party that makes the environment a top priority. I hope that the Green Party goes back to its left wing stance.

What do the Socialist Workers say about the environment?

□ LOUISE O'MALLEY, Louth

Get Useta' them

WHAT has farm safety got to do with rock and roll?

Nothing. That is, until the Sawdoctors released their latest single, "Haywrap".

The band have been criticised by the IFA for exhorting people to jump up and down on big bales of hay. "Very dangerous," said the IFA spokesperson.

The Sawdoctors are naturally very responsible, and have apologised. I'm sure they're tired though. After all, this wild piece of controversy is only the latest to have dogged them since they released "I Useta Love Her" over a year ago.

Trendies

Since then they've become the band that some people—mainly trendies—love to hate. The trendies refer to the group from Tuam as "rednecks" or worse still "mucksavages", and tell us that the Sawdoctors only sing about the country because they know damn all about anything else.

Sometimes the accusations are a little more sophisticated, as in

"the Sawdoctors are sexist because they sing about women's backsides".

Certainly they do. But isn't it clever of them to rhyme "mass" with "ass". Now that's not likely to endear them to the local parish priest, is it? And I'm damned if I'm not totally in favour of that.

Once more, you see, the trendies have missed the point. People in the West of Ireland don't all work on smallholdings in Arran jumpers and old boots. Most of them work, or at least used to work, in places like the old Siucré Eireann plant in Tuam.

The Sawdoctors grew up in a world which was well-connected to money and music. TV and video and all the modern things that trendies say they weren't supposed to have. Well, since the Siucré Eireann plant in Tuam went bust such things have been in short supply in East Galway and people are understandably angry.

If anything, the Sawdoctors are a product of the recession, but with a difference.

This time, it's the recession in an area dominated by agriculture, rather than by industry or finance. The contrasts may not be startling, but they're real.

In the 1970s a punk

band from South Dublin called the Boomtown Rats wrote songs about convent education and the damage it can do to your brain, among other things.

These days the Sawdoctors sing "Presentation Boarder" about more or less the same thing. In 1978 the Radiators wrote "Ghost Town" about the effects of emigration on Dublin. Now it's the Sawdoctors with "N17".

Myth

OK, so the Sawdoctors sometimes manage to make the Pogues look avant garde, but the idea that they are "mucksavages" is one myth I want to dispel. At least one band member was a founder of Macnas, the Galway-based theatrical group, and other members have been playing in rock and roll acts for years.

I hope the hip folk in Dublin have got that clear, but I hope they are also clear that it's not merely quaint farmers and their livestock who reside in the West, as some other products of Bord Failte's nostalgia industry, but real people.

The Sawdoctors are just some of them, and the next time they clean the muck off their boots I hope they shake it all over some trendy's living-room carpet.

■ KEN MULKEARN

supposed to be challenging the wrong ideas in people's heads, not pandering to them. The common belief in Russia as a communist state comes from the western and eastern ruling classes. Everyone from George Bush on is saying communism is dead.

The SWM have for years been able to say, without manipulating language, that the system in the USSR and Eastern Europe was not and never has been communist. This has not changed. Our analysis remains the same.

I hope that no-one within the SWM believes that communism is dead as we know it was never achieved. So why assume that we have to appeal to the ignorance fed to people by the media on behalf of capitalists, East and West? Is the SWM now embracing the "new times" of the western Communist Parties?

□ ANITA VILLA, Derry.

S.W. headline wrong

THE headline "Communism is Dead" on the front page of the September issue of *Socialist Worker* was wrong.

The SWM has the best analysis of the USSR but I find it appalling that this type of populist headline should be used, especially at this time.

The SWM, as a revolutionary organisation, are

NEW AN POST FIGHT

AS we go to press, 7,000 An Post workers plan to strike on October 6 and 7.

They are demanding payment of the 6 per cent increase awarded by the arbitrator 15 months ago. An overtime ban is also planned.

The strength used to push back the Viability Plan earlier this year can also win the six per cent.

Bigots stop rape crisis funds

SPUC supporters are trying to stop funding for the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre (DRCC).

The centre needs £300,000 per annum running costs. The Eastern Health Board (EHB) has only offered £100,000.

The DRCC provides a 24-hour crisis centre and counselling for teenagers and adults who have suffered sexual abuse and rape. It is the only rape crisis centre in the Dublin area that provides this comprehensive service.

The only other place that deals with sexual assaults is the Sexual Assault Unit in the Rotunda Hospital, which offers immediate medical treatment for victims and would then refer them to the DRCC for further help.

Right-wingers are leading the attack on the centre.

An article appeared in the *Irish Times* on 23rd August entitled "Dealing with rape—a second opinion". The author was Bernadette Bonar, a member of the Eastern Health Board and chairperson of the Irish branch of the Responsible Society.

The Responsible Society are similar to organisations like SPUC and Family Solidarity.

Bonar complained that the DRCC was "full of campaigners" for women's rights. This is true, and it is a credit to those women.

Bernadette Bonar and her ilk have no real sympathy for the victims of sexual abuse. If they did, they would recognise and encourage the good and essential service the DRCC is providing instead of trying to prevent funding so that the service will close.

