



POBLACHT SHOISIALACH

# SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

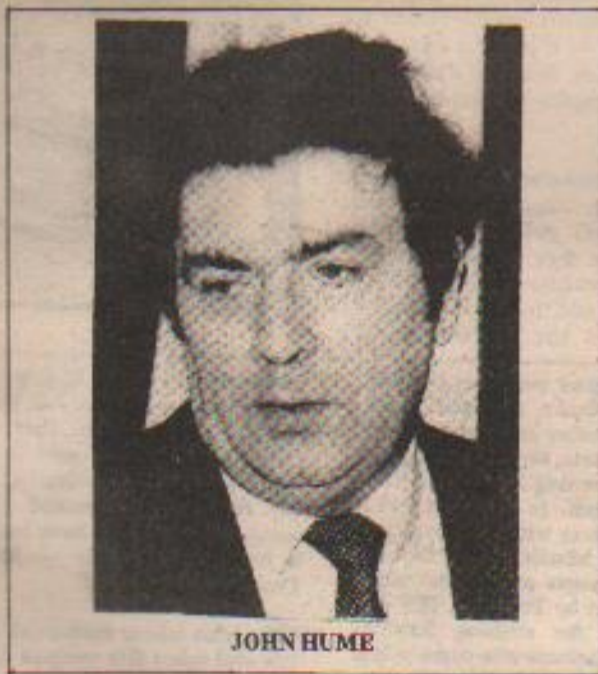
Unemployed and Strikers — 10p  
20p Outside Ireland — 25p

Paper of Peoples Democracy

VOLUME 8 NUMBER 2  
March/April 1985

## DEFEND DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS!

# STOP SDLP SILENCE NOW!



JOHN HUME

The humiliation of the Anglo-Irish talks hasn't changed the policy of the Nationalist parties. They are still determined to smash Republicanism and to sell out the Irish people's aspirations for Irish unity. With each day that passes collaboration on 'security' becomes more blatant.

However Thatcher's willingness to support unionism and humiliate them has left them all vulnerable. The point is that they are not all equally vulnerable — and John Hume and the SDLP are at the sharp end!

As might be expected Fine Gael, the traditional party of collaboration, are least affected but the failure to get a bone from the Brits has injured them deeply. It seems more and more likely that they will retreat towards Blue-

shirtism and all-out repression. The Labour Party, already leading an all-out offensive against the working class, have nothing to lose and expect to get decimated in the local government elections. Their best hope is that if they hang on in Coalition the Blueshirts will come up with a stroke to save them. Haughey of Fianna Fail and the Mallon wing of the SDLP are now trying to retain credibility by selling the Forum Report to the Americans. Mallon has actually offered Irish mem-

bership of NATO as part of the deal! Given Thatcher's support for 'Star Wars' he has no hope.

But it is Hume and the SDLP as a whole who are up against it. The other parties are either in government or expect to form one. They can put forward moves against Sinn Fein as independent decisions. The SDLP are being asked to support the direct repression of Britain and the Unionists at a time when many of their own supporters feel they should cooperate with Sinn Fein against an enemy unwilling to concede even the smallest reform.

It is in this context that we should place the Hume-IRA meeting. Hume was desperately anxious to wriggle off the hook of talks with Sinn Fein.

When the invitation from Gerry Adams came he had already prepared his defence by dismissing Sinn Fein as a political force and arguing that the real authority was the Army Council. The IRA wrong-footed him by issuing an immediate invitation.

The British, having taken a policy decision that there was to be no reform of the North, tried to disguise this by handing control of negotiations to the Unionists. For the 'not an inch' brigade negotiation means unconditional Nationalist surrender. They reacted to the IRA meeting by slamming the door on talks and smashing for the time being Hume's plan of an 'internal settlement'.

It appears from the circumstances of the meeting and the fact that Hume was able to avoid discussions that the Republican Movement is not totally united around the idea of talks with the SDLP.

It is important that this issue be sorted out. British pressure and 'dirty tricks' against Sinn Fein will increase in the run-up to the election. They will be hoping to take even stronger action after the election. The SDLP must be forced to meet Republicans and reverse their support for repression. Hume has challenged the Republican military campaign. Now he must be challenged to fight in a united political campaign against the growing repression.

JOHN McANULTY

## EDITORIAL SALUTE TO THE MINERS!

With the ending of the Miners' strike Irish workers should pause to salute the bravery and self-sacrifice of the British miners. Their struggle over the past year has been an example to us all. The Tories have won a battle for which they have been preparing since Thatcher came to power. It should be clear to all now that the war is not simply in Ireland but is directed to the crushing of the entire British working class as well.

Comparisons with the H Block struggle seem apt. The Tories held the line, but at a price they may have been unwilling to pay. The struggle almost bankrupted their economy and it stripped away many of the myths about parliamentary democracy and equality before the law that they use to maintain working class support for their rule.

The inevitable result of the struggle will be a deepening radicalisation of those involved. A new current has formed against the betrayal of the TUC leadership. Those in the miners support groups around local Labour parties are drawing revolutionary conclusions about British society. The women's movement has received a new influx of mass working class radicalism.

One element of the new debate will be the Irish question. Many British workers have had their eyes opened and are anxious to learn the lessons of our struggle. We should show a similar anxiety to understand the lessons of their struggle and build a long-lasting solidarity with them.

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN IRELAND

The passage of the new contraception legislation in the 26 Counties recently has led to a spate of claims that we have at last a secular state in the South and that the church has suffered a decisive defeat.

The evidence does not support this claim. The Jeanne Hayes case shows the depths of state brutality against women. The church victory over schoolteacher Eileen Flynn must concern all trade unionists. The capitalists are still dragging their feet on the issue of divorce.

But the 'Kerry Babies' case has shown that the women's movement in Ireland has come of age.

It has brought about a real sea-change in public attitudes. Unfortunately the movement is fragmented and tends to react to events. We believe that the anti-imperialist movement can play a real role in changing this and in opposing the sham liberalism of Fine Gael and the disgusting opportunism of Fianna Fail.

## THE MINERS - LESSONS FOR US ALL

When Arthur Scargill said at the end of the Miners' strike that the most important thing to come out of it was the struggle itself, he wasn't wrong, for the defeat of the strike is only half the story. The other half is the bitter lessons learned by the miners and their families; their politicisation and that of their supporters; and the beginnings of a genuine principled left wing in the British labour movement.

Which half will prove more significant only time will tell. We do know however, that the decisive fight between workers and the capitalist system lies in the future and the British working class now has the beginnings of a leadership worthy of waging that fight.

