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BRITISH RAID SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OFFICES

MASON ATTACKS OPPOSITION PRESS

On Wednesday the 2nd of August a joint force of RUC and Army staged a massive raid on the Connolly Bookshop in Belfast's Andersonstown area, the main production office for the 'Socialist Republic' paper. The raid occurred just as production of this edition of the paper was beginning. It lasted from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. and during the course of it the paper's editor, John McNulty, and a member of the editorial board, John McGeown, were arrested and taken to Fort Monagh army post. At the conclusion of the raid the shop was stripped bare of all books, papers, documents, correspondence and office equipment. Comrades McNulty and McGeown were released after



INTERIOR OF THE BOOKSHOP AFTER SOME OF THE MATERIAL WAS 'RETURNED' four hours and a proportion of the material taken was returned the next day - but so badly damaged as to be a complete write-off. All the shop's files and correspondence are still being held.

We in PD/MSR see the

**Continued on
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Guns for the Guards?

There have been persistent calls recently for the arming of the Gardai and particularly for the establishment of an elite 'trouble-shooting' armed unit like the British Special Patrol Group. The excuse for all this has been the recent spate of bank robberies and the Minister for Justice, Gerry Collins has said the Government is considering the issue. Already they have used the same excuse to bring in jeep-loads of armed troops to escort security vans in Dublin.

The proposal for armed Gardai or an elite armed unit is very dangerous and should be fought hard by all workers and anti-imperialists. The police in any capitalist society are the agents of the ruling class and the South is no different. Any elite unit of the Gardai will be used firstly

against republicans and then (even without their guns) against strikers, protesting tenants, small farmers and demonstrations of any description. The British Special Patrol Group are regularly used against strikers as at Grunwick, and against black and Asian protesters.

These elite units quickly develop a right-wing neo-fascist ideology and in Ireland where they would get more excuses they would be quick to use their guns. There would soon be more summary executions of the type the SAS carry out in the 6-Counties - and the Southern Special Branch carried out in the late 1930s and during the war.

The Coalition Government tried to turn the South into a police state but the last election stopped them in their tracks. We must stop Fianna Fail from going in the same direction as they did in the 1930s.

DEBATE IN THE BELFAST WOMENS' GROUPS

One of the most welcome developments in the North in the last period has been the formation of an activist women's movement. In the last few months there has been a split in this movement between the Belfast Women's Collective and the Women Against Imperialism group. We believe that the issues raised are of importance to the whole Irish women's movement and to the socialist movement. In this issue we report on the split. In future issues we hope to take part in the debate around the issues raised by the split.

The Women Against Imperialism group formally split with the Belfast Women's Collective last month. In fact the group had been operating informally for the last couple of months. It has organised a number of activities in West Belfast, the most successful of these being the social on 'Women and Violence' in the Martin Forsythe Club, Turf Lodge. It also organised a meeting on women and the forthcoming International Tribunal on Britain's Presence in Ireland, support for the Noreen Winchester Campaign and sent speakers on a successful Scottish tour on the theme 'Women and Repression'. The group is in the process of setting up a Women's centre in Ballymurphy and has participated in a wide range of anti-repression activities including the Relatives Action Committee.

The actual split between the two groups came as a surprise to some people. This is because, on the surface at least, there is a large measure of agreement between the two groups - agreement on the link between women's oppression and British imperialism, agreement on the need to organise an autonomous women's movement to fight for women's liberation. The two groups however, would argue that this agreement covers deeper differences on how to go about building this movement.

They came to a head when the women who were mainly in the RAC and meeting in West Belfast decided that there were areas that they should concentrate on in order to establish a firm presence in the anti-unionist areas.

They explained this view in a leaflet produced for a joint meeting with the Belfast Women's Collective:

"The most advanced layers of working class women are in and around the anti-imperialist struggle and large sections are actively involved in the R.A.C. The very fact that they are involved in the R.A.C. and in

politics creates an atmosphere where it is possible to raise feminist issues... Because of this we do not see a women's movement being built outside of the anti-imperialist struggle and calls for building a working class women's movement outside of this are meaningless in the abstract... What we do believe is that the movement's nucleus and impetus will arise out of this process."



On the otherhand, the Belfast Women's Collective in an article in the latest Women's Action state:

"While we recognise the RAC campaign as the most important one in which large numbers of working class women are at present involved, we do believe that it is vital for our group to work on as wide a range of women's issues as possible - including those which may not initially meet with a big response because they challenge traditional, political and religious beliefs."

So, the question was not whether women's issues should be raised, but in what context. The decision to designate the women's group as anti-imperialist and to meet solely in West Belfast became the subject of much debate, as did working with the Republican Movement.

The proposal to have a joint paper which would reflect the activities of other women's groups in Belfast eg. Women's Aid was turned down by the Collective as they felt this would relegate them to the status of a mere umbrella group.

However, these debates are not simply whether or not to meet separately, have a joint paper, be called anti-imperialist socialist or otherwise, but are around the basic problems that historically divided Irish women. Bridging the traditional gap between feminist politics and women fighting in the anti-imperialist struggle will not happen overnight. Whether or not the consciousness of women in the RAC does mark a break from traditional republican attitudes and an openness to feminist ideas, whether or not a working class women's movement will develop primarily from within the anti-imperialist struggle, are questions around which discussion must be developed in the next period. Such discussions themselves will only begin to tackle the difficult task of establishing campaigns on women's issues, which given the weakness of the Irish Women's movement, is a major problem for all concerned. A problem which militants in the two groups have shown themselves seriously interested in overcoming.