CREA RYDER

Student flats crisis

STUDENTS face poverty and homelessness when they return to college this term.

There has been a huge rise in the number of students in the Republic in the last few years, but this increase has not been matched by an increase in student housing. Of the 70,000 students, 35,000 need accommodation.

Local authorities aren't building houses. Last year Dublin Corporation built only 35 houses. But there are 23,000 families on the waiting list, so married couples and working people are being forced to live in rented flats. The spate of office developments have also contributed to the crisis.

One landlord had 48 calls for his flat after advertising in the paper. Landlords have, according to Eamonn Waters of the Union of Students in Ireland (USI), begun "profiteering" from this situation.

Rents even for so-called "cheap" private accommodation have soared in the last couple of years to around £35 per person per week. The maximum college grant is around £38 per week. This is forcing many to work or starve and so exam results suffer. Many are being forced to accept flats blacklisted by USI.

In Dublin the problem



has been made worse by the attitude of the Dublin Vocational Education Committee (DVEC). They have taken half the money Dublin Institute of Technology students pay to the Students' Union (SU) and taken over the accommodation service themselves. The result is a shambles.

Student Unions visit all flats on their approved list and are in a position to quickly spread the word about a bad landlord. The DVEC has approved landlords previously blacklisted, and is advertising accommodation in Meath and Kildare!

Fianna Fail will have to

be forced to give even the smallest concessions. USI is planning a week of action on the housing crisis in mid-October and is setting up housing groups in the colleges. The occupation of empty dwellings and the picketing of Dublin Corporation and other local authority meetings are also planned.

N.I. student poverty

MANY students in Northern Ireland return to college to face the prospect of real poverty.

Grants have been frozen for a year as the Tories' top up loan scheme has been put in place.

The full maximum student grant has been frozen at £2,227. The top up loan gives students an extra £420 a year or £310 if they are in the final term.

The Tories claim that the system gives a "greater responsibility to students for their own education".

But it only brings poverty and class discrimination. Over the summer students have been deprived of food and housing benefits.

When they leave college students will find themselves in debt to the tune of £1,000.

The result is to put working class students off going to college. At the moment only eight percent of N.I. students come from a working class background.

The Students Union has organised a soup kitchen outside City Hall. It was a good idea. But to beat the Tories, masses of students will have to be mobilised.

Every college in N.I. should have an emergency general meeting in the first term. Plans should be drawn up for a campaign of demonstrations and militant action.

Stop Derry poison plant

SEVERAL hundred people from Derry and Donegal plan to picket Leinster House on October 23. They are protesting at the government's involvement in the building of a toxic waste incinerator at Du Pont's plant just outside Derry city.

The publication of Du Pont's feasibility study has revived the opposition.

Hardly anyone in Derry or the surrounding area wants the incinerator, but Du Pont have made it clear that it will go ahead despite protests.

Meetings held in local areas have drawn forty to fifty people. The anger at the proposal is great, but the frustration about how to respond is even greater.

SWM members have argued that the Du Pont workers have the power to stop the incinerator being built.

However, given the weakened state of union organisation in the plant, most people feel this power will not be used.

Certainly, with the campaign being run on a very "respectable" basis the workers are unlikely to feel the kind of support and solidarity that might push them towards action.

A more militant campaign is definitely required. Targetting the Dail is a good start.

In the North, the political decision about whether or not to allow the plant to be built will be taken by Richard Needham, Minister in charge of Environment and Economic Development. Disrupting every function he or his representatives attend and occupying or picketing any of his Department's offices could boost the confidence of Du Pont workers.

DERRY SWM

WATERFORD

Resist ground rent robbery

THE long-running battle between Waterford workers and ground rent landlords surfaced again when two hundred Waterford workers appeared in court over their refusal to pay ground rent over the last fifteen years.

The ground rent is due on houses built by McNerney in the Waterford area over the last 25 years. Many of these houses are owned by Waterford Glass workers.

Over the years a Mr Henry Hunt, acting for McNerney Builders Ltd, was unable to collect the money due, despite dragging the house owners through the courts and threatening jail for non-payers.

McNerney sold the ground rent rights some years ago to an English-based property company called Ellard Lipson Ltd who are represented in

this country by Morgan Scales (Management) Ltd, Dublin.

The workers claim that ground rent is robbery and that they already paid for the land their homes stand on when they first purchased the houses.

Jimmy Galvin, a Glass worker, told *Socialist Worker* that he was refusing to pay as a matter of principle. "We have already paid in full for our homes and these rents are unjust, unfair and immoral. Ground rent is a legal form of highway robbery," he declared. "I will go to jail if necessary, and the

majority of other residents feel just as I do."

The anti-ground rent campaign has the support of the Waterford Council of Trade Unions and despite many court appearances no one has been sent to jail for non-payment.

This is due to the threat of industrial action. Over £100,000 is outstanding in arrears.

One hundred workers picketed the court but despite this, Judge Keenan-Johnson said he was obliged to "administer the law as it stood", and found in favour of the ground rent company.