Miners and the many thousands of British workers who supported them have learnt lessons they couldn't have been taught in a lifetime without such experience. They have learnt that the British state, far from being impartial, is a weapon of class rule. That the rule of law is really the rule of the rich and powerful. That the police are not 'fair', that judges are not 'independent' and that the television and press are not impartial and 'objective'.

Most important of all they know that they lost the strike not because of Scargill as the media continues to try to tell them but because of the leadership of the

British labour movement — the Kinnocks and Willis's. They know that the British labour movement needs a new leadership and new policies. Before the strike many even on the left had illusions in Kinnock. Now there can be no reason for not naming him and Willis for what they are — Scabs! The rightwing drift in the British labour movement has finally met a powerful leftwing force that has the potential to reverse it.

Twelve months of bitter struggle have proved to many ordinary workers what marxists like ourselves have been saying for a long time. Only by mobilising all the oppressed on the side of the workers can the full strength of the working class be mobilised. Thus it has been women in the miners support groups who have been the backbone of the strike. They have not only stood behind the men but stood side by side and even led them. Women's rights once scorned by many even on the left as a secondary issue

This summer's local government elections in both the North and the South are of fundamental importance to the whole anti-imperialist movement and to the Irish people as a whole. The elections, in May and June, will not just be about local issues. Instead they will be the first opportunity on an All-Ireland level for the Irish people to give a clear response to Thatcher's 'Out! Out! Out!' policy, to the blatant collaboration of the Forum report and Anglo-Irish talks and to the joint policy of the Brits, Unionist and Nationalist parties to attack Sinn Fein and roll back our political rights.

But are elections simply glorified opinion polls? This is the view of the capitalist parties and media commentators and what they mean by 'The verdict of the ballot box'. It is true that a massive vote for anti-imperialist candidates will make the British pause — but already their reaction to Sinn Fein victories shows that when an election result doesn't suit them then they will use the legal system and the state to roll back the effect of electoral gains.



Sinn Fein's policy of 'the armalite and Ballot Box' attempts to strike a balance between electoral work and the military campaign. This has led to a number of problems. It tends to accept the electoralist view that elections are simply opinion polls and does not directly link them with a strategy of defeating imperialism although many local and community struggles led by Sinn Fein raise these questions. A discussion has been going on about the role of the armed struggle, especially on punishment shootings, but the Republican Movement's policy has remained for some time the

have proved to be vital to the struggle. These women aren't going back to the kitchen sink because they realise that the only guarantee that their rights will be respected is by them themselves continuing to organise.

The leadership of the NUM has shown it has learned these lessons by supporting feminist demands at the last British Labour Party conference. They showed that they recognised the support Black people have given by supporting the setting up of Black caucuses in the Labour Party. They have acknowledged the support given by gay people to the strike throughout Britain. It is no accident that the most advanced working class fighters in Britain understand the need to join these struggles together in one movement. They have understood that unity means not the suppression of the demands and organisation of other oppressed groups, but their open and full expression in one movement against the enemy which confronts them all — Thatcher and the system she stands for.

For us in Ireland the most hopeful sign is the beginnings of a realisation among many miners that just as their struggle has been lied about by the media, just as they

concept of a 'long war' — but without any real statement about how it will be won.

Peoples Democracy does not believe that the Irish revolution will take place through gradual electoral advance. We believe that force will be necessary simply because the British and their capitalist allies will use maximum force to retain power. But we also believe that the major weapon in our hands is the mass united struggle of working people. It is this concept of mass struggle which offers a way of uniting all the struggles and which puts electoral campaigns in their proper place — as ways to organise mass struggle.



The H Block/Armagh campaign was a dramatic example of this. The election campaign north and south won massive support for the anti-imperialist cause. In the south since then we have seen Leinster House and EEC elections and in the north Assembly, Westminster and EEC elections. In these elections Sinn Fein has consolidated its position, but as united mass action has declined so also the pro-capitalist and pro-imperialist parties have been able to re-establish their hold over the majority of Irish workers.

Now there is a new British offensive. In the words of Secretary of State Hurd, the main plank of their policy is 'a robust security policy' — a polite description of the shoot-to-kill policy. This is to be linked to a political offensive against Sinn Fein and a denial of political rights to anti-imperialists.

The Nationalist parties have expressed 'concern' about the shoot-to-kill policy. But at the same time they have carried out political attacks on Sinn Fein in the south and the SDLP has openly backed the British political

have suffered police repression, the road blocks, riot gear, political questioning and conveyor belt special courts, the same thing has been happening in Ireland. They have begun to look at what happens here with new eyes and no longer blindly accept the version of events poured out night after night by the BBC, ITV etc. Certainly the striking Nottinghamshire miners who came to last year's anti-Internment demonstration in Belfast went back to Britain with a clear idea of who the real terrorists are. They saw a brutal assault on a peaceful demonstration and the murder of a young man, John Downes. Many miners realise that if the British had not been here then many of the tactics used against them would not have been learned. They now know that 'Troops Out' is not a slogan that should be limited to small groups on the left but is one that the whole British labour movement must take as their own.

The tremendous international solidarity given to the miners struggle has not been in vain. Their struggle has taught workers in Ireland lessons they might otherwise have paid a high price to learn. Irish workers who face attacks on their jobs should realise that they too need a new

offensive in the north. This is against the background of the Forum report and their abandonment of calls for a United Ireland.

Up to now nationalist parties have been able to confuse the issue and restrict criticism from their own supporters. Sinn Fein spokespersons have suggested that there might be grounds for an electoral arrangement — especially with the SDLP to maximise the effect of the anti-unionist vote in the north.

We believe that this is a mistaken strategy. The fact that parties like the SDLP and Fianna Fail are willing to endorse attacks on Sinn Fein's political rights is a central point which must be brought to the attention of those supporters who still defend the concept of a United, Democratic Ireland.

A united campaign on the streets would by itself put pressure on the British and their allies. It would be able to organise during the elections and set the tone of the electoral debate. It could also provide a basis for an anti-imperialist electoral pact which could begin to put forward a detailed and realistic alternative to the Forum Report — to raise the banner of independence rather than collaboration, of economic freedom rather than slavery to the multinationals and of international solidarity with anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles rather than the pawn of NATO.

JOHN NORTH



leadership — a leadership that is prepared not just to talk but to fight. A leadership that will rally all those oppressed in Ireland. Most of all a leadership that will take up the demand which many British miners have learned is important to them — British Troops Out of Ireland!