While any sort of split in the small forces active on the women's question is regrettable, the organisation of two separate groups has expanded the membership of both and increased their activities. This is in fact the national pattern, shown by the successful organisation of the first two Irish national women's liberation conferences and the broad support for the Noreen Winchester campaign.

Clearly the nucleus of a 32-counties' movement is assembling. While unity in action around particular campaigns is essential and is understood by both groups, it is just as important for different forces in this tiny movement to clarify their ideas through discussion and practical activity. It is to be hoped that the discussion which will undoubtedly follow the formation of the Women Against Imperialism group, will take the movement forward to building the support and united activity that will turn this small nucleus into a broad-based 32-counties' women's movement. Undoubtedly, the activity of both the Belfast Women's Collective and the Women Against Imperialism group will play an important role in this.

TUCAR Intervene at I.C.T.U. Conference

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"I would have been putting my unions point of view that the statement was inadequate and that it did not take into account the whole treatment meted out to suspects in Castlereagh and more positive action should have been taken in that regard".

Paddy Devlin, of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, speaking at the July conference of the Irish Congress of Trades Unions in Galway, Devlin was talking after the ICTU had decided to approve a special report of the Northern Committee without discussion. The delegates decided on this course by 210 votes against 117 at the insistence of the ICTU President John Mulhall.

The special report included a motion adopted by the Northern Committee and approved by the ICTU Exec. which called on Roy Mason to establish an enquiry into the death of AUEW/TASS member Brian Maguire, who was found hanged in Castlereagh barracks last May, and also into the allegations contained in the recent Amnesty International Report. In addition, the report contained a memo to Roy Mason from the Northern Cttee about prison conditions.

Mulhall's insistence that the special report be approved without debate should not surprise anyone who has studied the role played by the trade union leaders during the last ten years of repression in the North. Throughout those years this 'leadership' has done little or nothing to bring the repression to an end or even voice trade union opposition to it. The odd speech or resolution, very few and far between.

Even the much vaunted "Better Life for All" campaign which they hailed as the Trade Union answer to sectarianism and violence has been quietly dropped, now that its empty demands have clearly failed to mobilise any significant section of the Trade Union movement. Indeed, the only support which the Better Life for All campaign achieved was that of the British Government. Last February, for example, the Brits allowed a 'Better Life' rally to be held in London's Trafalgar Square, which has been banned

to Irish demonstrations for years.

Not offending the British Government is the yardstick which guides the policy of the trade union leadership. So they refused to take action over internment, or Bloody Sunday, or either of the Loyalist stoppages. They haven't a word of protest recorded at the constant harassment of anti-unionist workers at home or on the job, or the daily terror raids on working class ghettos. Despite the many trade unionists numbered amongst the H-block prisoners, the trade union leadership continues to be represented on the prison visiting committees, and in this way give their approval to Mason's brutal treatment of political prisoners.

In fact, even the original report of the Northern Committee to the ICTU conference made no mention of repression or the death of Brian Maguire, and it was only after pressure by delegates including TUCAR members that the special report was prepared. The conference decision not to discuss this report thus allowed the ICTU executive and the Northern Committee to cover up their failure to act over Maguire's death and the torture in Castlereagh and the H-blocks. They played no part in the protests which took place against Maguire's death, other than sending a cautiously worded memo to Mason.

The refusal of the trade

Irish Troops Out of Lebanon!

Since Irish Troops were sent to the Lebanon the newspapers have been full of an adulatory coverage of their activities.

The press treatment of Ireland's 'Lebanon adventure' of course, differs not one jot from its coverage of previous UN exploits by the Irish Army in both the Congo and in Cyprus. Nor has the purpose of all this glamourising changed - to cover over the real role of the Irish troops in upholding reactionary regimes and imperialist influence against the indigenous liberation movements.

In the Lebanon this means that the Irish troops along with the

union leadership to discuss or act on the issue of repression highlights the importance of the initiatives taken by the Trade Union Campaign Against Repression to make sure that Maguire's death is not whitewashed over. For the first time hundreds of anti-unionist workers downed tools, quit their workplaces and marched to demand that the trade union leadership take action. In Galway, it was left to TUCAR yet again to bring the truth of Maguire's death and the repression to the delegates. However, the small attendance at the meeting shows the enormous task which faces TUCAR if the issue of repression is to become a burning issue for the trade union movement as a whole. That brings us back to the beginning of this article. In Galway, Paddy Devlin spoke out about torture in Castlereagh. Yet in Belfast, Devlin has done nothing but obstruct workers action against repression, including waging a slander campaign against TUCAR. Trade unionists, particularly members of the ITGWU must take Devlin to task. Militant action is required on the streets of the North. Devlin and others are well placed to organise such action, and we must demand that they do. The fact that the conference was forced to take some stand is proof that TUCAR policy is worthwhile, and shows that greater pressure by workers could turn their talk into action and force the trade union movement to carry out its role of protecting working people.

other UN forces are used to prevent the Palestinians from recovering their homeland from Israeli occupation and ending the ruthless repression which Israel directs against the Palestinians who live in the occupied areas.

The spectacle of Irish soldiers taking up arms against the oppressed Palestinians while British imperialism continues its reign of terror in Ireland unchecked, must be ended. Irish workers must support the struggle for self-determination of the Palestinian people by demanding that the Irish Army

GET OUT OF LEBANON NOW!

