

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism



Gorbachev gave order

Gorbachev sends in the tanks

LAST month Gorbachev ordered tanks in to Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania.

This followed a week of rising tension as Russia cut off international telephone lines, jammed Lithuanian radio broadcasts and blockaded the border, following the declaration of independence by the Lithuania's Supreme Council.

Gorbachev refused to negotiate with Lithuanian leaders but instead used his extensive, new presidential powers to decree the action.

Lithuania was annexed to the USSR, along with the other small Baltic states of Estonia and Latvia, in 1940 in a deal between Hitler and Stalin. Moscow has only recently admitted the existence of this secret pact.

Gorbachev's action in Lithuania comes only weeks after Russian troops were sent to crush a nationalist uprising in Azerbaijan.

Then, Moscow claimed it was a peace-keeping force to stop Azer/Armenian "inter-ethnic" violence. The truth was the opposite.

Gorbachev was happy to sit back for over a year as local party bosses fomented inter-ethnic strife. It was only when a mass uprising threatened Communist Party rule in Baku that he moved. And then to protect the Stalinist administration in the republic.

Those on the Left who saw Gorbachev as "democratising" the USSR have had a rude shock. He is not a "humane socialist" but a class conscious representative of the imperialist state capitalist ruling class in the USSR.



Tanks rattle into Vilnius

The process of reforms from above has encouraged people to demand their rights for themselves. Workers are organising free trade unions, alternative political parties are coming into existence and the oppressed

nationalities are demanding their freedom.

Gorbachev is terrified that this process will overwhelm the bureaucracy and usher in the disintegration of the Russian empire. He has demonstrated

that, like other rulers East and West, he is prepared to use force to smash opposition.

The SWM is on the side of those fighting stalinist oppression. That's why we call for troops out of Lithuania.

BUSH IS JUST AS BAD



Bush: hypocrite

US PRESIDENT George Bush hypocritically condemns the Russian military intervention in Lithuania.

He poses as a "democrat" and respecter of human rights.

His words are lies and humbug.

■ **FACT** Over a thousand people died—most of them civilians—in last year's invasion of Panama.

US claims that the invasion was to remove a notorious drug dealer are eyewash. The tyrant Noreiga was *Bush's man*. As head of the CIA, Bush had backed Noreiga and recruited him to the CIA.

The US invasion was aimed at removing a no longer reliable servant and replacing him with someone who would more efficiently defend US interests.

■ **FACT** Bush personally masterminded Irangate by which US Congress ban on military funding for the notorious Contras was circumvented.

40,000 Nicaraguans died at the hands of Contra terrorism in Nicaragua. The war cost the country two-thirds of its productive capacity, forcing the slashing of social programmes and pushing its people into desperate poverty.

From the US invasion of Grenada in the eighties to the botched Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in the sixties, US rulers have shown they regard Central and South America as their back yard.

Those who saturated Vietnam with defoliants and explosives have no lessons in peace and freedom to teach anyone.

Time to build a fighting USI

THE Union of Students in Ireland holds its annual conference this month in Wexford. USI has gained much publicity during the last few months over the abortion information debate.

Yet its failure to capitalise on the publicity it has had and the enthusiasm generated among students, progressive groups and some trade union branches calls into question the competence of USI's leadership.

They are now keen to tone down the abortion information issue and to concentrate on other issues affecting students.

This is the fundamental mistake that the bureaucracy in USI has been consistently making over the years.

They think attacks on students are somehow almost accidental, if any issue is sufficiently fudged it will go away and they can divert attention elsewhere.

USI'S handling of the

introduction of student loans in the North could well be the next fudge, if USI insist that the way to fight loans is to get guarantees from bankers that they are unworkable and to petition Westminster.

Instead students and staff should make it clear that the very notion of student loans is objectionable by a militant campaign that included picketing government buildings.

USI should be lead-

ing such a campaign. Concentrating mainly on the "unworkable" nature of the scheme leaves students with little grounds to fight if the Tories do strike a deal with the banks

INJUNCTION

Similarly, now that SPUC's injunction has been made "unworkable"—rather than broken—by the



Cork students on the march last year

supposed leaders of students in Ireland, attacks on colleges still giving out information on abortion will be much harder to defend.

SPUC and its allies' next strategy is to push for voluntary membership of unions and disaffiliation from USI.

Such a move will be very hard to combat on the present record of USI. By failing to see the political basis for the attacks on students and

turning. If USI will adopt a fighting political agenda to fully take on these attacks and give support to grassroots activists in the frontline against the right, then it will find that students will rally not only to defend it but to take the struggle onto the offensive and win major gains for students.

It could start by publishing abortion information openly and publicly supporting in every way possible all students willing to do so.

But the tide can be

★ THIS month the SWM takes the fight for a strategy of direct action to sink the student loans to the Conference of the National Union of Students.

Ritchie McVeigh, who polled well in February's elections to the executive of Queen's Student Union, was elected a delegate of the university last month.

Together with the delegates of our sister organisation in Britain, the Socialist Workers Party, Ritchie will argue a socialist position on all the issues raised at Conference.

In particular, he will push for the involvement of as many students as possible—through more pickets, demos and occupations—and linking up with others who are fighting the Tories, as the only way to stop the student loans.

THE SWM called a successful day of defiance against SPUC last month.

■ In DUBLIN over fifty people gave out the banned telephone number for abortion information in O'Connell St and outside Tara St DART station.

Support came from students in Trinity College whose Student Union has been banned by a SPUC injunction from giving out abortion information.

Hundreds of SWM badges saying "Defy SPUC—Abortion Information (01) 794700" were sold on stalls and during International Women's Day events and march.

■ In WATERFORD, the local SWM branch organised a stall in the centre of the town's Red Square with posters, leaflets, pamphlets and badges.

■ CORK SWM produced a poster saying "What had Ceausescu and SPUC in common? They both banned abortion information" and giving the banned telephone number. This poster has been appearing all over the country and is proving very popular with anti-SPUCists everywhere.

■ Within a week of publication last month a hundred copies of the new SWM pamphlet on abortion had been sold. "Abortion—Why Irish women must have the right to choose" written by Goretti Horgan costs £1 and badges at 30p each are available from SW Publications, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8 or local SWM branches.

Dividend for the rich

★ AS workers face wage freezes, the following piece of news illustrates what belt-tightening is all about.

Guinness Peat Aviation boss Tony Ryan has been awarded an £86 million bonus by shareholders, on top of the £20 million he already receives in share dividends.

Deputy Chairman of the board Sir John Harvey Jones said that "as a result of the company's performance the value of its shares has considerably exceeded the expectations and targets established in 1986" and that therefore "the directors believe it to be appropriate" that a present of 130,588 "A" shares worth at least \$650 each be issued to Dr Ryan.

The new shares will add £8 million to Dr Ryan's dividend payments annually.



● Tony Ryan: increase

'Black provos'

★ A PROPOSAL by Workers Party Councillor Seamus Lynch to make Nelson Mandela a Freeman of Belfast has been turned down by the General Purposes and Finance Committee of the Council.

Independent Unionist Councillor Frank Millar described Mandela as a "black Provo". He thought he was not imprisoned unjustifiably for 27 years. "He was

imprisoned because of his very active involvement with terrorism. His first words on release were that the armed struggle would continue. Terrorism is terrorism."

On the same day as Millar made these observations a black man was shot dead and five people injured when police fired shots at a group of strikers outside a paper mill at Springs near Johannesburg.

Keeping the sceens blank

★ RULES governing the televising of the Dail, due to begin next year, will ban the coverage of "disorder in the chamber and

unparliamentary behaviour by members". There are fears that with the introduction of TV cameras incidents of disorder, which it is acknowledged do occur,

might increase and some members might be tempted to resort to "attention-seeking tactics". Whenever such incidents occur the cameras must focus on the Ceann Comhairle and remain on him until order has been restored (so that people won't see how ridiculous is the carry-on in the Dail).

Among the other things which may not be

televised is the chamber at large. Camera shots will be wide enough to cover speakers' "waist, shoulders and head" and the immediate surrounding area.

During Question Time only the member asking the question and the Minister or Minister of State replying may be shown (so that people won't realise how few TDs actually attend the Dail most of the time).



Cartoon: MARK LYNCH

WE THINK

No end in sight to armed struggle

IT IS not often that so much nonsense is talked about a single subject as has been talked in recent months about an IRA ceasefire. The plain fact is that there isn't going to be any IRA ceasefire.

The IRA could not possibly dump arms unless—at a minimum—the British gave some public indication that they were going to get out.

In his Dunloy speech in February Martin McGuinness suggested it might be enough if the Tory government announced that it regarded a united Ireland as the best long-term solution and would work towards that objective.

But such a commitment from the Tories would not only cause chaos among Unionists in the North, it would throw the Tories themselves into turmoil in Britain. There isn't anything like enough pressure on them to make them bring that sort of bother down on their heads.

MEDIA

Of course when the mainstream media speak of a ceasefire they don't mean a deal along these lines. They mean that the Provos should simply "give up the gun", and that in exchange they would be included in whatever talks eventually get under way.

The fact that serious people believe the Provos could or would end the armed struggle on this basis shows how little understanding of Republicanism there is in some circles even now. The Provos would have to be beaten to the ropes before they'd contemplate any such thing.

And almost the only thing everybody in the North is agreed

on is that they are not nearly beaten to the ropes.

Still, there is no doubt that Republicans are looking to see if they can get their act more together. They are aware of the reaction of people quite close to them to the Bloody Sunday bomb, the bomb at the ICTU Women's Conference and a number of other recent operations.