If the Irish labour movement does this and takes this weapon out of the hands of the British ruling class it will be the greatest help they could give to the British workers and especially the miners who have not yet given their last word to Thatcher!



# 'BUTCHER'S APRON' AT HALF-MAST!

The 'Butcher's Apron' saga at Belfast's City Hall ended with a High court victory for PD's West Belfast councillor John McAnulty and with the Union Jack flying at half mast over demoralised Unionists.

The Unionists had seized on the 'Butcher's Apron' comparison with the Union Jack as a way of using the standing orders of council meetings to exclude Councillor McAnulty. They hoped to find a way to permanently exclude Peoples Democracy and Sinn Fein from council meetings. In the event they failed.

Most people were overjoyed at the unionist defeat, but many do not see the implications of the campaign. As John McAnulty said:

"The British and Unionist parties have a policy of removing the democratic rights of anti-unionists. We in Peoples Democracy have shown that that policy has to be implemented and that it can be resisted."

The legal actions got the greatest publicity, but PD also carried on a publicity campaign, mounted protest demonstrations inside the City Hall itself and sought united action with other anti-unionist parties. This led to active support from Sinn Fein and a great deal of twisting and turning from the



SDLP, who at first ignored the issue, then walked out of a council meeting in support, then withdrew active support.

We in PD regard this as an exemplary action, showing the way forward for a major campaign

## BASQUE SUPPORT

In the name of the executive committee of the LKI [Basque organisation of the Fourth International of the Spanish state] and in my own, I would like to express our deep solidarity with our comrade John McAnulty, member of Peoples Democracy [Irish section of the Fourth International] and member of Belfast City Council, against the attacks on his political and civil rights by British imperialism and its Unionist lackeys.

Defending the symbols of the oppressed nation, faced with the weight of imperialism and its symbols of domination, is incumbent upon every consistently anti-imperialist patriot. This takes on special significance when faced with the butcher of peoples that is British imperialism, whose flag is indeed a "butcher's apron".

The democratic facade cannot hide its oppressive and barbaric reality confronted with a heroic people fighting for their country's reunification and independence.

LONG LIVE THE INTERNATIONALIST AND SOLIDARITY STRUGGLE!  
LONG LIVE THE BASQUE AND IRISH PEOPLES!

J. I. BIKILA



in defence of democratic rights. We intend to continue organising around this issue and we will continue to seek broad United Front activity to defend political rights.

FRANK ROSSA.

## ARMAGH PICKET

"As long as she's in there my mind will never be away from those walls". These were the moving words of Mary McArdle, whose daughter is among those imprisoned in Armagh Jail. She was addressing a picket of over 500 people gathered at the Jail for International Women's Day. They had travelled from all parts of Ireland and Britain.

Other speakers represented the Chile Support Group, Black Women from Sheffield, and 'Women Against Pit Closures', who pledged their solidarity and promised to return to Britain and describe what was happening in Ireland. There were dozens of messages of support from organisations internationally who are seeking to raise the question of strip-searching at Armagh in their own countries.

## USI CONGRESS

The 27th Annual Congress of the Union of Students in Ireland will take place in Belfast 11-14 April. Motions going to the Congress challenge government policy with regard to the economy.

Union members consider they are facing a crucial period ahead as the government advances its plans for a wide range of cut-

backs, including dismantling the education system.

A record number of motions will challenge government policy on its austerity programme and on the central political question of Partition. Democratic rights for women will also be a focus of debate.

## HELP!

In the last issue of Socialist Republic we appealed for £1,000 to help in our defence campaign. Since then John McAnulty's victory and the awarding of costs, has allowed us to slash £500 from this total.

But we still need money to mount a real campaign on democratic rights. At the moment the appeal has met with a slow response.

LONDON SOCIALIST ACTION	£50
BELFAST PD	£20
DUBLIN PD	£20
LIMERICK PD	£15
DUNBARTON REVOLUTION YOUTH	£10
TOTAL	£115

WE STILL NEED £385 TO MEET OUR TARGET!

Donations to:  
Cllr John McAnulty  
Horizon Books

6 Avoca Park  
Belfast 11

## Declaration From F.I. Congress

Delegates from revolutionary organisations throughout the world assembled for the recent Twelfth World Congress of the Fourth International declared their support for Councillor McAnulty's stand. In a message to Peoples Democracy, the Congress declared:

"Forward to the day that the Tricolour flies in a 32 County Irish Workers Republic!

Britain and its Butcher's Apron Out of Ireland Now!"

# DEMOCRACY STIFLED AT INTO CONFERENCE

The Irish National Teachers' Union (INTO), the largest teachers' union in Ireland, held its Northern Conference 8th-9th March in Derry.

The conference was dominated in different ways by two issues. One is the major conflict coming up for the teaching unions over this year's pay rise. The other was the sacking of anti-imperialist militant Danny Burke, of Belfast West.

The debate over the current pay dispute followed predictable lines. A resolution calling for "a coordinated plan of industrial action to secure a just salary award" was passed unanimously. The Northern Secretary Al Macleod announced that the recent postal ballot organised by the union (to conform with Tory anti-union laws)

majority in favour of industrial action, including the use of strike.

John McAnulty of East Down INTO, and PD member, pointed out that more would be needed to secure a victory in this dispute than ringing declarations to the converted. With the miners' strike now over a valuable opportunity has been lost. The teachers need to identify themselves firmly as public service workers and to unite in a broad campaign against the government's arbitrary pay norms. The leadership must now begin to lead. Ballots should include recommendations from the leadership and it should be realised that the campaign will be a long haul, testing the combative qualities of the teachers unions to the full.

The undemocratic nature confere-

suggests that the leadership does not understand that only by mobilising its members through involvement in debate and decision-making, can the rank and file be prepared for the rigours of the campaign that lies ahead. The manner in which the leadership prevented discussion on Danny Burke's case suggests that the leadership has little concern for internal democracy over a whole range of issues.

An emergency motion from Belfast West calling for a special conference in the autumn to discuss a campaign against further redundancies was passed by a large majority, despite furious opposition from the Northern Committee. West Belfast schools suffered savage job losses this year and clearly the Department of Education is engaged in an exercise of school closure by

ranging cutbacks in education. The special conference in the Autumn could provide a powerful

focus of opposition to this insidious policy.