DENIS MURPHY SENTENCED

'MY HANDS ARE TIED'

SAYS JUDGE

Denis Murphy a PD member from the upper Springfield area of Belfast was jailed for 6 years recently for possession of arms and ammunitions. Denis' case was very significant because it exposed some of the fundamental contradictions in the Northern State. During the 15 month period of Denis' remand PD/MSR carried on a defence campaign to support him. In this campaign we argued for the right of the anti-imperialist minority in the North to hold arms to defend themselves. A petition in support of Denis was supported by over 300 of his neighbours; and won widespread support both in Ireland and internationally. At the trial Denis advanced the same arguments in his defence.

Denis admitted having the weapons and ammunition but declared that they were intended for the defence of the area he lived in against attacks by armed Loyalists. He pointed out, through his lawyer that the Ballymurphy-Springhill area had come under repeated attack by loyalist gunmen over the years. He referred to the massive campaign of sectarian murders of Catholics over the years in Belfast and made clear that the weapons were stored in the 1975/early 76 period when, after the success of the first UWC stoppage a loyalist takeover and all out civil-war in the North seemed imminent.

This argument struck at the foundations of the myths by which the Northern legal system is maintained, and asserted some of the realities of the situation in the North today. The legal charade in the North is upheld by elaborate pretence that the state is a normal democracy, that it was not established against the wishes of the majority of the Irish people, that there is no oppressed minority in the 6 counties, and that the state's security forces are neutral, impartial, and have no political role. Denis Murphy was saying in fact that there is an oppressed minority, that the state forces condone and collaborate in attacks on the minority, and that members of the minority have the right to defend themselves and indeed have no option but to do so.

of the governments claim that the Republican and Socialist prisoners are just criminals and psychopaths. In fact it undermines the whole court system since if the "security forces" are not neutral the courts which depend on them for arrest and evidence against defendants are willy nilly political tools of the government as well. Amazingly the Judge did accept his basic argument.

The Judge was Garret McGrath, an SDLP-type Catholic appointed in the days of British sponsored reforms in the North. Presumably having preserved a modicum of integrity despite his position he couldn't but acknowledge in his summing up the attacks on Catholic areas and the widespread fear of a wholesale loyalist onslaught and out-right civil war which existed at the time. Nor could he deny the necessity for and right of self defence. But then he revealed the total bankruptcy of the strategy of trying to reform the Northern state.

Having accepted arguments which led inevitably to the conclusion that Denis Murphy had committed no crime Judge McGrath said his hands were tied in such a case and went on to sentence him to 6 years in jail. In other words he (McGrath) didn't think Denis was guilty but he had to jail him because that was the price of being a Judge in the North.

Its the same for all those who join the Northern ad-



ministration hoping to change it. The Garret McGrath's and Stephen McGonagles may very well accept their government posts sincerely hoping to bring about changes (The prestige and money may be purely incidental). But the price of what ever tiny changes they may make is that they help enforce its repressive laws like McGrath or whitewash its discrimination like McGonagle.

note: Stephen McGonagle is a former ITGWU official and Irish Labour Party activist who is now the North's ombudsman.

CONFEXIM

The occupation of the Confexim factory in Drogheda is over. The 35 women, who had occupied the factory for a month in support of their demands- payment of 3 weeks wages, a guarantee of their jobs, ended their action when the Industrial Development Agency agreed to pay them their wages.

However this was only one of the issues at stake in this struggle. The women had already been declared redundant when they were persuaded by Confexim owner Adolf Bonte to work a further

Denis's defence, if accepted, makes nonsense

BELFAST CAR FACTORY

£50m in bosses pockets

The new De Lorean car factory to be sited in the Twinbrook area of West Belfast looks like being a very expensive white elephant. The whole idea just underlines the crazy structure of modern multinational capitalism. De Lorean's cars will only be assembled in Belfast; all the main components will be imported from America or the continent and the finished cars will be exported back to the United States.

Only really massive government subsidies could offset the transport costs. De Lorean is getting a massive subsidy: the British government is putting up about £45 million out of the £65m cost of the venture and it will probably transpire that they are lending him most of the rest of it at low interest rates.

It's doubtful if even that will be enough. The Southern Industrial Development Authority which has financed a lot of fly-by-night capitalists in its time, offered De Lorean £37m to go to Limerick but called off the deal when he wanted more money because they reckoned it was too risky.

Workers in West Belfast shouldn't get too excited about this venture. It looks like a colossal gimmick by Mason to give the impression that he's doing something about unemployment. Mason won't be in the North in a couple of years time to carry the can if the whole thing flops. On the other hand if Labour wins the next election in Britain he can always boast about this 'achievement' when he's looking for promotion in the new government.

Even if the car-firm keeps going for a while, the workers will need to watch out. De Lorean said that apart from the money, the main thing that attracted him to the North was the low strike-rate. In other words he's looking for a docile work-force who will accept low wages, bad conditions and anti-social shift-hours without complaint. But its no solution to the unemployment problem to import a lot of US business sharks who are only interested in cheap labour and easy money.

Mason's £45m would be a lot better spent in a socialist republic in developing industries based on the natural resources of the country.

The importance of the Confexim affair was shown when a similar strike broke out in Bunbeg co Donegal immediately afterwards. (It has now been settled) The Confexim women are considering further action to win a guarantee of their jobs. Trade Unionists, Socialists and anti-imperialists should stand ready to support them and to contribute to the fight-back against the government's attack on workers' jobs and living standards.

COALISLAND MARCH

ALL OUT ON AUGUST 27th!

The coming August 27th demonstration from Coalisland to Dungannon is the most important opportunity for anti-imperialist unity since the discussions at the Coalisland Conference last February. The demonstration has been organised by Tyrone RAC and has the support of major sections of the anti-imperialist movement, including Sinn Fein and the Belfast Relatives Action Committees. These will be represented on the platform along with Frank Maguire, MP and a speaker from the Irish Independence Party. We in PD/MSR urge all socialists and anti-imperialists to support the march.

will demonstrate the effectiveness of united action.