And they are aware, too, that while their electoral support in the North seems to have withstood the recent shocks solidly enough, there is little room for real expansion in sight. And no sign at all of any significant improvement in their disastrous electoral situation in the South.

So while the Republicans are by no means beaten, and there is no ceasefire in prospect, many

see a need for a new and better way of working. Of making the military campaign more sensitive to political needs, and making political activity more relevant to the day to day concerns of the people.

MILITANCY

And of course it is true that this or that military operation could have been more effectively organised—or not organised at all. And this or that political campaign could have been handled differently.

But in general terms there is very little indeed that Republicans can do to improve their fortunes.

No guerrilla campaign fought from within a beleaguered community can be entirely "clean".

Operating clandestinely and under the most intense pressure which sophisticated techniques of surveillance and counter-insurgency can bring to bear, mistakes are bound to happen.

Those who cheer "good" IRA operations, and condemn "bad" operations, are allowing themselves a luxury which is not available to those actually carrying the operations out.

Of more political significance is the fact that the armed struggle is, of its very nature, a strictly-limited nationalist struggle. It is aimed against the physical manifestations of the British presence. The message it conveys is, simply, "Brits Out".

It cannot be made to convey any clear-cut message about the nature of the Ireland which would result from Brits Out.

This limits its support to straight-and-narrow nationalists, to those who want a single Irish State, full stop.

This closely restricts the possibility of expansion in the North. And it is of crucial importance in the South, where "Brits Out" offers nothing tangible to Southern workers whose day to day struggles bring them into conflict not with the British state but with the Irish state.

There may be a degree of tacit support—"sneaking regard"—for the IRA in the South at certain times and at certain junctures. But this cannot be transformed into sustained, active, political support for the Republican Movement.

The truth of the matter is that there isn't any significantly better way of working open to the Republican Movement. Rank and file Republicans have the choice of continuing along the present road, or seeking another road altogether.

WORKING CLASS

That other road involves recognising that it is working class people, Catholic and Protestant, North and South, who face the deprivations of capitalism in Ireland. They suffer unemployment, low pay, lousy health care and poverty at the hands of the two states on this island.

The working class, *alone*, has a long run, unconditional interest in smashing that system of oppression, clearing away sectarianism, the border and Southern collaboration.

The Socialist Workers Movement is seeking to build a party built on this recognition. We invite those who are interested in such a project to discuss with us how this can be achieved.



NI Tories' master stroke

★ **NORTHERN Ireland Tories—who have only just been allowed to join the British Conservative Party are demanding the introduction of the Poll Tax into the Six Counties.**

Thatcher's government in Britain is in deep crisis with ministers resigning, a bye-election hammering in Staffordshire and rock bottom opinion poll ratings.

Chief among Thatcher's worries is intense popular anger at the introduction of the poll tax which has sparked militant demonstrations outside town halls up and down the country.

None of this seems to worry the newly-formed East Belfast Conservative Association. They put down a motion to a Tory conference in Cheltenham last month demanding the poll tax for NI "as soon as possible".

INTERNATIONAL

Nicaragua: Sandinista poll defeat:

WHAT WENT WRONG?

THE defeat suffered by the Sandinistas in the Nicaraguan elections on 25 February is a terrible blow for the Left everywhere. It will be held up by Bush and Thatcher as yet another example of a people rejecting "marxism".

Nowhere will the effect be greater than in Central and South America itself, particularly El Salvador where the FMLN guerrillas have been engaged in bitter struggle with the US-backed government of the death squads.

This is because the 1979 revolution in Nicaragua showed that it was possible to break the stranglehold of US-backed regimes in Central America, right in America's "backyard".

But why did the right wing-dominated coalition UNO win and where now for Nicar-

agua?

Any answer to this question has to start with the role of the real victor, US imperialism. Reagan planned to destroy the Nicaraguan economy by siege, economic and military.

Somoza's notorious National Guard were resurrected as the Contras, Reagan's "modern day freedom fighters". Contra incursions from Honduras disrupted harvests and planting in the coffee fields, virtually Nicaragua's only source of foreign earnings. In addition they terrorised the population. The Contra war claimed some 40,000 lives.

And now the Contras form part of UNO. Their leaders appear on UNO's platforms and UNO leader Chamorro refuses to condemn their most recent murders. No wonder the US appears smug. Robert Dole, Republican leader in the US Senate, says, "As I look around this hemisphere—at Panama, Nicaragua and Cuba—it's two down, one to go."

Nicaragua has put up a tough resistance to this imperialist aggression, but at great cost, and that more than anything explains the election result.

By 1986 Nicaragua had become a survival economy. The minimum wage covered no more than 25 per cent of the basic necessities of an average worker's family. Rocketing inflation hit the poorest hardest. An inflation rate of 35,000 per cent meant that a worker's wage bought just a tenth of what it had twelve months before.

In addition, the war budget cut into the impressive social programmes initiated by the FSLN. At the height of the war nearly two thirds of GNP went on defence.

Nicaragua found itself increasingly isolated internationally. Thanks to a US veto the international finance agencies starved Nicaragua of nearly all aid for her faltering economy.

But if the major reason behind the defeat is the strategy adopted by US imperialism and its allies, at least part of the fault lies with the strategy adopted in response by the Sandinistas.

The 1979 revolution was a mass popular uprising. It sent a shock wave throughout the region. In January 1980, five hundred thousand people marched through the capital of El Salvador shouting revolutionary slogans and carrying arms.

But afterwards the Sandinistas did not let the popular movement itself assume power. There were local popular committees, but the state



Victorious: UNO's Violeta Chamorro

wasn't built on them but rather around the 1,000 strong Sandinista party.

Included in the first post revolution Government of National Reconstruction were members of the "patriotic" (anti-Somoza) bourgeoisie, including Chamorro. Chamorro and her paper *La Prensa* didn't stay on the bandwagon long. They jumped off once the FSLN began to expropriate Somoza's holdings and to set in motion a minimum welfare provision.

Her inclusion reflected a broader strategy of self-limitation by those who led the revolution. They sought the widest coalition of support internally and externally.

Despite the "marxist" label the only stated aim of the revolution had been the overthrow of Somoza. Far from basing themselves on workers and small peasants, the FSLN sought the unity of all "patriotic classes" against the dictator. From day one they made a commitment to maintaining a mixed economy.



Defeated: Daniel Ortega

Expropriation of land and industry was limited to the property of Somoza and his supporters. The FSLN imposed their own unions on the working class which were used to boost output rather than protect living standards.

At the 1985 Congress of the Sandinista trade unions workers were urged to refuse wage rises and renounce restrictions on the length of the working day. Strikes were banned—even though 60

per cent of the economy was in private hands.

In 1988, in response to inflation and currency devaluation, the government introduced an austerity programme which even leading Sandinistas denounced as "monetarist".

Nor was the burden shared evenly. Dollar supermarkets continue to exist where hard currency can be exchanged for a range of consumer goods. Meanwhile, the "popular stores" where workers could get basic goods were closed in 1988, and subsidies lifted.

ACCEPTANCE

At the same time, in a desperate effort to win international acceptance, the FSLN accepted a whole series of "peace" plans imposed by the US. The US continued to supply military aid to El Salvador's vicious regime while the Sandinistas called upon the FMLN to lay down their arms under the Arias Peace Plan.

Similar concessions were made at home, in

backbone of the Nicaraguan revolution. This is why UNO has won, certainly not because this ragbag of reactionaries cobbled together on US money convinced them of their democratic credentials.

But things could have worked out differently. The Sandinistas believed that moderation would save them. They also believed that their control of the state machine could substitute for the conquest by the masses of economic power in Nicaragua. They were wrong on both counts.

The US and the Nicaraguan capitalist class were determined to remove the FSLN, not because it pursued socialist policies. The FSLN proved that they were quite prepared to jettison any policy in the interests of "national survival". Rather, capitalism in the region could not coexist with a state which, however much it lauded the mixed economy, was not directly under capitalism's control.

There remains some hope. For one thing, the UNO coalition is very unstable. For another, the FSLN remains the largest party in the national assembly. Things could still turn out differently if the FSLN realised that their natural allies are not the "patriotic" middle class in Nicaragua, nor Social Democrats in European governments, but rather the revolutionaries in El Salvador and Guatemala and, crucially, among the immensely powerful organised workers in Mexico and Brazil.

In the months ahead imperialism will attempt to reimpose its order. It could be stopped if the Sandinistas used their support to build working class resistance to the new government. And if they prepared a new revolution, based not on national solidarity, which is illusory, but on the solidarity of workers throughout the region, who have the power to stop imperialism in its tracks.

■ JOSH CLARKE

Ten days in the occupied West Bank

Eoghan Dallun recently spent ten days in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and gives a personal view of what he saw.



AS a tourist in Ramallah you have little to fear from occupied or occupier so long as you use a little cop on. Even if you stand there like an eejit eating bananas five feet from where men with guns are dragging a boy away for no apparent reason.

If you follow this up with a stroll around the colourful marketplace and centre of this Arab town, the only flag to be seen is the Star of David, and the men with guns standing on rooftops won't be speaking Arabic.

Al Haq, the independent human rights group who document abuses, have their HQ here and a man I spoke to told me of a neighbour shot point blank in the stomach by a tax collector.

Refusing to pay taxes is only one weapon of resistance being used, but along

with strikes it is having serious effects on the Israeli economy which at one time made an overall profit from the West Bank.

From Al Haq I learned also of the beatings, killings, internment (sounds familiar?), demolition of homes as punishment, 24-hour curfews that can last for weeks, "plastic bullets" that are steel with a thin plastic cover. These are some of the things which constitute daily life here.