## Victimisation of Danny Burke

A major issue at INTO's Northern Conference was the victimisation of West Belfast teacher Danny Burke and the removal of his licence to teach. Motions at the conference supporting Burke were banned by the leadership in an obvious attempt to avoid taking action over a clear case of victimisation. As previous issues of Socialist Republic have reported, Danny is a longstanding militant and anti-imperialist. Despite

a court case revealing the disgraceful nature of the 'evidence' against him and a motion at last year's conference calling for a withdrawal of cooperation with a withdrawal of cooperation pending a satisfactory appeal procedure, the union has now dropped the case like a hot potato. The furious rows which broke out at the conference show that the issue is far from dead and its effects will be felt for some time to come.

# KERRY BABIES SCANDAL

**THE DETAILS OF THIS CASE WHICH HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN THE** Irish newspapers over the last few months are by now familiar. The mutilated body of a newly born infant was found on the beach at Cahirciveen in Kerry last April. The Gardai arrested a young local woman, Joanne Hayes. They claimed she was the mother and that together with her family she had killed the child. The family was questioned at Tralee Garda Barracks by a team of detectives led by Superintendent John Courtney, following which they made statements in accordance with the police accusations.

They subsequently retracted their 'confessions' saying these had been obtained under duress — the family was physically and mentally abused during the interrogation which lasted 12 hours. Meanwhile blood tests confirmed that Joanne Hayes was not the mother of the baby on the beach. The police caught in this clumsy attempt at a frame-up were advised to drop the case. The Hayes family complained to a solicitor about their treatment, and Noonan was forced to order an enquiry.

The conduct of that inquiry, now in its tenth week has caused a good deal of public outrage. Far from being an impartial attempt to get at the truth it is clearly a face-saving exercise for the police. The kinds of questions put to the Hayes family were simply an extension of their interro-

sued a bizarre line of enquiry seeking to establish that Joanne had given birth to twins, one of which was the baby on the beach!

Using this theory as a pretext, all the most intimate details of Joanne's pregnancy and social life were made known to the public. The Tribunal became a 'trial' and an ordeal very reminiscent of rape cases where the victim's sexual life is held up to scrutiny.

## POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

The Joanne Hayes case shows that the ruthless interrogation methods which the Free State government condoned against its political enemies in the 70s are finding their way into routine police investigations. This link is represented in the person of John Courtney, formerly of the 'Heavy Gang', now promoted head of the Murder Squad and in charge of the 'Kerry Babies' investigation.

## THE HEAVY GANG

A special section of the Gardai was set up in the early 70s to 'deal' with those arrested under emergency legislation. Those involved were nicknamed 'the Heavy Gang' due to the brutal methods they used to extract confessions. One of their earliest cases was the Sallins Mail Train Robbery by means of which they framed four members of the Irish Republican Socialist Party. Courtney was centrally involved. This case resulted in an eight year fight for justice by Nicky Kelly,



JOANNE HAYES



gation in the Tralee Garda Barracks. The aim of the questions is clearly to convict them still of the Cahirciveen killing.

Three Garda superintendents, including John Courtney, have been giving instructions to the lawyers responsible for their defence and it was clear what line they were to take. There is no evidence to convict Joanne Hayes so they were to go for character assassination instead.

Joanne is a single parent, who in the course of a love affair found herself pregnant again. The child was born prematurely in April 1984 and did not survive. Much was made of this by the lawyers acting for the Gardai. They pur-

Amnesty International compiled a dossier and report giving details of the Heavy Gang's activities based on numerous allegations it had received and presented this to the Minister for Justice. The reason for concern was not simply the physical and mental abuse of detainees but that 'confessions' were sufficient grounds for conviction in the juryless Special Criminal Court. To date no member of the Heavy Gang has been prosecuted and in fact many have been promoted. All demands for an independent enquiry into the Sallins affair have been refused. It is clear with the passing of the Criminal Justice Bill that the government is looking to the police to contain the results of the

recession, the social crisis youth are in through lack of jobs, etc. The government has no solution save extending police powers.

## CHURCH POLICE

In their fight to discredit Joanne Hayes as a witness and so keep control over the case the Gardai defence lawyers invoked another set of laws — the ones governing people's emotional lives as laid down by the church.

The Joanne Hayes case is one of a series where unmarried mothers are under attack because they don't conform to church morality. They face severe discrimination in housing like Nancy O'Donnell and are dismissed from jobs like Eileen Flynn. Denial of democratic rights like adequate sex education and free choice about birth control leads to tragic pregnancies like those of Ann Lovett and Joanne Hayes. The church justifies this repression in the name of 'life' and 'human dignity' (Inaugural address Archbishop of Dublin, January 21st 1985). This is hypocritical because they continue to classify some babies as 'illegitimate'; they don't demand nurseries, adequate maternity benefit, nor an end to poverty to assist the babies who are alive.

The number of dead babies which have been found recently show the desperate solution sought by some who cannot cope with preg-

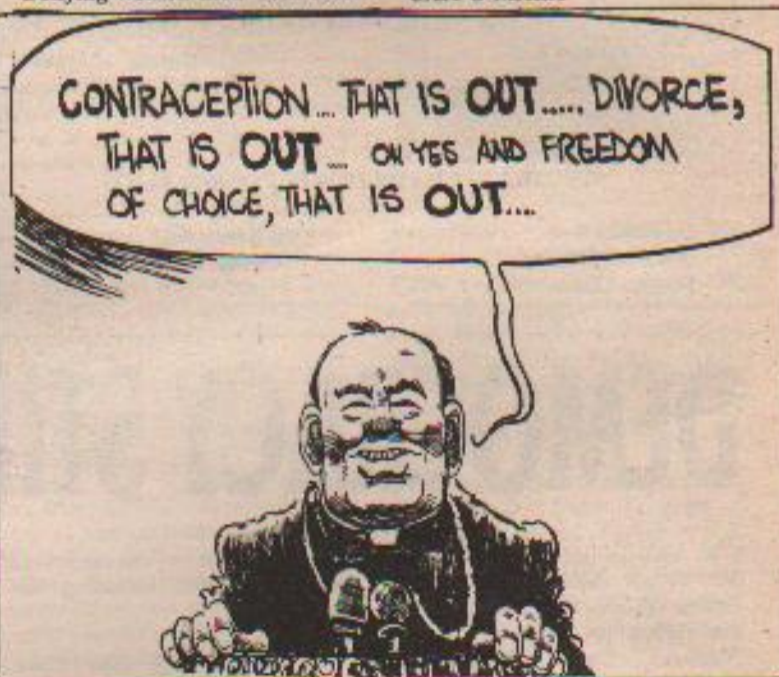
nancy in a hostile environment. The church hierarchy and its Fine Gael backers ignore this kind of misery.