But the Tyrone demonstration has its weaknesses. The unity it represents is a unity from above, organised by a private committee. For this reason important organisations like TUCAR have been refused speaking rights as have the IESP despite the fact that it has many comrades 'on the blanket'. For the same reason there has not been a general campaign North and South to build support for the demonstration.

Ironically, the platform bears resemblances to the type of unity proposed by PD/MSR at the Coalisland Conference. Then organisational sectarianism prevented this sort of unity from being realised but hopefully the Tyrone demonstration

Repression continues to increase and we urgently need to unite and fight back. The Coalisland demonstration represents the best chance for some time. The anti-imperialist movement is moving towards unity - your presence could help make that unity a reality.

VICTORY

3 weeks, on the promise of payment when a new clothing order had been met. Bonte's flight from the country, leaving a trail of debts behind him was merely the last straw. He had in the past denied the basic right to join a trade union, by sacking a women employee for refusing to sign an undertaking not to join a trade union. No taxes or insurance stamps had been paid so that the IDA had refused to give the factory a grant because it did not meet the needs specified.

Once again workers jobs were jeopardised, by the exploits of a get rich quick foreign investor. It is the responsibility of the Southern government, whose policy of encouraging foreign investment lays the ground for such villains as Bonte, to provide jobs and in this case compensation for wages lost, for such workers. The women had received support from Dublin and Drogheda, Trade Councils, the womans movement north and south, but it was their swift turn to a campaign demanding action from the government that won them back their wages.

VERDICT ON GREEN PAPER : **Fianna**



Workers demonstrate in Limerick

At the Bonn economic summit in July, the major imperialist powers (USA, Japan, West Germany, Britain, France etc.) issued a communique which called for faster economic growth "without rekindling inflation". That this was a mere platitude was emphasised by the fact that the communique was drafted before the meeting even began.

But behind the nonsense lies a commitment to go on a major offensive against the international working class in order to slash our living standards and save the dying capitalist system. It is this same commitment which lies behind the Fianna Fail Green Paper 'Development for Full Employment'. Pretending to be a thought-out plan to get rid of the cancer of unemployment, the Green Paper in reality represents an attempt to restore and increase the profits of the bosses at the expense of Irish workers. The Green Paper far from being a plan to reduce unemployment is a piece of trickery for reducing incomes and cutting social services.

Work-sharing

One of the major and most talked about features of the Green Paper is the idea of reducing the dole queues by sharing out the work already available. If everybody did one hour less work a day and took an extra week's holiday, 36,000 extra jobs could be created. The snag is that all this new leisure time will be at our expense. As Garrett Fitzgerald let it out of the bag "Income-sharing is its proper name".

In fact any work-sharing, any new jobs will be financed out of our wages. On top of that we will be expected to do the same amount

of work in less time in order to increase productivity overall so as to keep labour costs down. And that in turn will leave less scope for creating new jobs.

Fianna Fail's 'work-sharing' con-trick has already conned some of our union leaders who talk of negotiations and phasing it in. The time is long overdue when the trade union leaders must cut out these 'ifs' and 'buts'.

Attack

Is Irish society so impoverished and backward that it cannot guarantee everybody the basic precondition of life, that is a job? No, the truth is that capitalism is such a corrupt and outdated system that it is unable to take advantage of countless technical and productive achievements which could be transformed into real gains for workers and their families.

Fianna Fail, whose election manifesto promised us all a prosperous future and especially the youth has now kicked the voters in the teeth. And for the most vulnerable sections of society it has used both feet. Thus for the ill there are higher hospital and doctor's charges. For the young seeking higher education there will be higher fees and lower grants. For the

unemployed there will be a tax on welfare benefits. It is precisely the unemployed, the elderly and the sick who will be most hurt by the decisions to build fewer council houses while charging higher rents and to wipe out the subsidies on basic food stuffs, milk, flour, bread, butter and the subsidy on gas.

On top of all this Fianna Fail intend to introduce what they call 'Special Outdoor Staff' to snoop and spy on the recipients of welfare benefits while of course continuing to turn a blind-eye to the wholesale evasion of taxes by the wealthy.

The Fianna Fail Green Paper is nothing less than a licence to rob the workers and plunder the weakest sections of the population. It must meet with a mighty opposition from the trade unions, tenants' associations and other organisations.

The Unions

Experience has shown that the union leaders are not likely to do anything about such a demand.

PD/MSR

The paper of a revolutionary organisation is "a major weapon in the struggle". Using the experience of members and supporters of the organisation it will "analyse struggles" and "put forward a strategy for militants."

Five months after the Socialist Republic, joint paper of the PD/MSR, was launched, how has it lived up to these aims (put forward in the joint aims of PD/MSR published in the last issue)? What role has it played in the fusion process? these and other questions were discussed at a national PD/MSR day school in Dublin at the end of June, attended by members from Dublin, Limerick, Cork, and Belfast.

Fianna Fail Con Trick

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is up to socialist and other trade union activists to get together and raise this issue within the trade union movement. A fight must be initiated to win the rank and file to the demand for a 35-hour week. A start has already been made with the adoption of this demand by the Socialist Labour Party. In the coming months support must be built in all the unions and workplaces for industrial action to secure the introduction of a 35-hour week without loss of pay. Then, Fianna Fail and the bosses will know that the workers' fightback is farway.