It's a strange feeling to know you're in a community which is fenced in like Dehessa refugee camp near Bethlehem. The family I stayed with insisted on showing me photographs of their 15 year old daughter's face after she'd been shot in the back of the head by a dum dum bullet. These

bullets explode on impact leaving an enormous exit wound. She is now another martyr for the intifada, and pictures adorn every room of an otherwise almost empty house. If you go out after four you're taking a very serious risk of ending up the same way because of the curfew.

Families of more than twelve often come close to murdering each other in these conditions, but I was struck by the warmth and affection of people for one another. Partly due, I think, to the way communities have become so much closer in the face of such common hardship.

The difference between the intifada and the forty years or so of Palestinian resistance to Israeli expansionism since the British left is—from what I've seen, heard or read—threefold.

It has replaced apathy among an oppressed population with the realisation that ordinary people have the power not only to fight but to carry on doing so for as long as it takes to achieve justice.

Secondly, the usual impact of a continuous (almost two and a half years long) stream of images of brutality on our TVs is reversing the perception of tiny, democratic, persecuted Israel

FORCED

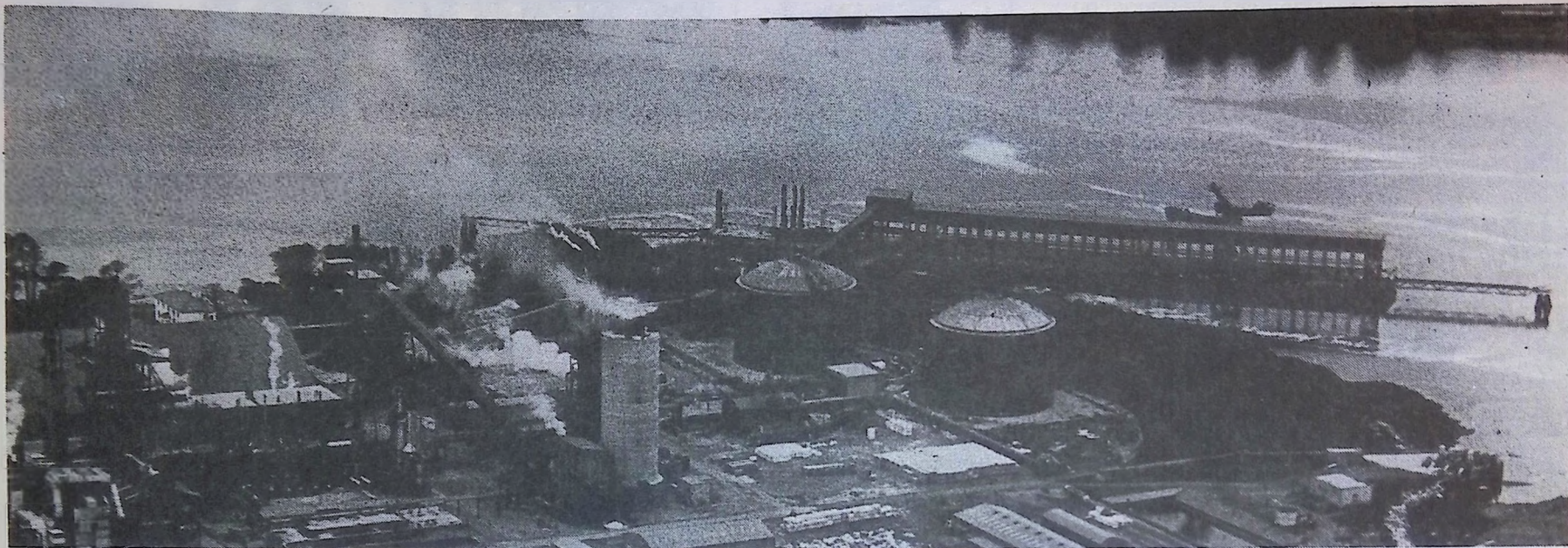
Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, it has forced all the world players involved to face up to the reality of the situation in the occupied territories at a time when Soviet Jews are beginning to arrive in enormous numbers.

Whatever about the long-term benefits of a two-state solution which the PLO now proposes (Ireland could be taken as a good argument against partition), the PLO has been forced to take notice of those it represents or be left behind.

The White House, already embarrassed, is now in open dispute with Tel Aviv over the status of Jerusalem. And with Israel utterly dependent on US aid for its very existence and now having to compete with Eastern Europe, they must take criticism from the likes of ex-US President Carter, architect of the Israel/Egypt peace treaty and currently in the occupied territories, very seriously. And now finally Likud's delay tactics regarding talking to the PLO and proposed elections have brought about the first ever collapse of an Israeli government.

Ireland breaks every EEC rule on pollution

A dirty business



CHARLES Haughey says, with his hand on his unhealthy heart, that he is deeply concerned about protecting and preserving the environment.

When he became President of Europe on 1 January he said his presidency would be a "green" one.

Frankly, you'd need to be a bit green to believe him, for Haughey's Ireland has one of the worst records in Europe for protecting the environment. And it's Haughey and his cronies who are responsible for the environmental mess.

For years past Ireland has breached all the major EEC environmental directives on air pollution, water quality and toxic waste. It permits the hunting and killing of protected species of animals and is rapidly converting rare and protected bogland into commercial forests.

There was a time when you had to wear open-toed sandals to even think about such issues, let alone campaign on them. But now they are so popular that Haughey has to jump on the bandwagon.

Yet at the same time as he expressed his concern for the environment Haughey announced that talk about Dublin's smog problem was "an awful lot of rubbish". This dismissive attitude is more in keeping with the real Haughey than his conversion to "green" politics.

The government's record on environmental issues stinks. It has either ignored the problems or done too little too late, never willingly, always reluctantly, and only under pressure.

Take smog. Ever since 1981 Ireland has regularly breached EC limits on air pollution. As a result hundreds of people—the elderly and the sick—have died in Dublin's winter smogs. Sixty died in the winter of 1988-89 alone.

Dublin's smog is caused by burning ordinary household coal. Now it just so happens that the biggest coal merchant in the

country, John Reihill of CDL, is a big financial backer of Fianna Fail and he has made millions out of the spread of coal fires, as promoted by Fianna Fail throughout the 1960s and '70s. While Belfast began cleaning up its air twenty odd years ago, it was 1990 before the first steps were taken to restrict coal burning in Dublin.

Take water pollution. Dublin Bay is one of the most polluted pieces of coastline in Europe. An estimated 1,200 million cubic metres of raw sewage is pumped or dumped into the Irish Sea every year. That's enough to bury every house in Tallaght.

On top of this there is a constant flow of industrial discharge and agricultural effluent.

RADIATED

From the other side of the sea comes the radiated pollution from Sellafield, something successive Irish governments have been too lily livered to tackle in a meaningful way. Instead they grovel pathetically.

Not one single beach in the whole Dublin Bay area qualifies as safe under EC standards and only five out of nine in Co Dublin qualify.

This is the result of decades of neglect and indifference. And it poses a direct threat to public health.

The technology exists for the safe disposal of sewage, even for its conversion to energy, but government after government has failed to allocate the necessary resources to solve the problem.

It will be the middle of next year at the earliest before the Department of the Environment produces a "management plan". But even that won't tackle the problem directly, but will "address the question of the level of treatment that may be required". Sounds like we're in for a long wait.

The country's rivers and lakes are in an equally diabolical state. The Avoca river, once teeming with trout

and other fish, is now officially "dead" all the way from the abandoned copper mines to the sea at Arklow. Nothing lives in it, not even weed. And the old mine workings have been illegally pumped full of chemical and other toxic wastes from surrounding industries. The companies responsible have never been brought to book.

Industrial pollution entering the river Boyne has all but destroyed the mussel fishing industry in the estuary.

A major cause of river—and drinking water—pollution is the seepage of nitrates from agricultural fertilisers through the soil and into the water system. These chemicals are used to boost output—not to feed the starving of the world but to pile up in "mountains" and earn huge subsidies for the farmers.

Animal slurry and liquid silage are other major water pollutants from the land so that over a quarter of all Irish rivers and one third of all lakes are now seriously affected.

In 1989 there were nearly 150 reported "fish kills"—instances of severe pollution in the rivers, with the loss of around 50,000 fish.

Industrial pollution is a growing problem. In the 1960s major chemical companies were attracted to Ireland by a combination of cheap labour and few restrictions on how they disposed of their waste products. As a result companies such as Merk in Co Tipperary have laid waste to a wide area. A local farmer had to fight for years for recognition that it was chemical pollution from Merk that was causing his animals to be born with gross deformities.

Likewise Penn Chemicals in Cork. This company spews noxious gasses into the air and deadly waste into the sea. For years local residents have been up in arms about its negligence, but nothing is done

because nobody in authority wants to upset a major multinational.

Workers in Penn Chemicals are

prohibited—on the threat of being dismissed—from talking publicly about what they know to be a massive health hazard. Their union, SIPTU, grovels before a mighty employer.

And this is symptomatic of the problem. Desperate for industrial development and jobs, no-one wants to kick up too much of a fuss about pollution. The big companies hold us to ransom. The answer isn't to stop development but to subject it to rational planning and control.

Another area where Ireland is in breach of EC directives relates to the preservation of unique boglands, habitat for rare animals, birds and plants.

Vast tracts are being turned into commercial forests funded by private investors in a grant-aided and tax-free scheme which enables the rich to get richer by destroying the environment. At the present rate of destruction there will be no natural bogland left by 1994.

And the trees that are being grown are not environmentally worthwhile. They are simply the quickest growing species which will lay waste to whole areas.