## CONCLUSIONS

The 'Kerry Babies' case shows the kind of violence which pervades societies where police and church are allowed a free rein. It shows that the community ignores this state violence at its peril — the experience the Gardai gained from repressing anti-imperialists will be used to deal with any kind of public protest. Denying women their democratic

rights causes misery, hardship and even death. However the depth of public feeling aroused over these injustices shows that Irish workers are not ready to accept repression blindly. It shows the value of campaigns like the Nicky Kelly Campaign and the Right to Choose Campaign which deepen understanding of the political situation. It shows the value that a general campaign against the denial of democratic rights would have in exposing the bankruptcy of the Free State government.

CAIT O'MARA



Peoples Democracy

HORIZON BOOKSHOP

Busy Bee  
Andersonstown,  
Belfast BT12  
Tel: Belfast 617926

Busy Bee  
Baile Anderson,  
Beal Feirste, BT12  
Gúthán: Beal Feirste 617926



OPEN MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY SATURDAY 12.00-5.00pm

# ALIENATION!

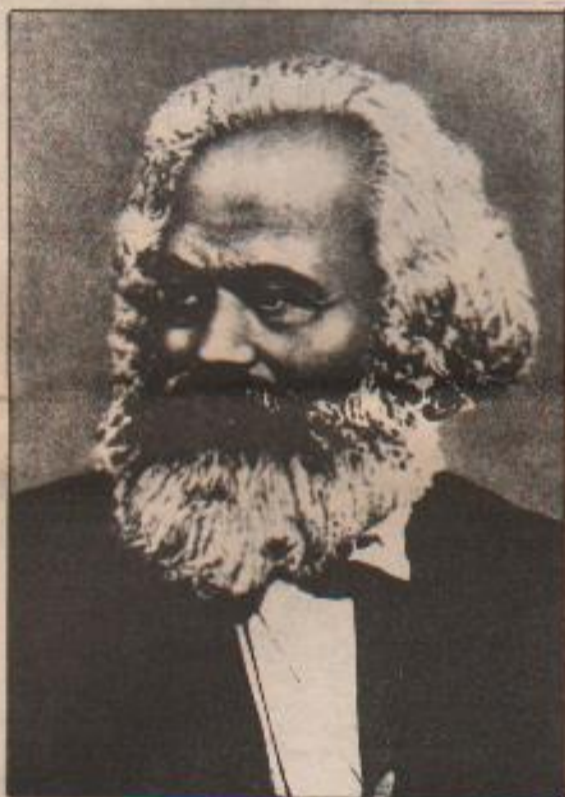
## WHAT MARX MEANT

It is to Karl Marx that we must turn in order to find the most radical interpretation of the concept of alienation. For Marx argued that humanity is not condemned to live by the sweat of its brow under alienated conditions throughout its whole term on earth. It can become free, its labour can become free, it is capable of self-emancipation, though only under specific historical conditions.

Under the system of capitalism the economic obligation of people who cannot otherwise survive has forced them to sell the only commodity they possess — their labour power — on the labour market. According to Marx, this is where the alienation of labour occurs.

We know the consequences of selling labour power to a boss. It first implies the worker loses control over her waking hours. This time belongs to the employer, not the worker. The employer will dictate what the worker will or will not do during this period.

In time and motion studies — the ultimate and most perfected form of this control, the boss even tries to control every second, literally every second of the time you spend in his employment. Alienation in the workplace also takes on another form: when a wage earner has sold her labour power for a certain part of her life to the employer, the products of her labour are not her own. Under capitalism the products of labour become the property of the employer.



Karl Marx

Whilst the creation of new technology should benefit the worker, in reality under capitalism, it is often to the worker's disadvantage. For example, shift work was created to suit the needs of the machine, the introduction of the microchip has resulted in the loss of thousands of jobs. The assembly line is designed to turn quick profits for the employer, whilst the worker must suffer boring, and often dangerous work routines.

Thus alienation is complete. Work is no longer a means of self-expression for those who sell their labour power. Work is just a means to an end and that end is to get enough money to live. Some income to make it possible to buy the consumer goods necessary to satisfy one's needs. Thus a basic aspect of human nature, the capacity to perform creative work, is twisted and distorted under capitalism.

This is highlighted in How Beynon's book, 'Working for Ford': a major study of the working conditions in a car assembly line plant. One Ford worker is quoted as saying, "It's got no interest, you couldn't take the job home. There's nothing to take. It's different for them in the office, they are a part of Ford's. We are not, we are numbers."

The workers told the story about the man who left Ford to work in a sweet factory where he had to divide up the reds from the blues. He quit because he couldn't take the decision-making! Or the country lad who couldn't believe that he had to work on every car: "Oh no, I've done my car, that one down there. A green one it was."

Throughout capitalist societies, many examples of alienation are to be found. The loneliness of people which results in individualism being pushed to the fore. But it must be remembered that Marx was no gloomy pessimist. He contended that alienation like everything else created by humanity can also be undone. However, it will only be undone after bitter class struggles fought by the working class. For unlike other classes the working class will fight not only for economic freedom but for a society free of exploitation, oppression, and violence — in a word, SOCIALISM!

## Daly's Code for Collaboration!

The SDLP, the Catholic hierarchy and the main political parties in the south, Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and the Labour Party, all have a ready phrase when describing the situation of the nationalist population in the north. The phrase used is alienation.

The term alienation found expression in the language of the New Ireland Forum Report. We are told nationalists in the north feel alienated from political and civil institutions, from the security forces and from the rule of law.

Needless to say the conclusion to be drawn, that the only way to overcome this alienation is to dismantle the six-county state and establish an United Ireland was not arrived at. The reason being that the political parties behind this document do not subscribe to the concept of an independent United Ireland, but to how they can best protect their interests, and that boils down to more collaboration with British imperialism.

The SDLP, Free State parties and the catholic church seem to have forgotten that nationalists have always felt alienated in relation to the six-county partitionist state. The British government set it up as a bulwark for Unionism. It was Craigavon who said in 1934, "I have always said that I am an Orangeman first and a politician and a member of parliament afterwards ... All I boast is that we have a protestant parliament and a protestant state."

With that type of mentality still pertaining amongst loyalists then it is to be expected that nationalists want no truck with this sectarian state. From the day and hour of its inception it has always attempted to repress the aspirations for a United Ireland.

So when Dr Daly and John Hume pontificate from their respective pulpits on the danger of alienation and how the British government should not ignore it, let us not imagine for a second that they are really concerned about the midnight raids on nationalist homes by the British Army and the RUC or the shoot-to-kill policy or extradition and the attacks on Sinn Fein.