The basis for such opposition was provided in a resolution adopted by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) which presents some 31 million workers in 19 countries, including Ireland. This resolution was the ETUC's answer to unemployment and was adopted following the deep recession of 1973-74. This resolution clearly placed the responsibility for unemployment at the doorstep of the capitalist system.

The ETUC said: "We believe that there are plenty of opportunities and facilities to create jobs; we want these jobs now and we are not prepared to accept the insulting argument that to create these jobs would jeopardise the private enterprise system."

The ETUC called for the introduction of a 35-hour week with five weeks annual holiday; banning of overtime; lowering of the retirement age; extension of the period of formal education. There was no talk of taking a cut in pay.

Such demands reflected a growing mood of militancy among workers everywhere who were beginning to realise that they and not the bosses would have to provide the solution to the crisis, a solution which would promote the workers' interests and not those of the profit boards.

In four years the trade union leaders have done nothing to win these demands and they remain



Martin O'Donoghue, Architect of the Green Paper

paper proposals. It is doubtful if more than a handful of trade unionists in Ireland have even heard of them. It is a damning indictment of our union leaders that Fianna Fail was able to hijack the powerful idea of 'work-sharing' and use it as a cover for cutting wages.

But there is still time to turn the tables on Fianna Fail and the bosses. Now that the idea of 'work-sharing' is in the air and being discussed there is a real chance to organise a fightback against unemployment. In opposition to Fianna Fail's plans the trade unions must raise the demand of a "35-hour week with no loss of pay".

FUSION

DAY SCHOOL ON PAPER

It was clear from the discussion that the new Socialist Republic, the first joint venture of the two organisations, played a vital role in developing the fusion process. The joint production of a paper had meant discussing aspects of building a joint organisation and a joint institution. There was the general feeling that the first couple of issues had reflected some of the problems of fusion - they were simply PD articles and MSR articles added together. But building a united revolutionary party is not just a question of adding two groups together, but a process of political development in which past mistakes are learnt from and past successes are built on. From which a new organisation with the benefit of their combined experience will emerge.

To do this the paper has to take up the issues being discussed in the anti-imperialist and workers movement and to provide a focus for debate and activity around important political issues, while at the same time developing its own political ideas.

A difficulty was the regular monthly production of the paper, which had not yet been achieved. This was due to the initial difficulties of a joint paper and also to the increasing attacks on the opposition press by the British. Steps were made to appoint an editorial committee and establish a network of paper correspondents throughout the two organisations.

As always the severest problems were financial and technical. The regular production of a paper in which all

the members are involved is an immense task for what is still a small organisation. And of course finance is the key to overcoming many of these problems. Finance is the key to providing up-to-date equipment, production of a range of literature, journals etc as added weapons in the battle of ideas and to providing PD/MSR militants with resources to put in the struggles developing and to building the joint organisations. To this end it was decided to launch a major fund drive.

But ultimately the success of the joint paper depends on the political development of the two organisations and their ability to develop a clear programme which militants can debate and try out in practice. And readers can play their part in this process by making their views known, through activity, discussion, letters, providing information, contributing to the fund drive, selling the paper in their work-place or area and ultimately by joining the fused organisation.

It is no longer possible to read an article on Black Africa in the international press without running across scare stories about 'Soviet-Cuban expansionism' and huge massacres of 'innocent' whites. We are being asked to believe that the Western powers are (reluctantly) being forced to shoulder the (white man's) burden of protecting civilisation from a sinister and deadly menace. Of course these claims have won little credibility among the African people who have had to learn the hard way, over a period of almost a century, that these high-sounding principles are meaningless.

West Props Up Zaire Despot

The intervention of Belgian troops in the Congo in 1960 and of French troops in Gabon in 1964, in Senegal in 1968, in Chad in 1970, and in Zaire, Chad (again), Sahara and Djibouti in 1977, as well as the proliferation of garrisons and military delegations, all give a good account of Western intentions in Africa.

This list also provides a very useful explanation of why the French government has been particularly eager to portray itself as a defender of African interests. French President, Giscard d'Estaing, has even come forth with the slogan "Africa for the Africans". In practice however, it is "Africa for the most corrupt, despotic and pro-imperialist Africans". Zaire is the latest and most clear-cut example.

Zaire Zaire

Zaire's President Mobutu is an ex-nationalist who came to power in a US-backed coup in the mid-'60s. His regime is so reactionary that it helped arm and train the South African supported UNITA forces in the Angolan civil war of 1975. This was at a time when almost all the other neo-colonial African states could see which way the wind was blowing and decided to back the victorious MPLA.

A decisive factor in ensuring the MPLA's victory and the repulsion of a South African invasion was the arrival of Cuban troops. It must however, be stressed that the Cubans only intervened after the Western powers threw all their resources behind Unita and had encouraged the South African invasion. This has now been admitted by the person in charge of United States CIA Angolan operations at that time: in a new book; which goes into a lot of detail over what happened, he

asks whether the Cubans would have come to the aid of the MPLA if the US had not already backed Unita. He answers that they wouldn't have had to, since the MPLA would have won easily.

US. U.S. Set-back

In the event the USA suffered a bad setback in the region and its most reliable client Mobutu was left in a very precarious position. Angola shares a vast common frontier with Zaire which borders on the Shaba province.

Shaba has a long history of revolt against Mobutu and many freedom fighters had been exiled to Angola. Thus it should come as no surprise to find that these 'invaders' from the Front National de Liberation du Congo (FNLC - Congo National Liberation Front) were openly welcomed when they crossed the border in May of this year.



Mobutu embraces French president Giscard.