In the preservation of endangered animal species Haughey's Ireland

ABYSMAL

not only has an abysmal record but seems to enjoy wallowing in it.

Since 1988, 2,500 badgers—a protected species—were snared and killed. In Ireland sporting licences to hunt otters have been granted for the past four years. No other country allows the hunting of this endangered species. Similarly, this winter the government decided to grant hunting licences for the shooting of a protected species of goose which winters in Wexford. Up to last December over 400 were shot for sport in their protected habitat.

The cynicism in Haughey's Green Presidency could scarcely be more transparent.

And this exposes a fundamental problem with green politics. The very fact that the likes of Haughey could declare himself environmentally concerned is an indication of

how open green politics are to abuse.

Despite its appearance of radicalism, environmental politics can be safely incorporated within the prevailing system and even turned to its advantage—witness the sudden surge of "environmentally friendly" products onto the market, from

PREMIUM

organic food to deodorants and biodegradable nappies, all selling at a premium, making even bigger profits and giving a new lease of life to capitalism.

Our environmental problems are not the inevitable result of industrialisation, as the most radical "greens" would have us believe.

The solution to pollution is not the destruction of industry, the halting of economic growth, the turning back of the clock to some imagined idyllic past when the air was clean, the water pure and the food wholesome. Pre-industrial society was a pretty barbaric place with open sewers, plagues and epidemics, and catastrophic famines and droughts, as we in Ireland know so well. There can be no turning the clock back.

The mistake is to imagine that industry and technology are free floating forces which by their very existence wreak havoc on the environment. In fact they are owned and controlled by a small class of people: it is these people who, by their greed, are wreaking havoc.

Modern methods of production have to be harnessed to serve the needs of everyone, not just to make profits for the few. Technology has to be used to restore and replenish the natural world, not speed its destruction.

And for this to happen the ownership and control of industry and technology have to be taken out of the hands of the few so it can serve the interests of all. But that's "red" politics, not "green", and the class war, unlike the struggle over the environment, cannot be fudged.

OLEG VORONIN, of the independent trade union movement in the USSR

The workers' movement still to have

OLEG VORONIN of Sotsprof, the Federation of Independent Socialist Trade Unions in the USSR made a brief tour of Britain last month. He spoke at a weekend rally in London, on "The Future for Socialism". He talked to *Socialist Worker* and we began by asking—how was Sotsprof set up?



OLEG VORONIN—member of the Committee for a New Socialist Party

THERE HAS always been a great demand for independent trade unions in the Soviet Union, because the official trade unions do not defend workers' interests.

Those who set up Sotsprof were a few activists in the democratic movement—academic Sergei Khramov, engineer Lev Volovik and a worker in a footwear factory, Valeri Korolev. They tried to set up unions that would fight for workers.

They announced themselves as a coordinating committee for the Federation of Independent Socialist Trade Unions (Sotsprof).

It was not set up like a usual trade union in which a local organisation is established and then the leadership chosen by the rank and file. Here the leadership announced itself in order to be able to legalise independent workers' organisations.

The Soviet constitution says that to set up a trade union organisation you don't need to register with the state—you only need to register with a higher trade union organisation.

So the coordinating committee announced itself as such an organisation.

For the first few months of its existence all it did was stamp papers and thereby legalise newly arising independent unions.

Where the state interfered with this legalisation process Sotsprof hired independent solicitors to travel around the country and conduct court cases against the state for breaking the constitution.

What sort of groups have joined?

ONE OF the first organisations to join was an independent union of Moscow footwear and clothing workers.

Then an independent organisation of students at Moscow University was set up and joined Sotsprof.

Also an independent organisation of intellectuals joined—independent sociologists, historians, solicitors, journalists, even artists.

Still, in the spring of last year Sotsprof only numbered 6,000 members.

But in the summer, immediately after the miners' strike in the Donbass and the Kuzbass, Sotsprof organisations were set up in these regions. In November, at the famous strike at Vargashorskaya pit, Lev Volovik succeeded in setting up Sotsprof in the Vorkuta coalfield.

Just in the last few months a union of truck drivers in Moscow, a union of refrigeration workers on the railways and a union of officers in the Soviet army—Shield—have joined Sotsprof.

So now there are about 30 organisations in Sotsprof, numbering about 60,000 members.

The first congress of Sotsprof took place in Moscow on 17 and 18 February, at which the leadership was widened. I don't know how many delegates arrived, but we were expecting about 300 from around the country.

Have these unions been built by strikes?

IT IS not just through strikes that unions join Sotsprof. The refrigeration workers on the railways, for example, came to Sotsprof for help during negotiations with the ministry of transport.

Sotsprof organised independent expertise on the question of workers' conditions and found that at no less than 60 points the labour law was being broken by the employers.

We opened a court case against the ministry but the ministry refused to back down, so Sotsprof threatened a strike of the refrigeration workers on the Moscow-Leningrad railway. That threat forced the ministry to yield.

We won an increase in wages, a reduction in the pensionable age and a whole series of measures to do with safety at work.

Through putting pressure on the administration, student Sotsprof at Moscow University managed to win the reinstatement of several students who had been expelled for political activity.

As soon as the miners' strikes broke out, Sotsprof activists went to the strike towns and helped the workers formulate their political and economic demands.

We camped out on the central squares in the towns where the miners were camped—slept with them, ate with them—and agitated for Sotsprof. As soon as the strikes were over, Sotsprof organisations sprung up in the pits.

Are other organisations growing too?

INDEPENDENT trade unions are springing up without Sotsprof's help.

For example, in Leningrad there is an independent union called Nezavisimost (Independence). There is another in Leningrad called Spravedlivost (Justice), and another called Independence in Novosibirsk, Siberia.

In the Ukraine there is an independent union organised by anarcho-syndicalists.

People are joining these unions, but Sotsprof is by far the biggest.

Very few political organisations have links with the workers' movement. In fact the miners, during their strikes, threw out representatives of the liberals. In the Kuzbass, the miners gave the representative of the journal *Glasnost* a black eye.

They threw out representatives of Democratic Union too. They just wouldn't listen to them.

What attitude does Sotsprof take to the events in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan?

I HAVE taped interviews with Armenian and Azerbaijani eye-witnesses to what happened in Baku. They support our view that the events which began on 13 January with pogroms in the Armenian quarters were inspired by the local authorities and by the KGB.

Agents of the local party apparatus and the KGB incited Azerbaijani refugees from Armenia, who live in the most appalling conditions.

Then they used these events as a pretext to bring in tanks to smash the Azerbaijani national front, which would have swept the board against the Communist Party in the elections on 4 March.

They arrested the leaders of the Azerbaijan national front and also simultaneously arrested all the leaders of the Armenian nationalist movement in the Karabakh.

So now not only are the leaders of the Azerbaijan national front and the democratic movements in general demanding the withdrawal of the troops and tanks but so is the Armenian nationalist movement.

Democratic forces organised a meeting between representatives of the Azerbaijani and Armenian nationalist movements recently in Riga. They were able to find common ground on a number of points, with the exception of Nagorno Karabakh.

As concerns events in Tajikistan, they began after I arrived in England.

But I can't believe that they are inter-ethnic. I can't believe they are nationalist conflicts.

The comment by Gorbachev on British television and the comments of British analysts amaze me. They talk about nationalist conflict, but they don't say which nationalities are involved.

How can you talk about nationalist conflicts when the people are storming the headquarters of the Communist Party? Does that mean Communist Party members form a separate nationality?

I think we are talking about a mass movement of unemployed youth. Unemployment in central Asia runs at about 8 percent.

British socialists argue that one reason trade unionists should oppose the British Army in Ireland is because the techniques used there will be used in Britain too. Do you see a similar reason for opposing the troops in Baku and Tajikistan?

I LOOK at the situation in Northern Ireland and the Caucasus and they are mirror



TENS OF thousands marched in Moscow

images of one another.

In my view Gorbachev is preparing for the introduction of a state of emergency throughout the country by trying it out in separate republics.

His policies are more and more tending towards the use of violence against the population.

If Gorbachev really wanted to reduce the tension in the Caucasus, he could have put troops on the borders between Azerbaijan and Armenia a year ago to break the rail blockade of the Karabakh by Azerbaijan and to break the blockade of Nakhichevan by the Armenians.

This would have avoided the violence of sending tanks into Baku. A year ago Gorbachev could have done something about it and he didn't.

It is a turning point. Now the state will use troops and tanks against the mass movement.

What is the likelihood of Gorbachev surviving, and what effect will the elections have on the situation?

GORBACHEV CAN survive for the near future.

The elections will not immediately influence his situation—because they are local elections, elections to regional councils and the higher soviet of the republics.

But if Yeltsin wins the vote in Sverdlovsk and then wins the election for president of the Russian Republic—and it is highly likely he

will win—that will create difficulties for Gorbachev.

The gap between Gorbachev and the people is growing. Many people still respect him, but very few people like him.

As for Yeltsin and the liberals, certain cases—where they support general democratic demands—play a progressive role.

The election of Yeltsin as president of the Russian Republic would be a real step forward.

But at the same time there is polarisation taking place between the people and the liberals. The liberals—united in the parliamentary opposition—hardly have a structure in the mass movement.

Their forces consist in the effective control of the means of mass communication and the illusions that remain among people their policies.

Financial appeal for Sotsprof

The infant trade union movement in the USSR is desperately short of funds for such simple things as office and printing equipment. They urgently require money to extend their organising drive. Raise collections in your college/workplace. Get the support of your union branch.