The gradual disenfranchisement of part of the electorate, the attempt by loyalist councillors to expel Cllr John McAnult of PD, or the threat to end the provision of leisure services to an area of West Belfast, simply because a Tricolour is flown over the centre — this is the reality of life for



BISHOP CAHAL DALY

nationalists and we know why the catholic hierarchy and Irish politicians wring their hands.

These people such as Hume, Daly and Peter Barry mouth about alienation, because they know that a growing anti-imperialist consciousness threatens their power base and will undermine their attempts to further collaborate with British imperialism. The surge of support for the recent hunger strikes and the thousands of votes for Sinn Fein has them terrified.

For example they boasted in the New Ireland Forum Report that the Forum sought the views of all traditions who agreed with its objectives and who reject violence. This never took place, because the loyalists who were invited, support violence against nationalist resistance to their rule. The document was aimed at the British government and nobody could say that Maggie disagrees with the weapon of violence to solve political problems, we have to look no further than the miners' strike.

Another thing which is annoying is how the SDLP and its allies attempt to limit the nature of alienation to nationalists in the north.

As Marxists we contend that alienation is a widespread phenomenon throughout the whole of Ireland. This has been exploited by those who, under the cover of 'pure' socialism, support imperialism and refuse to challenge loyalism. Jim Kemmy has said that protestant workers also suffer unemployment, bad housing, etc and are also alienated.

We agree! But we realise that loyalist workers support the same political system which guarantees imperialist rule and all the unemployment that flows from it. It is the struggle for a united Ireland that threatens this domination and it is nationalist workers who support this fight who have suffered the worst repression and discrimination.

Be it at the factory of the working class women who are forced to spend long hours at home; be it amongst the unemployed who have been told that capitalism has no place for them; or the workers living on housing estates lacking in facilities; or the ever-increasing use of repressive legislation designed to break the back of any resistance that may emerge from workers.

Let us also remember that the next set of Anglo-Irish talks will only increase this alienation and not start to gradually erode it. The continuation of the existence of multinational companies only ensures further alienation and the overall subservience of the southern economy to British imperialism is a sure guarantee that alienation in Ireland will not wither away.

So next time you hear Hume or Daly talk about Alienation, remind them about the Marxist concept of alienation, guaranteed to bring buckets of sweat onto their foreheads. For as Marxists we firmly lay the blame for alienation at the door of imperialism. On a worldwide scale the preconditions for a gradual disappearance of alienation can only come about with an end to the system of capitalism.

# JOIN NOW!

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING THE PEOPLES DEMOCRACY AND FIGHTING FOR A SOCIALIST 32 COUNTY REPUBLIC, FILL IN THE FORM BELOW AND SEND IT TO:

**HORIZON BOOKS**  
**6, Avoca Park, Belfast**

NAME: .....

ADDRESS: .....

.....

# WOMEN IN EXILE

Women in Exile and Emigration Workshop  
Saturday January 26, 1985  
Dublin

There was not much room for women in 19th century Ireland — 75% of all those emigrating to the United States after the famine were women who left for economic reasons: shortages of land, education and jobs. Now in the 20th century Irish people are still being forced to leave due to lack of opportunity. This continuing exile was the basic theme of the above-named workshop held in Dublin on January 26th. It was organised by the Women's Studies Forum of University College Dublin — an autonomous collective of feminist academics.

## WOMENS STUDIES FORUM

Introducing the workshop on behalf of the collective Pauline Jackson said they wished to examine women's space and place in society but also to push forward the frontiers of what is considered 'women's issues'. They are convinced that what they have to say about women's forced exile has relevance for society as a whole.

The Women's Studies Forum wish their research to be made as public as possible and useful to society. They consider that universities are closed, elitist institutions which should reach out to the community so that further education may be accessible to all.

## 19th CENTURY AMERICA

The first speaker was Professor Hasia Diner of the University of Maryland who has just published *Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the*

19th Century. She described how the majority of migrants were from the poorer peasantry; how they opted mainly for the unpopular but well paid domestic service and so were able to send large amounts of money home.

In this field they had to confront many racist and middle class prejudices. Irish servant girls were considered 'unstable' because they moved jobs a lot, refusing to be exploited! The history of domestic service itself is hardly recorded due to the middle class bias of most US historians.

## TRADE UNION ORGANISERS

This determined assertion of rights was a general feature of the Irish labour force as a whole in America. 'No other group organised so rapidly or so intensely' and in fact the development of trade union organisation among women in the second half of the 19th century synchronised with the activities of Irish women. They were organised in every area of work: factories, sewing, teaching and nursing. Here again they had to confront middle class prejudice that trade union work was 'disreputable' and that 'ladies' didn't discuss money!

## BRITAIN

The second speaker was Mary Lennon of 'Grainne Mhaol', a collective of Irish women living in London. With funding from the Greater London Council, which has taken a strong stand on anti-racism, they are researching the lives of Irish women emigrants to Britain in the 1940s and 1950s. Their book is due out within the next year. Mary stated that black people in Britain had led the way in asserting their identity and in

challenging colonial attitudes pumped out by authority and the media. Irish people too experienced 'culture shock' and problems of identity in a society which distorts the history of those it has ruled in the past. The British government's continuing efforts to hold onto the six counties using propaganda as a weapon gives the ancient prejudices a new lease on life!

## CONTINUING EMIGRATION

In the discussion from the floor the point was made that the politics of successive Free State governments had created an economic and social climate particularly hostile to women — denying them work and basic rights. The present government denies that emigration is again on the increase with young women forming once more the majority group. Ireland in 1985, still in the grip of conservatism and with 80-90,000 unemployed youth is still not a country fit for its people to live in.

The forum went some way to uncovering the active struggle of Irish workers 'hidden from history' by racial, class and anti-feminist bigotry. It underlined the need to learn the lessons of that history and for a concerted fight-back against a ruling class which is paving the way towards the emigrant ship for thousands of Irish people today.

## CAITLIN NI CONNAIL

### Bibliography

'Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century.' by Hasia R. Diner. Published by The Johns Hopkins University Press. Baltimore and London.



# CONTRACEPTION HYPROCRISY!

Almost 18 months to the day after the passing of the Constitutional amendment outlawing abortion, a row has broken out in the Free State about 18 year olds having legal access to condoms.

Even after the tragic death of teenager, Ann Lovett in Longford last year, and the 'Kerry Babies' scandal, Leinster House politicians are still discussing the South in terms that would convince an outsider that we all arrived here through immaculate conceptions. They ignore the fact of thousands of Irish women going to Britain for abortions; the sale of 30 million condoms in the state last year; and the lengthening list of concealed births by frightened teenagers. We are subjected instead to hysterical ravings about 'moral decay'.