Almost immediately Mobutu panicked and lost his grip, and was forced to call for foreign aid. There can be no doubt about the willingness of the US government to agree to this request. However, the humiliating defeat its forces suffered in Vietnam has severely curtailed its capacity to act. There is a very widespread anti-war sentiment in the United States and the government is not yet in a position to risk foreign adventures in defence of corrupt puppet regimes.

Instead we were treated to a few nauseating 'human rights' speeches by Jimmy Carter in which he attacked Cuban 'aggression'. But no-one should imagine that US imperialism is totally paralysed - Carter approved the provision of 20 million dollars worth of military assistance to Mobutu, \$17.5 million in "non-lethal" equipment and \$2.5 million to train Zairian general staff officers in the USA.

FR France moves in

France came along to do the real dirty work. The excuse was that 2,000 whites were being held as hostages in Kolwezi. Lurid accounts of how rebels were ruthlessly wiping out Europeans were splashed across the Western press. As might by now have been expected, the truth turned out to be different. The bulk of the killings appear to have been conducted by Mobutu's troops. These same troops were also responsible for revenge killings and massacres of the black population which went unreported in the West.

E European Solidarity

As things stand now the FNLC has temporarily withdrawn and Mobutu's hold on state power is shakier than ever. Furthermore, the imperialist intervention has not gone unchallenged. In one of the bigger protests against French intervention in Africa since the Algerian war, 15,000 marched in Paris in June. They carried signs such as "NO TO GISCARD'S INTERVENTION IN AFRICA" and "INDO-CHINA, ALGERIA, THAT'S ENOUGH! NO TO COLONIALISM!" This march was organised by the French Communist Party and a number of far-left groups, including the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (LCR - Revolutionary Communist League), French Section of the Fourth International.

There is a lot at stake in the struggle against imperialism in Africa. Africa is of crucial importance to the imperialists in terms of trade and as a source of raw materials. The growth of

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MARXIST CONFERENCE ON IRELAND

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An important Marxist conference on Ireland was held at Warwick University in July. It was confined to Marxist scholars who have written books or are doing research on Ireland and the idea was to pool some of this research and its conclusions as part of the process of developing a Marxist analysis of Irish society.

This is a vitally important development because of the extreme weakness of the Marxist tradition in Ireland, and the lack of serious Marxist analysis of developments in this country in the last 20 years or so. The effect of this has been seen in the confusion and mistakes of even the Marxist left during the Northern crisis and the many blind alleys that had to be explored before even elementary errors were discarded.

If the present political impasse in the North is to be surmounted and the growing contradictions in the 26 counties (massive unemployment, control by multi-nationals etc) exploited to produce a new revolutionary upsurge it can only be done on the basis of a rigorous Marxist analysis of underlying economic and social change and a clear strategy derived from it. Hopefully the Warwick conference has begun to lay the foundations for such a development.

An interesting feature of the conference was the broad spectrum of views represented. Organisationally this ranged from the PD and MSR, represented by Mike Farrell, John McAnulty, and Rayner Lysaght, to the Communist Party, and a group of former supporters of the Two Nations theory including Paul Bew and Henry Patterson of the Politics Department at the new Northern Polytechnic. There was also a number of non party academic

sociologists and economists. Until recently the intense sectarianism of the Irish Left would have made such a gathering impossible but the fact it took place at Warwick shows the growing awareness of the need for rigorous analysis. There were no sudden conversions at the seminar- they were not expected or desired- but the people involved evidently saw the need to familiarise themselves with each others work if only to be able to answer their opponents arguments.

Another important feature of the seminar was that all present, even those who opposed the anti-imperialist position of the PD-MSR, were agreed on the central importance of the National Question in the struggle for socialism in Ireland. Though a minority argued that it had now been resolved. The PD and MSR fought for a long time to get that point accepted, evidently it is now a battle won.

The Conference consisted of papers read on particular topics and then discussed by the participants. The area most thoroughly covered was economic and social developments in the South since the 2nd world war. There were also papers on the establishment of the Northern state, and on the role of government reform agencies in recent times in the North. There was some examination of the role of Republicanism past and present and an important session on the Marxist and Leninist positions on Imperialism, and the right of National Self Determination. Most of the participants agreed that the conference was very stimulating and worthwhile. At the same time they felt that there was large gaps in the areas covered, most notably in regard to the North between the 1920s and the 1960s and regarding economic developments in both parts of the country in the 1970s. Accordingly it was provisionally

agreed to convene a similar conference to cover these areas in about 6 months time. Hopefully such seminars will become a regular event.

The Warwick conference was jointly sponsored by a socialist trust associated with the Socialist Register an annual Marxist review and by Ink Links a new Marxist publishing firm. Ink Links aim to publish the conference papers as a book of essays on the background to the current situation in Ireland. It is to be hoped that they will do so that the new information and analysis presented there can reach a much wider public.

ZAIRE

CONTd

the liberation movements and the fact that they are moving to the left under the pressures of the viciousness of imperialism and the weakness of native capitalism poses a huge threat to imperialism. Victories, especially in South West Africa would be a major defeat for the imperialist system as a whole and especially for British imperialism.

Imperialism is using a combination of crude racialism and virulent anti-communism to cover its real policy of mounting aggression against the African liberation movements. The US is moving to active involvement on the side of the reactionary regimes and attacks on the Cuban presence and thus the Cuban revolution itself.