Further details: Sotsprof Appeal c/o14 Glengariff Parade, Dublin 7
Send all donations to Matt Merrigan, Treasurer, 24 Crotty Avenue, Dublin 12.

nt trade union movement in the USSR, speaks...

Workers' movement has still to have a say



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Their forces consist in their effective control of the means of mass communication and the illusions that remain among people in their policies.

For example, the official press is effectively now in the hands of the liberals. Very few people read *Pravda* and even fewer believe it, whereas many people read *Ogonyok* and believe it.

Can Gorbachev pull the various factions of the bureaucracy together?

FACED WITH a mass movement the ruling groups in the regions and at the centre will unite, but not in the Caucasus or the Baltic.

I very much doubt that he will be able to unite with the nationalist bureaucracies. They have their own interests.

He could unite with the right in the bureaucracies, but a move to the right for him is problematic. He is a man of the centre. He plays on the contradictions between the different ruling groups and he does it very well. While he continues to do it he will remain in power.

How big a danger is the right?

THE DANGER of the right does exist. In the western newspapers it is linked with the organisation Pamyat.

But Pamyat as a united organisation does not exist. Under this name there are five smaller organisations and three larger ones, all of which are at each others' throats.

What is frightening is not necessarily Pamyat but the forces that lie behind, within the KGB and within the party apparatus.

Very worrying has been the establishment of a network of military patriotic clubs for youth. These are in the main led by Afghanisthan veterans.

Activists of the central committee of the Komsomol are trying to create a fusion of these clubs.

It's also worrying that the United Front of Workers, which has real support among unskilled workers, is linked with the right wing press.

We in Sotsprof and the new socialist party underestimated the strength of the United Front of Workers. Now we are having to work inside this organisation in order to split bits from it.

Tell us about the new socialist party.

A NEW socialist party as a united organisation still does not exist.

Preparations are going ahead to found one and we are hoping to have the founding conference by the end of this year.

There are committees for a new socialist party in about ten cities and numbering a few hundred members. We see ourselves as part of Sotsprof.

The growth of the party depends on two things. Firstly, there is the development of the mass movements—the mass strike movements.



"WE DEMAND the registration of Sotsprof candidates" says the placard. Sotsprof members in Moscow Campaign to be allowed to stand in the elections

Mass strikes will take place whether we want them or not in the spring or summer of this year. In these circumstances we think the most politicised and conscious workers will join the socialist party.

The second thing is the situation in the Communist Party, which as a united organisation no longer exists. There are many platforms and factions.

Our comrades were among the founding members of the Democratic Platform within the Communist Party.

At the party's forthcoming congress the chances of a victory for the Democratic Platform are very small. Most likely it will suffer a defeat and some of its members will undoubtedly leave and come to us.

Also there is the disintegration of the young communist league, the Komsomol.

Our comrades are active within the Democratic Fraction of the Komsomol and working to create a Federation of Socialist Youth which will be part of the structure of the new socialist party.

Why does Sotsprof describe itself as a socialist trade union?

WE ARE socialists because of our basic demands—which are for workers' self management, collective ownership of the means of production, democratic planning from below.

Only with the fulfilment of these three demands could we allow the establishment of a socialist market system in the Soviet Union—I emphasise, not a capitalist market, not the sort of market that the parliamentary opposition wants, but a socialist market.

Among workers the idea that socialism is dead is not popular. It is popular among the middle class and intellectuals.

The mass of workers simply don't understand what real socialism could be.

How can these demands be achieved?

WE WORK inside and with the workers' movement. We help it and we bring our ideas into the movement.

We will conduct a democratic struggle for power. This might mean taking part in elections—it might mean mass strikes. There may be other means.

But we will not contest power through armed struggle. We are categorically against violence because it can only provoke more violence from the state.

We are prepared to repulse the state's violence, but to appeal for violence now would be political suicide.

Why do you use the word market?

WE UNDERSTAND that taking any of these measures separately—workers' self management, collective ownership, democratic planning—can't work. They immediately turn into their opposites.

For example, collective ownership of the means of production is as nothing on its own because workers just become toys in the hands of management.

These measures have to be taken together to form a socialist market. It is not a market in the traditional meaning of the word.

A machine can't work without oil. So the trade and financial relationships have to be oiled by some mechanism, and this mechanism we call a market.

Many on the left in the West are pessimistic about the USSR because they identify with Gorbachev. You clearly do not. Are you optimistic?

IN MY opinion Gorbachev is very successfully strengthening the solidarity among the ruling groups of East and West and working against the solidarity of workers.

I am an optimist because I believe the mass workers' movement has still to have its say.

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Should Porn be censored?

PORNOGRAPHY is a worldwide, multi-billion dollar industry. It is an industry dominated by a dozen porn barons with a revenue calculated at between five and ten billion dollars annually.

The growth of the porn industry is part of the general development of colour magazines and videos. It is also linked to the increasing view of sex as a commodity—something which can be bought, sold—or stolen.

The vast majority of women view this growth with alarm, fear and great anger. Because pornography shows women, at best, as passive sex objects waiting to be fucked, at worst as bits of bodies, hunks of meat, no more than holes waiting to be filled.

It is right that women—and men—should react to porn with anger and disgust. Because it presents a very important, very special part of our lives—our sexuality—in a warped and distorted way.

Does pornography go further than that? Does it invite men, incite men, to rape?

This is the single most important question which has to be answered by those on both sides of the growing debate on the Left about whether porn should be banned by law.

Socialists have always argued against state censorship because experience has shown that it is the likes of *The Joy of Sex* or *Gay News* which suffer under censorship laws, not the girly mags or the porn videos which continue to thrive underground. But if porn does cause rape then the argument in favour of censorship would be greatly strengthened.

All pornography is not the same. While it is all insulting and degrading to women, over 90 percent of porn depicts routine sex. Even the most ardent advocates of the "porn leads to rape" argument agree that it is violent porn which is suspect and less than 10 percent of porn portrays violent sex.

So what is the evidence that porn leads to rape? A 1970 US presidential commission on obscenity and pornography concluded that the evidence "casts considerable doubt on the thesis that erotica is a determinant of either the extent or nature of individuals' habitual sexual behaviour".

EVIDENCE

The last major UK survey, by the 1979 Williams Committee, found that evidence for a link between porn and violence against women was "too weak to be convincing".

In 1986, the US Attorney General's Commission concluded that there is a link between aggressive pornography and violence against women.

However, researchers Donnerstein and Malmouth (whose findings are used by those arguing for bans on pornography) found that while sex films had no impact on men at all, the level of men's aggression against women



did rise after seeing violent rape scenes.

But only on the condition that the woman was shown to enjoy the rape and when the male viewer had already been made to feel angry by a woman.

These research findings ignore two important points.

First, it is surely the violence not the sex which arouses aggression in men—and it's censorship of the sex, not the violence, that is sought.

More importantly, in real life women do not in any way enjoy rape. In real life they fight back, argue, scream or just cry quietly. In any case, no rapist is left in doubt.

The surveys and commissions, then, provide no evidence of porn causing rape.

There is a lot of anecdotal evidence—from rapists, rape victims and psychiatrists—which shows that porn does cause some men to rape. But there is also a lot of evidence to indicate that an interest in religion, especially in the Bible, causes some men to rape.

And if "pornography is the theory, rape the practice" as the feminist slogan goes, how do we explain rape in earlier societies before porn was available?

And how do we explain the monstrous levels of violence against women in countries like Iran where porn is not just banned and driven underground but where there are horrific penalties for anyone found with porn in their possession?

The explanation lies in the position of women in society.

Violence against women is greatest in societies where the position of women is at its lowest. And it is to the oppression of women in class society that we have to look to find the cause of rape—not to pornography or to other manifestations of oppression.

So there is a link between rape and pornography. But it is not that one is produced by

the other. It is that both are products of the oppression of women under capitalism.

Looked at in this way, the argument for state censorship collapses. As long as women are oppressed, the worst aspects of oppression can be driven underground, but not wiped out.

And by approving the state's right to ban offensive literature or films, we allow it the space to ban the lesbian and gay films and magazines, the pro-women sex manuals which have begun to appear, etc.

Books and magazines are already censored in the South under the 1967 Censorship of Publications Act. And what has the effect of this censorship been?

Certainly no-one could argue that women in the South suffer less sexual violence than women in the North where pornographic magazines are sold openly in newsagents.

It was under this censorship law that the articles on abortion were banned recently from the Irish editions of *Company* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines.

So the reality of censorship in the 26 Counties supports the socialist arguments against supporting censorship by the state.

The way to fight pornography and rape is not to strengthen the powers of the state but to strengthen the position of women in society and so undermine the reasons porn exists.

In Ireland at present that means standing up to the attempts of SPUC and Family Solidarity to push women back into the home.

It means taking every opportunity for the mass distribution of information on abortion in defiance of SPUC's injunctions.

And it means supporting every struggle of working women, North and South, for better pay and conditions.

■ GORETTI HORGAN

OUR HISTORY

Socialists and the Easter Rising

THERE are many people in Ireland today, including some on the Left, who find the whole topic of the Easter Rising distasteful.

There are others, particularly Nationalists in the North, but also including Leftists, who regard the Rising as the most glorious episode in all Irish history and won't hear a word said against it.

Both these attitudes are wrong.

The Rising was an attempt to assert the right of a colonised country to independence. It was a significant strike against the biggest imperialist country in the world at the time. It was a mighty blow against the World War in which millions of working class people were being slaughtered.

For these reasons, all socialists should see themselves as being on the same side as the rebels who rose up.