The Fianna Fail spokesperson for health said there was no demand for the Bill — only three days after the Irish Times had published a poll showing that 41% of the electorate felt that contraceptives should be available to everyone while only 15% felt they should be banned. Yet only some months ago the Fianna Fail leader accepted that the 1979 Contraception Act — Haughey's 'Irish solution for an Irish problem' — was inadequate and would have to be updated. Why oppose the changes they had then accepted as necessary? Haughey thought he had a chance of defeating the government on a measure which FitzGerald had staked his 'political virility' on. Naked political opportunism led Fianna Fail to oppose what was in essence

legalisation of what was already a fact — the use of contraceptives by non-married people — and in so doing showed their total disregard for the needs of Irish people, and in particular young Irish women.

Haughey's other angle was to 'out-Catholic' the government by supporting the line of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. The bishops were determined that there should be no liberalising of the contraception laws. They argued that catholic politicians should not distinguish between their obligations to the church and their role as legislators. They raised the spectre of an epidemic of venereal disease and unwanted pregnancies and the moral degeneration of the Irish nation. It was not without cause that they stand accused of being obsessed with sex. More sinister than their ravings about the moral degeneracy of Irish youth — up until now 'our greatest national asset' — was the assertion by the Bishop of Limerick that catholic legislators were bound to take guidance from their bishops. Not only does the church have significant influence in the running of our schools and hospitals, they also want to control the legislature.

Although the Bill was passed by a narrow margin it will not mean a great leap forward for Irish women. Had it failed to pass, however, it would have been a real setback.

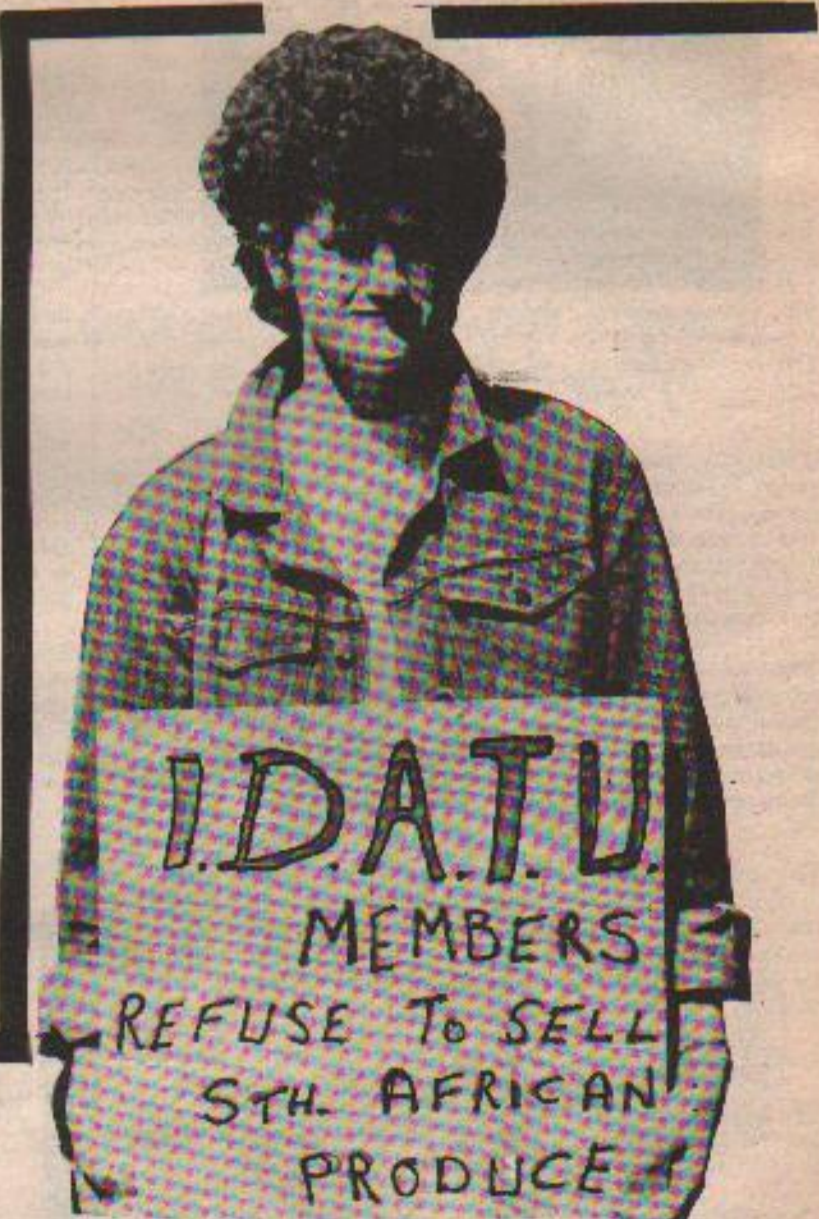
Working class women have never had control of our fertility. The politicians try to con us with talk

about the importance of women in the home and as rearers of children. They deny us the right to a decent job and economic independence. They preside over a system where even if a woman has a job she is likely to earn only 60% of a man's wage; rape is treated as a harmless bit of fun or something 'she was asking for'.

As long as women are oppressed so is the entire working class, a measure of the advance of society is the level at which women exist. The debate on the contraception bill showed clearly the most reactionary elements of the ruling class — the bishops and the backwoodsmen of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael — attempting to block advances for women and young people. The fight for women's control of their own bodies is an important part of the fight for freedom for everyone, for jobs and a proper standard of living, of the fight against police harassment and finally for socialism and a workers' republic.

JOAN O'ROURKE

**A  
GENUINE  
SPIRIT  
OF  
SOLIDARITY**



Thirteen workers at the Henry Street, Dublin branch of Dunnes Stores are still out on strike after nine months. The strike began when IDATU members refused to handle South African goods and management victimised one of their members. Despite lots of

verbal support the ICTU has done nothing practical to assist the strikers. Meanwhile the determination of the thirteen to oppose apartheid saves the honour of the Irish trade union movement. They need every kind of support we can give them!

# WORLD CONGRESS OF REVOLUTIONARIES

The Fourth International (FI) held its Twelfth World Congress Jan. 27-Feb 6, 1985. It was the climax of years of debate in the world movement. The Congress appeal was issued in May 1982. An International Internal Discussion Bulletin (IIDB) was published in English, Spanish and French. Mainline resolutions were translated into several other languages: German, Portuguese, Swedish and others.