In this situation the tasks of all supporters of African freedom and all opponents of imperialism are clear. We must mobilise solidarity to demand the immediate withdrawal of American 'aid' and European troops from Zaire.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Ten years after the civil rights demonstrators erupted onto the streets of the 6-counties is a good time to look back at the history of our struggle over the intervening years. That's precisely what we will be doing in the next few issues of Socialist Republic in order to remind us all of the lessons our struggle has pointed out, the mistakes that have been made and not least the successes we have all shared. Below, the first article in this series takes a look at the objective situation that allowed the birth of our struggle and the forces behind the first halting steps of opposition to the Orange State and its systems of sectarianism and discrimination.

As we commemorate the tenth anniversary of the first civil rights marches in the North, it's easy to be depressive about the results of the struggle. Both North and South democratic rights have been eroded. In the North many have died or been seriously injured and many more languish in prison and in the squalor of H-blocks. The injustices of imperialism remain and repression is on the increase.

But there have been positive gains from the struggle. An enormous mass of people have become politically conscious and active in the course of the struggle. Many are no longer active but all the signs are that large are becoming reinvolved in politics and are determined to end the repression.

The struggle has been the most intense and serious challenge that imperialism has ever faced in Ireland, culminating in 'no-go' areas that set-up alternative self-government and effectively seceded from British control. Above all, the struggle brought about the destruction of the corrupt Stormont regime. The imperialists are still reeling from that blow and the effects will be felt for some time to come. But if we want to see permanent gains come from the struggle we have to look critically at its history and learn the lessons.

economic factors

Perhaps the simplest and most basic lesson of the past ten years is that mass upsurges are dependant to a large extent on political changes in society, which are themselves caused by major economic changes both locally and in the world economy. These sorts of economic change did occur in Ireland in the late '50s and early '60s.

In the North local industries like engineering, shipbuilding and linen, all major sources of Unionist patronage, went into decline. Stormont adopted a policy of lavish grants and tax-free perks to attract foreign capital. In order to accommodate this new finance capital the unionists had to tone down sectarianism and rationalise the economic relationships with the South. This necessity was the base for O'Neillism.

In the South the government gave up all attempts to establish an independent Irish economy. They mounted a campaign to encourage foreign investment and in late 1965 agreed an Anglo-Irish free-trade area with London. The main results of this were a major upsurge of working class militancy as large-scale industry began to replace agricultural work and a deep ideological crisis as the state tried to abandon nationalism and replace it with a more readily pro-imperialist ideology.

the unionists

Lenin once wrote that revolution became possible when the ruling class found it impossible to rule in the old way and the oppressed classes were no longer willing to accept their condition of servitude. In the '60s the unionists found themselves unable to rule in the old way. For 50 years they had dealt with opposition by massive repression, by the use of naked sectarianism and using the B-Specials and RUC as a private army. During this whole period they had the unconditional support of the British. Now they were being pressured to refurbish their image and there was an element of uncertainty in their policy that their opponents were quick to seize upon.

the opposition

Earlier we noted that objective factors play a large role in the creation of mass upsurges. But it

is also true that political groups must actively organise to take advantage of these opportunities. The economic boom of the sixties created employment opportunities for catholic workers, especially in the construction industry and created a new mood of militancy and self-confidence. A new middle class grew up deeply opposed to discrimination and lack of opportunity. And political groups organised to take advantage of this.

By far the most important development was the alliance between the Communist Party and the republicans. The defeat of military activity in 1956-62 had meant a major rethink for republicans and they had moved towards political action and building a base in the working class. Together they decided to attack the unionist denial of democracy in the North. Another group active in producing information and publicising discrimination was the Campaign for Social Justice in Dungannon and small socialist groups that had split away from the pro-partition Northern Ireland Labour Party were also active. All worked for years before the first demonstration, laying the political basis of the mass explosion that was to come.

civil rights

A major political weakness of the Communist Party and the republicans was that their activity was aimed at publicity and parliamentary pressure rather than mass demonstrations. They worked hard to establish the Civil Rights Association, but it was meant as a complaints body rather like the NCCL in England and contained several businessmen and liberal unionists. But the local bodies that were growing up around the North were considerably more radical and they were to be the base of the future Civil Rights Movement.

H-BLOCK Protest Grows

"Like sewer pipes in the slums of Calcutta" was how Archbishop O'Fiaich described conditions in the H-blocks at Long Kesh. O'Fiaich's statement was important even if it was long overdue.

The Catholic church has never been a friend to the anti-imperialist movement in Ireland from the days of the Fenian prisoners to whom O'Fiaich referred in his statement to the present time. The church basically speaks for the Catholic bourgeoisie and the fact that the Archbishop has decided to speak out on H Block at last means that the bourgeoisie are worried about the issue.

The Catholic businessmen North and South sense that there is a rising tide of anger about conditions in H Block in the working-class ghettos of the North and that it is beginning to spread to the working-class in the South as well. They reckon that they've got to speak out now or they'll lose their influence over the mass of the people and they feel they must try to get some concessions from the British quickly.

That's why O'Fiaich's statement got such widespread publicity at home and abroad. The media know that it was really a warning to the British that if they don't make concessions things may get out of hand. It was noticeable too that once O'Fiaich had spoken all sorts of respectable people who had steered very clear of the H Block issue up to this found their voices at last. The most striking example was the SDLP whose leader Gerry Fitt had actually opposed political status and the rest of whose members had kept very quiet on the issue.

This sudden chorus of respectable protests is welcome as a sign that the H Block campaign is getting somewhere at last but the British seem very determined to stick to their criminalisation policy. It will take more than O'Fiaich's statement to move them. It will require a really substantial mass mobilisation on the streets. The Coalisland-Dungannon march on August 27th should start the process and all anti-imperialist organisations should join in building a united campaign this autumn and winter around key dates like the 10th anniversary of the October 5th march in Derry.