The SWM has nothing but scorn for those who call themselves Leftists today but who argue, in effect, that it would have been better if Irish nationalism had stayed within constitutional bounds. Such people, in effect, offer retrospective support to the politics of John Redmond—who in 1916 was still drumming up support for the British imperial war effort.

It's worth remembering that during this period the politics of constitutional nationalism sent far more young men out to die than were sent out by the politics of unconstitutional nationalism.

So much for those who argue against honouring the Rising on the ground that they are against the "cult of violence". What they mean is that they are against the "cult" of violence directed against the State.

Then, as now, they have no problem with violence directed by the State.

And this, of course, is the real reason for their distaste for 1916. They are afraid that commemorating 1916 gives credibility to the Provos.

And they are right. The Provos' arguments fit in pretty well with the tradition of 1916.

The people who occupied the GPO were going to war for an Irish Republic without any electoral mandate from the people. It's hard to praise them as heroes while at the same time denouncing the Provos as the essence of evil.

In this context, those who denounce both the Easter Rising and the Provos—Conor Cruise O'Brien, for example—are more logical than the likes of Fianna Fail. O'Brien might be consistently wrong, but at least he's consistent.

At the same time, it's nonsense for socialists to be uncritical of the Rising. The Rising was not a social-

by EAMONN McCANN

James Connolly: soft on nationalism; Pearse: deadly serious; below: Irish Citizen Army: no manifesto



ist affair. It was a nationalist affair. Our criticism is based on the fact that nationalist ideas aren't designed to serve the interests of working class people but to advance "the nation".

REGARD

There are some who regard themselves as socialists but who nevertheless argue that the proper way to advance the working class struggle at the time was to take up the cause of the nation. They cite the presence of Connolly among the 1916 leaders.

They also mention Lenin's denunciation of those within the Marxist movement internationally who attacked the Rising as a "putsch".

To take the second point first: Lenin's argument was that the Rising represented a real revolt by an oppressed people, it wasn't just a small group trying to seize power; that such revolts were inevitable as colonised nations strove for independence, and that socialists should be on the side of these revolts.

He did not argue that socialists in Ireland should be uncritical of the

Rising, and certainly never suggested that Irish socialists should dissolve themselves into any nationalist organisation, however militant.

His writings on nationalist struggles elsewhere—particularly Poland—leave no room for doubt that he would have been ferocious in his denunciation of any such idea.

However, it was Connolly's involvement in 1916, and his execution as one of the leaders, which is most frequently used as an argument for uncritical socialist support for the Rising.

Connolly was soft on nationalism. In his very first pamphlet, *Erin's Hope*, for example, he had argued that a form of primitive communism had existed in Ireland prior to the Conquest. Therefore, he went on, there was a socialist element contained within the idea of an Ireland in which the Conquest had been overturned.

This was quite untrue. No historian of the Left, Right or Centre would now defend Connolly's account of Irish society prior to the Conquest.

Yet the conclusion which Connolly drew from his erroneous description of Gaelic Ireland—that there is something intrinsically socialistic about Irish nationalism—

is still defended, particularly by people around the Left fringes of the Republican movement. They find the idea attractive because it "excuses" them from having to break with nationalist politics.

Because of the way he looked at Irish nationalism, Connolly came to believe that the Republicans in the Volunteer leadership and the IRB could be tugged over into socialism and that there was no need to argue that they should break with Republicanism.

From shortly after the outbreak of the First World War his main argument against the Volunteer leadership was not that they weren't socialists but that they weren't sufficiently serious about being Republicans.

POLEMICAL

Thus his main polemical fire was focused on their failure—as he saw it—to make serious preparations for a Rising.

Once he was convinced—by Pearse, Ceannt and McDermott at the beginning of 1916—that one faction of the Volunteer leadership was deadly serious, he

effectively became one of them.

In the run-up to the Rising Connolly issued no separate socialist propaganda drawing a distinction between the ideas of the pure nationalists who just wanted "Ireland free" and the socialists who wanted Irish workers to win.

Although he was general secretary of the ITGWU at the time, the union played no role in the Rising. The rights and wrongs of insurrection were widely discussed in Ireland at the time, but seem not to have been raised within the union at all.

The Citizen Army issued no separate manifesto. Connolly put his name to the Proclamation, a distinctly nationalist document which makes no reference of any kind to the working class—but puts the enterprise "under the protection of the most high God..."

In these matters, Connolly was wrong.

To say this is not to offer an answer to the specious question: was Connolly right to join the Rising?

Given Connolly's analysis of Irish history and of Irish nationalism, and given the desperate situation he found himself in in 1916, the defeat of the great 1913-1914 lockout through the scabbing of the TUC still fresh in the memory, Dublin workers joining the British Army in droves, the vast majority of the socialist parties of Europe actively engaged in supporting the capitalist world war, given all this it was inevitable that Connolly would join in with the only people around who were willing to fight against the imperialism which was crushing Europe.

Connolly's presence certainly meant that socialism, in a sense, was included in the Rising. But this did not mean that socialist aims and ideas were added to the aims and ideas of the Rising. Indeed, the socialism was contained within nationalism.

One result was that when the tide of public opinion turned and mass support surged towards the Rising, this was expressed as an influx of support into the Sinn Féin party led by the right wing nationalist Arthur Griffith.

It was not expressed by support flowing towards any socialist groups.

The 1916 Rising was a fight against imperialism. Then and now we are in favour of a fight against imperialism.

The reason we make strong criticisms of the way the fight was conducted then, and of the ideology of those who led it, is that there are conclusions to be drawn for the present and future fight.

Socialist Workers Movement Annual Conference

Dublin, 20, 21 and 22 April 1990

The SWM is holding its annual conference in April when the organisation will meet to discuss the political situation at home and abroad and to decide policy for the year ahead.

Readers of Socialist Worker who support the general politics of the SWM who would like to know more about us are invited to write in for observer tickets for the weekend.

For an observer ticket write to: National Secretary, SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

Below is an outline of the agenda for the weekend:

Time:	Topic:	Introduced by:
Friday Night		
8.00pm	Socialists and the revolutions in Eastern Europe	Chris Bambery (SWP)
Saturday Morning		
9.30-10.30	Motions on Eastern Europe	
10.30-11.30	The Left in Ireland	Kieran Allen
11.45-12.45	The Environment	Dominic Carroll
Saturday Afternoon		
2.00-3.00	The fight against the Programme for National Recovery	Paul O'Brien
3.15-4.45	Building a socialist current in the North	Eamonn McCann
6.30-7.45	Women and the fight against SPUC	Goretti Horgan
Sunday Morning		
10.30-11.30	South Africa, Nicaragua: The relevance of the theory of Permanent Revolution today	Chris Bambery (SWP)
11.45-12.45	Student work	Ritchie McVeigh
Sunday Afternoon		
1.45-3.15	Perspectives for the organisation over the coming year	Marnie Holborow
3.15-4.00	Elections of National Committee; Motions outstanding	
4.00-4.15	Concluding session	Hugh Friel

What we stand for

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

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

We begin from the proposition that what determines the nature of any society is the system by which its wealth is produced. In the system we live under, capitalism, production is geared to profit, not to human need. Among its inevitable features are poverty, war, racism and sexism. Capitalism cannot be destroyed and these evils thus eradicated by piecemeal reform. It can only be destroyed by revolutionary action by the class which creates all the wealth, the working class.

The machinery of the capitalist state - parliament, courts, army, police etc - is designed to protect the interests of the ruling capitalist class, not to regulate society in a neutral fashion. At most, parliament can be used sometimes, to make propaganda against capitalism. It cannot be used to smash capitalism. Only a workers' revolution can do that and establish a truly democratic society in which workers hold power directly through delegates elected from workplaces and areas and are re-callable and replaceable at any time by those who elect them.

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

This kind of socialism does not exist anywhere today. Workers do not have control in Russia, China, Cuba etc. Instead, power is held by a state-capitalist class. A workers' revolution is needed in these countries too.

We are against NATO and the Warsaw Pact and all weapons of mass destruction. We are for the right of all nations, East and West, to self-determination.

FOR AN END TO PARTITION

The Northern State was created by British imperialism in its own interests. Sectarianism and bigotry were built into it and will continue to exist for as long as the state exists.

The marginal privileges given to Protestant workers are just that: marginal. It is in the immediate interest of Protestant as well as Catholic workers to fight against their exploitation. It is in the interest of all Northern workers to unite against the state and aim at socialism in Ireland.

We support all forces struggling against imperialism and the Northern state, regardless of differences we may have with them.

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

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

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

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

FOR A FIGHT IN THE UNIONS

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

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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

Join us!

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.....



Defend Workers' Rights East and West

Demonstrate at European Heads Of States Meeting

28th April
Assemble 2.30pm outside
Dublin Castle

Organised by Sotsprof Solidarity Group

What's on: SWM meetings and activities

The Socialist Workers Movement is a growing organisation with branches around the country which meet regularly. Those who are interested in the politics of the SWM are invited to attend these meetings.

Belfast branch

Meets every Monday at 7.30 pm in Queen's University Students Union

Dublin Branch

Meets every Wednesday at 8 pm in the Bachelor Inn, O'Connell Bridge

Bray Branch

Meets every second Tuesday at 8 pm in Hibernian Inn, Marine Terrace

Kilkenny Branch

Meets every Tuesday in the Club House Hotel

Cork Branch

Meets every Tuesday at 8 pm in the Anchor Inn, George's Quay

Derry Branch

Meets every Tuesday at 8 pm in Dungloe Bar, Waterloo Street

Dundalk Branch

Meets every second Tuesday at 8 pm in ATGWU, Francis Street

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

REVIEWS

Telling lies about history

Film: *Glory*

ONE of the most common misconceptions held about the American Civil War is that it was fought to end slavery. Abraham Lincoln is portrayed almost as a saint.