GLASS BOSS FIGHTS FOR HIS CLASS

WATERFORD Crystal boss Paddy Galvin is an unashamed union basher.

In the September issue of *Management* magazine Galvin boasted about his exploits at the Crystal factory and before that in Guinness's brewery.

He admitted that in December 1989, when unions refused to negotiate a cost-cutting plan, management "had to identify areas in which

we could take action".

Galvin also told of a "blistering speech" he made to the Joint Negotiating Committee: "I made it clear that if we did not get a settlement we would continue the strike indefinitely, which would

Damage

cause untold damage in the market place. Ultimately this would lead to a compulsory redundancy programme when they returned to work. If that meant another strike we would take it, but there would be nothing left to

return to. One way or the other they had to understand that they had lost the strike, that there was no way we were backing down."

Galvin welcomed the concessions management won after the strike, claiming that "the strike shifted the balance of power from the union to management".

Clearly Galvin is battling away to preserve the power and privilege of himself and his rich pals. He even makes a dig at *Socialist Workers'* "Galvin must be beaten" placards.

Workers at Waterford Crystal must prepare now for a period of trench war resistance to Galvin.

MAGEE CRECHE CLOSURE THREAT

THE creche at Magee University in Derry is under threat of closure.

The creche has been totally mismanaged throughout its first year. The workers in the creche have no say in its running and are at present working without contracts.

When they returned after the summer months, with no re-tainer fees, three of them were laid off. The fees for the creche have been raised to a level which few stu-

dents could afford and are way above those being charged by other creches in the town.

A recent meeting of students, workers and parents raised two main issues.

Firstly, students should have more control over the day to day running of the creche.

Secondly, proper terms and conditions of employment should be fought for. The Students Union should be demanding that creche facilities be made a basic right at Magee.

DERRY BRANCH

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism 35p

Quote:

THE BIGOTS SPEAK

"These people think sex is for fun"—Free Presbyterian Minister

"We think it is time that people looked at the facts and got over the whole idea about having the freedom to do whatever they want"—Kathleen McQuaid, N.I. Secretary of SPUC

DEFEND

THE BROOK

CENTRE

RIGHT-wing bigots in Belfast are trying to stop the Brook Advisory Centre from opening. The Brook Clinic offers advice on sex to teenagers.

At the fore of the campaign has been the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child—SPUC.

Last month the Left in Belfast hit back. Eighty people turned up to picket SPUC's conference.

The picket was organised by the Socialist Workers Movement in conjunction with the Belfast Rape Crisis Centre and the Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association. These groups have also launched the Campaign for Information and Choice.

The Brook Advisory Centre has been invited to Belfast by the Eastern Health and Social Services Board in response to the rising number of teenage pregnancies in Northern Ireland.

The proportion of teenager mothers who are unmarried has risen from 54 percent in

1985 to 73 percent in 1989.

The Brook Centre will offer sex education and family planning to sexually active young people who are reluctant to go to a GP or family planning centre in their area.

The Brook organisation has over seventy centres in Britain and has been providing information and counselling for over 25 years.

The Belfast Brook Centre will open at the end of the year and hold two sessions a week. They will provide the same information and advice as is available in other family planning centres throughout the North. The difference is that the Brook Centre is geared to

young people.

SPUC's campaign to stop the opening of the Brook Centre has included a huge media campaign.

Insult

According to SPUC, the Brook Centre will "usurp the rights of parents". It will also "cause a threat to the children of Northern Ireland".

A SPUC leaflet claimed that "lollipops and Barbie dolls will be given out with condoms".

SPUC have flooded the city centre in Belfast with a leaflet claiming that Brook Centres lead to a rise in abortions in the areas they operate in.

Behind the scenes, SPUC are doing their best to prevent Brook getting premises in Belfast.

Another right-wing organisation, LIFE, has called for a special Sunday to be devoted to prayers against Brook in Catholic and Protestant churches.

The Bishop of Down and Conor, Patrick Walshe, says that the

Catholic Church is opposed to Brook because "sexual relationships outside marriage undermine responsibility and commitment".

He also claimed that information on contraception would not help teenagers.

This is a gross insult to thousands of teenagers. SPUC and the other bigots want to condemn them to a life of fear and ignorance.

The tragedy is that the bigots are now making the running. Down Council passed a resolu-

tion from Unionist Councillor Dick against the centre. The resolution had all-party support.

Picket

Sinn Fein have stayed silent on the attempted censorship of the information that the Brook Centre will provide—this, despite being victims of censorship themselves. They see conflict with the Catholic Church on this issue as a vote loser.

SPUC are now trying to step up their campaign. SPUC spokesperson Kathleen McQuaid claims that Brook is bringing abor-

tion to Northern Ireland by the back door.

Northern Ireland is still excluded from the 1967 Abortion Act.

If the centre opens, SPUC have threatened to mount pickets to intimidate teenagers away.

The bigots must now be taken on. Resolutions should be raised in students unions and trade unions to affiliate to the Campaign for Information and Choice. A major march should be organised in Belfast.

The SWM calls on all those interested in fighting for the Brook Centre to get in touch with us to organise against the bigots.