The break came in June 1967. Austin Currie, the Campaign for Social Justice and local Republican Clubs had campaigned against housing discrimination in Dungannon. After being evicted from houses they were squatting in they decided to hold a march from Coalisland to Dungannon. The CRA rather hesitatingly agreed to sponsor it. The march attracted 2,500 people and was banned from the centre of Dungannon.

The march brought together the elements of the CRM. This had many divisions and contradictions within but had the power to mobilise huge numbers. The unionists had allowed the march but had banned it from the centre of a 'catholic town' under pressure from Paisleyites. The stage was set for the explosion of the masses onto the streets.

to be continued

ANTI-NUCLEAR SHOW

Ireland's first anti-nuclear power show is happening at Carnsore Point in August from 19th - 20th.

We're organising this free show to stop the nuclear power plant that the government and the ESB say they want to build at the Point. We think that nuclear power is the most destructive of all industries and threatens the lives, health and livelihoods of all people. A Nuclear Ireland is not in our interests and this will be a mass protest to express opposition to the intentions of those who would impose it on us.

We hope many people young and old will make the power show an enjoyable and educational demonstration. There will be alternative energy exhibitions, discussions, films and theatre against nuclear power and music by some of the best folk, traditional and rock bands in the country.

Anti-nuclear organisations from Europe will come to talk on the successes and failures of the anti-nuclear movement internationally. Our aim is to help create the condition for the building of a truly national and international mass movement of opposition to nuclear power.

Most of all we want a good weekend with young and old from all parts. A creche and natural playground will be provided for kids.

Among the musicians playing against nuclear will be Christy Moore, Barry Moore, Clannad, Stagalee, Andy Irvine, Oisín, the Sinners, Jackie Daly, Liam Weldon, Padraig McMathuna, Mick Hanley, Paddy Glackin, Matt Molloy, Kevin Burke and many others.

DON'T MISS THE POINT TO MAKE YOUR POINT THAT NUCLEAR IS BAD NEWS.

HELP SUPPORT SOCIALIST REPUBLIC FUND DRIVE

Big responsibilities face revolutionary socialists in Ireland today. Ten years of British armed occupation in the North and the developing repression in the 26-Counties have taken a huge toll amongst militants in the anti-imperialist resistance with the graveyards and prisons crammed full.

Together with the economic crisis which has wracked the capitalist system and led to a major attack on the living standards of the working class, the national question has put to the test the ability of all parties to provide a solution in the interests of the oppressed and exploited.

A clear socialist and anti-imperialist voice needs to make itself heard in the present crisis. One of the most important weapons available to the working class in the struggle against the capitalist system and imperialist occupation is the existence of a revolutionary press. A revolutionary newspaper reports on the struggles taking place amongst the oppressed, builds support for them and makes the important lessons of these struggles available to wide numbers of people. Most important of all it offers the working class the means to develop its own set of political

ideas and ends our reliance on the press and media of the capitalist class.

Since its launching five months ago the Socialist Republic has tried to carry out these tasks. Attacks by the RUC and British Army have caused tremendous damage and seriously set us back. (See front page) But we are determined to continue and improve the paper.

One of our major difficulties is the lack of money with which to regularise the publication of the paper, increase the circulation and our ability to give wider coverage to the many different struggles that are taking place.

We also need more and better technical equipment to help in the production and make the paper more attractive to people. At present we are getting-by on ancient typewriters and used print.

Our immediate aim is to spread the circulation of the paper into those areas where it is presently not available such as Derry and Newry in the North, Galway and Waterford in the South. We believe that militants in these areas will find the Socialist Republic a real aid in their struggles.

So, we are asking you, our readers at home and abroad, to send us £300 over the next four months. Send us whatever you can, large or small amounts will be equally welcomed. Get your friends to buy the paper and if you can't always get the paper then take out a subscription (12 issues for £2 postage paid). All donations will be acknowledged in the paper. Send us something immediately.

The address is:

Fund Drive,
Connolly Bookshop,
Avoca Park,
BELFAST II.

Post something off today so that we meet the August target of

£ 75

Target

RAID ON SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

raid as part of a savage campaign by Mason against the opposition press in the North. John McNulty is not long free after being held for six months after being held for six months after being held for six months 'Internment by Remand' on a frame-up documents charge. John McGeown was arrested a few days before the raid and an article for the paper was confiscated. And the raid is only one of a series of such attacks. Attacks on Republican News have included the arrest on trumped-up 'subversion' charges of leading Sinn Féin members. The Workers' Resource Centre in Belfast has been raided twice and files of the information sheet 'Irish Free Press' held.

Physical attacks on the revolutionary press are only the tip of the iceberg. The repression extends to the 'respectable' media as well. Recently the Independent Broadcasting Authority in Britain banned a 'This Week' programme on the Amnesty International report. The effect of censorship North and South is clearly shown by the fact that for two years they gave no clear report on conditions in the H-Blocks until Archbishop O'Fiach's statement was released. We in PD/MSR believe that a major campaign against censorship and in defence of the opposition press both inside and outside the trade-unions is an urgent necessity.

This issue of the Socialist Republic is being produced amid the rubble of the bookshop. The editorial board gives notice to the British that we intend to continue production. We will fight to recover our files and for the thousands of pounds worth of damage caused. We refused to be forced underground and to accept the de facto illegality that the British are trying to force on us. We will work openly to defend our right to organise.

STOP PRESS:

As we go to press word has come in of a major raid on a member's home in Andersonstown. The interior of the house has been wrecked. This is clear evidence that the campaign of harassment is to continue and makes even more urgent the need for a united fight-back.