In fact, the war between the states was a war between southern slave owners and northern industrialists for hegemony over the Federal government and to decide whether the new territories of the west would be "slave" or "free" states. Abolishing slavery where it already existed was never an issue at the start of the war. Black men were forbidden to join the Federal troops and the army had a policy of returning runaway slaves to their owners.

This attitude towards blacks only began to change when it became clear that the war would be a long and drawn out conflict. By 1862 the Union armies were suffering heavy losses and desertion was very high. It was these factors that prompted Lincoln and the Federal government to authorise the use of black troops in 1862 and pass the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.

EVIDENCE

Black soldiers joined the army by the thousands; Lincoln admitted at the end of the war that the north could not have won without black support and participation.

Glory, directed by Edward Zwick and starring Denzel Washington, Morgan Freeman and Matthew Broderick, tells the story of the 54th Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry—a regiment of black soldiers. What an appalling film this is!

Firstly, the film is boring,

meandering along for an hour without obvious intention. It eventually reaches a sort of a climax, glorifying the slaughter of the 54th in an unsuccessful attempt to take a Confederate stronghold.

By this point I was thoroughly disgusted. It is estimated that the mortality rate of blacks in the Civil War was up to 40 per cent higher than for white soldiers. This was due to the fact that black troops were deliberately used in battles where there was little or no hope of success. For this film to glorify this fact as a sign of the black soldiers' patriotism rather than the outright racism of the northern army is unforgivable.

Denzel Washington as the bitter ex-slave named Trip is the one well-developed character. He is the only person in the film who expresses any doubt as to what the war is about and what black soldiers will get for their trouble. So if you are a Denzel Washington fan that might enable you to stomach this crap, but otherwise give the film a miss.

■EVE MORRISON



Warm, friendly community

When pregnancy is a tragedy

Film, *Hush A Bye Baby*

IT IS fitting that the premiere of *Hush A Bye Baby* was shown in the same week as a jam-packed public meeting was held in Dublin on the issue of women having the right to information on abortion.

Because, ultimately, the film was about that exact topic, in its broadest sense—the right of people to have access to information, the right to know and make real choices from that knowledge.

The film showed that people, and specifically a fifteen year old pregnant teenager, do not have those

choices, as we are all too aware of in "christian" Ireland.

The film is set in a Catholic working class district of Derry city. The story is set around a group of four teenage girls and how they are coping with growing up—boyfriends, sexuality, periods, relationships with parents and so on, the usual problems that most teenagers encounter.

The impression is given of a warm, friendly (albeit suppressed) community, interspersed with the Derry wit, until Goretti, one of the four teenagers, realises she is pregnant by her boyfriend who has just been jailed for Republican activities.

The reality of this situation hits you like a brick. She is fifteen, still at school, her family would be horrified to

even think she would be sleeping with her boyfriend. She is in total despair.

She has nobody to talk to. Letters to her boyfriend are censored, so he is unaware of her situation. You get a real feeling of a no-hope situation.

You see how she tries to hide her pregnancy, wearing loose tops, burning sanitary towels (which are hidden by her mum at the back of a press, so the males of the household won't see them!) which she would normally have been using, and she even goes as far as trying to terminate the pregnancy by drinking a bottle of gin with a hot bath.

But ultimately you get the impression of a censored society where there was obviously no talk of contraceptives, where any discussion about sex or

sexuality was repressed by the Catholic Church.

In this regard, there are two very telling incidents. One is when she is at the Gaeltacht and is helping in the kitchen with the Bean an Ti.

A programme on the radio is discussing abortion. She listens avidly while the Bean an Ti is out of the room but has to change the station quickly when she returns and so misses the opportunity of gaining some knowledge.

The second incident is when she asks her friend if a miscarriage is the same as an abortion, in other words will she be punished if she miscarries.

She doesn't want the pregnancy or the baby, but there is no way out in holy Catholic Ireland, where the Catholic Church rules the roost. In fact, the Catholic Church looms large in this film.

The film is excellent. Without pointing it out, it shows the real villain to be the Catholic Church.

As this goes to press, the film is still being shown at the Academy in Dublin. If it is still on as you read this, go and see it.

■CREA RYDER

ALBUM REVIEW

Sinead O'Connor branching out

Album: *Sinead O'Connor: "Don't Want What I Haven't Got"*

LAST month saw the release of Sinead O'Connor's second album, "I Don't Want What I Haven't Got". As a follow up to her fabulous debut album, her new release shows Sinead maturing steadily but cautiously. The new recording pulls no big punches in terms of new fields of exploration, but at the same time it shows a greater understanding of the musical environment that Sinead finds herself in.

There is a sharp improvement in both production quality and direction compared to her first album. This shows itself in a much deeper and richer sound on the album as a whole.

Added to this there are some quite outstanding strings arrangements, particularly on "Feels So Different". The combination of these two gives the recording a somewhat celestial feel.

Musically the record is similar in style to "The Lion And The Cobra" in that there is a great divergence of influences. There are moody songs with large strings arrangements, upbeat songs with heavy guitar riffs and a wonderful version of "I Am Stretched On Your Grave".

In fact this track is one of the highlights of the album. A strong drum machine, with an extra portion of echo on Sinead's voice and an Arabic-sounding fiddle, gives the impression that the song would not sound out of place in a North African bazaar.

The album is strewn with very intimate and highly personal lyrics, dealing mainly with human relationships. However, Sinead also has a "social conscience" which is highlighted on the track "Black Boys On Mopeds".

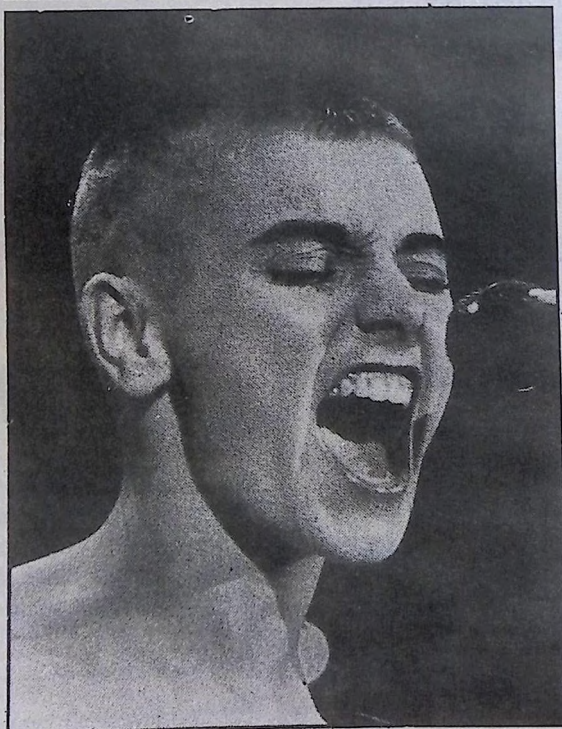
This track deals with the impact that ten years of Thatcher government has had on Britain. "England's not the mythical land of Madame George and roses/It's the home of police who kill black boys on mopeds".

It's quite easy to see from this that Sinead has a clear understanding of contemporary British society, but like most rock artists with a "social conscience" she offers no solution. In fact in the next line she goes on to say, "...I love my boy and that's why I'm leaving".

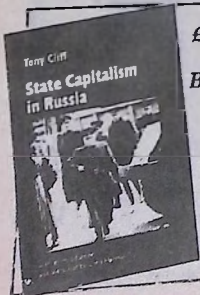
There is one other grey area on the album and that is the title track. The composition features Sinead singing a rather dull melody on her own. The track is also excessively long and tedious, while the lyrics are a bit too personal, making them a shade inaccessible.

On the whole the album is well balanced, with tracks such as "You Cause As Much Sorrow" and "The Last Day Of Our Acquaintance" which deserve a special mention for quality listening. But while the album is a great success already and will be one of the top albums of the year, don't expect too many hit singles.

■STUART SMITH



Sinead O'Connor: celestial feel



£5.95 from
SW
Books, PO
Box 1648
Dublin 8

Shifting over to the right

THE FALL-OUT from Eastern Europe has finally reached the Workers Party.

In a document published from the powerful Research Section of the party, Eoin Harris, the leading ideologue of the WP, argues that "the word 'socialism' is now a brake on progress."

Harris argument is simple and crude. 1989 brought the death of "socialism" in Eastern Europe.

Moreover, as Harris points out, "we do not know how much more dirt there is to come". His own hero, Gorbachev might after all be exposed as nothing more than a trendy Stalinist tyrant.

ELECTION

The WP, therefore have a problem. Socialism, Harris says "will certainly lose the next election for us. But if we are sane people and not dogmatists we will not let it do any such thing."

The alternative is to turn to social democracy which means accepting the market place and striving for the goals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

Socialism should now be dissolved into the ideals of the French Revolution Democracy is the issue on which the WP should mobilise. According to Harris, this will indeed mean returning to genuine Marxism.

Harris argues that the WP need to oust the Labour Party from the right. This will mean contemplating coalition with—although it is not explicitly mentioned—Fine Gael.

According to Harris, "we should move up midfield as a mass party of social democracy and take as much left, liberal left centre space as possible, recognising that the Labour vote will come to us eventually, and faster if it looks like we can take office. We should remind ourselves that coalition depends, and is not a principle".

ENTREPRENEURS

These are just the bare outlines of Harris's main argument. His document is filled with disgraceful attacks on "dole spongers", left wingers who are "soft" on law and order, and the closed shop.

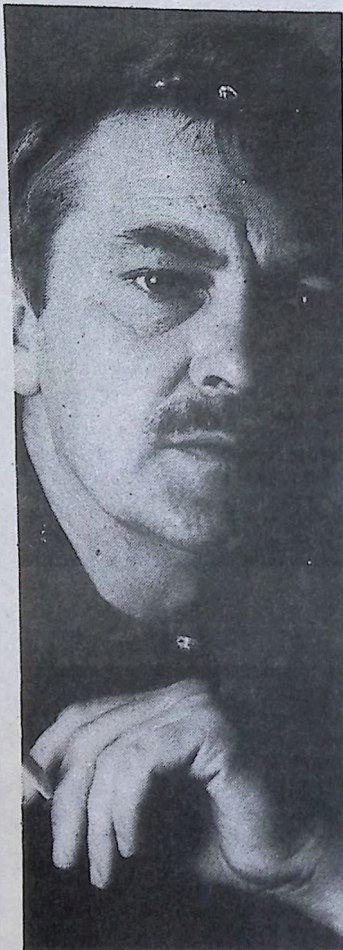
There is praise for "entrepreneurs", for liberal Afrikaners (South Africa's progressive Unionists) and for the materialist theory of genetics! Throughout there is a hatred for the genuine left.

Harris argument is dishonest and wrong on all counts.

There is no mention of the fact that the WP backed the Eastern European regimes to the hilt. The WP denounced the revolts in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 as "CIA inspired".

The WP continues to back the North Korean dictator today. Organisations such as the SWM who attacked these regimes as state capitalist were denounced as splitters.

Strangely, Harris has to admit the



Montrose guru Eoin Harris

truth of the "Trot" argument. He claims that in Eastern Europe, "a ruling class with military means to stay in power walked away to die".

Leaving aside the absurd notion of the bureaucracy committing collective suicide, we are left with the proposition that socialism operated in Eastern Europe with a "ruling class" in command.

If "socialism" was about a society based on the most barbaric sacrifices to benefit a "ruling class", then it should have been buried a long time ago.

Fortunately there is a different tradition that Harris and his friends in WP have always sneered at—a democratic, internationalist vision of socialism based on workers control.

Harris's political cynicism is also based on condescending view of the working class. Here is his estimate of what workers think:

"They hate ... the closed shop for trade unions. They don't believe in the politics of begrugery. They admire people like Smurfit, Goodman, Tony O'Reilly. Only Trots think otherwise."

There is not a word about the struggles of workers where ideas are open to change. Nor about the hundreds of workers who have lost their jobs from the asset stripping of our three native Irish entrepreneurs. Workers are simply presumed to lap up the ideological mush-mash that is pumped out by Harris and his colleagues in RTE.

It is this attitude of the WP leadership that explains their most base electoral opportunism.

If workers can never see through the rip-off merchants such as Tony O'Reilly—who the WP have exposed very well in their publication—then the only alternative is to engage in the politics of manipulation.

In the end, these politics come from the WP's strategy of turning their back working class struggle. The party in the past has attacked strikers, such as the oil workers as "ultra-left", and refused to support Waterford Glass led strikes against the PAYE system.

Harris tries to recruit Marx for his argument that socialism can simply be dissolved into a fight for democracy. He uses Marx's writings on the Paris Commune 1871—the first major workers revolt in history.

According to Harris, Marx praised three features of the Paris Commune: Universal Suffrage, An Open Society, the Separation of Church and State. This is a rather short list.

In fact Marx pointed to the abolition of a standing army, the election system whereby delegates could be re-called by their constituents, the payment of all public representatives at workman's wages, the election of judges—as features of workers democracy.

DEMOCRACY

Marx point was precisely that there was a difference between the present bourgeois form of democracy and the extension of democratic rights that came with a workers state.

Harris was forced to resign from the Workers Party because of the bluntness of his arguments. Significantly, the issue was his lack of party discipline in publicising his arguments outside the party channels.

But the party leader, de Rossa has already taken much of his points on board in his last Ard Fheis speech. The bankruptcy of the WP leadership's politics are exposed in Harris document.

Genuine socialists in the WP who have been shocked with the revelations that have come out in the current split need to look a lot further than Harris. The whole tradition of the party in attacking those who resist the British Army as "fascists" and in defending absolutely the institutions of the Southern state has led to the cul de sac.

The rest of the WP leadership share the same political methods as Harris. An alternative to the drift to social democracy will therefore also involve a battle with the political methods that the WP has espoused for the last decade and a half.

■ KIERAN ALLEN

For information on abortion phone: 01 794700

O'Reilly's Glass blackmail

THE £100 million "rescue package" for Waterford Glass, put together by multi-millionaire Tony O'Reilly—boss of the Fitzwilliam Group—and New York investment bankers Morgan Stanley demands still more sacrifices from the workers.

Dr E P Galvin, Chief Executive of Waterford Crystal sent a letter to 2,300 workers threatening that the new consortium would run off with the valuable Waterford brand, closing the plants.

"If we can't get it right, the brand may survive, but we may not," he wrote.

He demanded further belt-tightening from the workforce.

ATGWU District Officer Walter Cullen welcomed the investment in the Group. He pointed out that only 20 per cent of the

Group's losses for 1989 could be attributed to production of crystal.

Cullen said £6 million was lost in stock write-offs and customs losses last year. Redundancies of skilled glass workers had created production bottle necks last year and the company had re-employed many of those stood down on contract.

The union position going in to negotiations for further rationalisation is weakened by two factors.

First, last year's negotiated rationalisation resulted in a three year wage freeze, workers paying their own pension contributions and extending the retirement age of workers.

These concessions will save the management an estimated £8.8 million on top of redundancies.

And faced with the latest crisis in the firm instead of organising resistance, the union side has commissioned a report into the health of the company from



O'Reilly's happy

financial adviser, Dr Bob Bryer.

Instead of conceding the principle of negotiating further give-backs, the union should be preparing for a fight to save all jobs and conditions in the company.

■ FACT: Paddy Hayes, the man who closed Fords in Cork, who resigned as chief executive last year received a massive golden handshake at the same time as the company was demanding more belt-tightening from the workers.

Figures just released show that Hayes along with other directors received over £2 million in 1989.



Sunbeam workers march in Cork

Sunbeam sit in to save jobs

ONE HUNDRED and fifty knitting workers began a sit-in of the Sunbeam knitwear factory in Cork last month following the appointment of a receiver.

A large demonstration of local support demanded government action to keep the plant open and save the threatened 450 jobs.

Chairman of the Shop Stewards committee and SIPTU member Jim Cronin said all the workers supported the continuation of the sit-in.

Sixty jobs have already been lost in the most vulnerable section of the firm which lost £250,000 in 1989. Workers point out that

this is a drop in the ocean compared with the over £100 million IDA hand outs to firms in Ireland for last year.

Cork SWM issued a leaflet in support of the occupation quoting a Sunbeam worker: "If we leave the occupation we're walking over to the labour exchange for the rest of our lives... and tomorrow it could be your turn."

The leaflet pointed out that while local right wing TDs like Wallace, Allen and Quill have claimed to support the Sunbeam

workers, they did nothing to stop Fords, Dunlops and other firms pulling out. And they didn't manage to save the North Infirm-ary either.

The workers instead must continue the occupation and demand nationalisation if necessary and seek the support of other workers.

"To hold out, the workers will need help, particularly since they're not getting strike pay. The support the Liebert strikers have received is a good example of what can be done with collections being organised in other workplaces. The same should be done for Sunbeam."

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

Haughey's bonanza profits for the rich



Millionaires together: Liam Lawlor, Haughey and Tom Roche

THE IRISH rich need a shot in the arm before all hell breaks out in the Single Europe of 1992.

And Fianna Fail are getting ready to hand over the goodies.

A report in the bosses magazine *Business and Finance* has revealed that the Fianna Fail/Progressive Democrat coalition have drawn up plans to sell off semi-state industry.

Targets for a sell-off include: Irish Life, Irish Steel, Irish Sugar and possibly Aer Lingus in the longer term.

The rich are already whetting their appetite at the sell off of Irish Life.

Here is a company that makes

a £20 million surplus each year. At the moment the Irish state only takes a half million and the rest is ploughed back to the policy holders.

With privatisation all that will change. A whopping dividend will be available to the rich.

Fianna Fail argue that privatisation will lead to greater efficiency.

REDUNDANCIES

Really? Ask the workers of Waterford Glass about the efficiency of capitalism. Waterford Glass spent thousands on redundancy payments—and then found that they had to go back and recruit more workers be-

cause they had sacked too many.

In fact Irish Life was established in the 1930s after three private companies in the insurance business went bankrupt.

The talk of efficiency is only a cover for hand-outs to the rich. The Green Tories in Fianna Fail know how to look after their friends.

Before privatising Irish Life, the Fianna Fail/Progressive Democrats Coalition paid out £260,000 just for a report into the company. The money went to National City Brokers—a company with close links to Haughey personally.

At the end of March, Fianna Fail appointed Hugh O'Flaherty to the powerful and lucrative

position of Supreme Court judge. O'Flaherty spoke on Fianna Fail election platforms in Kerry last year.

He says, "I have not been a card-carrying party member for some years but nobody could have any doubts about my politics."

The Green Tories know how to look after *their* class.

What a tragedy we are lumbered with a group of jackasses in the ICTU who preach cowardice and retreat.

Instead of fighting Fianna Fail, they have sold us the Programme for National Recovery.

It is high time we built a socialist organisation in this country that fights for our class as well as Fianna Fail fights for their's.

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