Twenty-four issues of the English language IIDB were published up to December 1984. These included draft resolutions adopted by the FI's leading bodies — the United Secretariat and International Executive Committee, individual contributions from comrades, and minority positions.

The FI's Statutes grant minorities the incontestable right to form tendencies or factions around clear political platforms. Such minorities have the right to present their views to the membership, and to coordinate meetings among themselves in order to draw up positions different from the majority.

This principle has often proved difficult to implement at both national and international level. We believe it is worth fighting for in practice. Socialism and democracy, including within our organisations, has to be proved a viable concept. That is the tradition of Lenin's Bolshevik party before the tragedy of Stalinism.

We call this process democratic centralism. It is 'centralism' because once a majority is achieved democratically, it is the duty of the organisation to carry out decisions which have been made.

This concept was fully evident in the debate at the World Congress. A number of minority groups had formed around challenges to the majority position on all of the major questions of the struggle worldwide. The debate included calls for a review of our

interpretation of the theoretical basis of our movement — the theory of permanent revolution.

Through this process of debate a number of issues were resolved and most of the currents dissolved themselves at the end of the Congress. The FI all over the world will now unit to implement the decisions of Congress and test them in practice.

The tradition of democratic centralism is being revived among the working class and its allies today. It is very evident in the consolidation of the Nicaraguan revolution since 1979. The Nicaraguan elections proved very conclusively that the FSLN — the Sandinistas — have huge popular support. But the elections also helped to place the mobilisation of the people on a higher level. Experience of revolution since October 1917 has shown that one of the greatest dangers is bureaucratic degeneration. This lesson was tragically confirmed by Bernard Coard's October 1983 murderous coup d'état against Maurice Bishop in Grenada. The terror unleashed by Coard thoroughly demoralised the Grenadian people, weakening the revolution.

The debate on the Central American revolution reflected this theme, and showed that the FI is deeply involved in Central American solidarity work, arguing at all times for principled broad-based unity with other progressive forces.

The Congress adopted resolutions on Socialist Democracy, Central America, Poland, International Politics, and the Building of the Fourth International.

The International Theses set the framework for the other debates. The reporter, Ernest Mandel, pointed out that the capitalist system had gone through a prolonged and agonising economic crisis since 1968. There have been ups and downs in the general pattern, but each successive recession bites deeper, each recovery is more meagre than its forerunner.

Huge social struggles — the women's movement, the anti-nuclear movement, the international movement in solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution — started before the 1968 economic decline set in. Today these social movements are continuing and deepening, with the defence of the Nicaraguan revolution playing the central role once held by Vietnam. They are modified by the economic crisis, but their demands cannot usually be met due to the severity of the recession.

This material reality obliges the ruling class to choose 'Guns before Butter'. To carry out these brutal policies rightwing dinosaurs like Thatcher, Reagan and Kohl are necessary.

The capitalist system will not collapse automatically. It will only be overthrown by a conscious and disciplined revolutionary movement based on the working class. There are widespread revolts against austerity in the advanced capitalist countries. The British miners have given a tremendous lead in their own industry, but have also built advanced political alliances with other oppressed people. Many of them draw revolutionary conclusions from the treatment they have been given by the police, and the obvious parallel with RUC and British Army tactics in the six counties. Women's liberation is now a mass current among the miner's wives. The miners have given real support to Black people and gays in the British Labour Party.

These are the kinds of revolutionary links the FI is seeking to build today. That process was advanced by the Twelfth World Congress.

JAMES GALLAGHER

## THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Peoples Democracy is the Irish section of the Fourth International, the World Party of Socialist Revolution founded in 1938. The FI's best known militant at that time was Leon Trotsky, president of the Petrograd Soviet and military organiser of the Bolshevik-led socialist revolution of October 1917.

Today the FI stands on the traditions of the first three Communist Internationals:

- For Socialist Revolution in the advanced capitalist countries
- For Political Revolution in the bureaucratised workers' states — We stand with Solidarnosc in Poland against the Jaruzelski regime.
- For Socialist Revolution — the Permanent Revolution — in dominated countries like Ireland — the process we are seeing today in Nicaragua.

The FI's highest authority is its World Congress. It is composed of sections in over 35 countries on each continent. In several parts of the world sections cannot operate or declare themselves openly because of repression.

One example is Poland. However, a Polish language journal — *Imprekor* — is produced in Western Europe and circulates under the noses of Jaruzelski's cops.

The best way to follow the activity of the FI is to regularly read our fortnightly English language journal *International Viewpoint*. We also publish fortnightly international journals in French and Spanish. *IV* can be bought from your local seller of *Socialist Republic*, or by writing to Peoples Democracy at the addresses listed elsewhere in this paper.



[For fuller information on the World Congress, read the FI's fortnightly journal, 'International Viewpoint'.]

# NEW APARTHEID OFFENSIVE

On 19th February 1985 the South African police arrested almost the entire top leadership of the UDF — the United Democratic Front, the mass extra-parliamentary organisation opposed to the country's white government.

The UDF was born out of the protest activity of the black population against the so-called constitutional reforms of the apartheid government of P.W. Botha and is close to the positions of the banned ANC whose leader Nelson Mandela has now spent over 20 years in South African jails. The 'reforms' consisted of newly created chambers in the Apartheid parliament for the country's 2.8m 'coloureds' and 850,000 Indians. The country's huge black majority remains totally disenfranchised. In a huge operation involving the uprooting of thousands in a settled communities, the white government is carrying through its plans to deprive the black population of their rights as citizens by transplanting them to barren 'homelands' which have been granted a farcical 'independence' by the South African state. The latest to receive its independence was Kivandebele, to the north of Pretoria, in December.

The elections in the summer of 1984 to the 'coloureds' and 'Indian' chambers were a humiliating setback for the South African government. The response of the Coloured and Indian populations was clear. Many did not even register to vote and of those who did only 30% of the

Coloureds and 20% of Indians actually voted. The world watched on its television screens the reality of these 'democratic' elections. Protesters were brutally beaten off the streets outside polling stations. Tear gas was used and demonstrators were shot with lead and rubber bullets. In the last six months rioting has broken out in most of the major Black townships of South Africa. The boycott campaign and the accompanying mass agitation showed the growing strength of Black mass organisations, now at a higher point than they have been since the wave of repression in 1960.

The Independent non-racial unions were also involved in the campaign. The FOSATU, one of the most powerful non-racial federations, waged an intense campaign. Thousands of homes in the Eastern Cape were visited by shop stewards and organisers of FOSATU who organised around the FOSATU slogan 'Workers unite, don't vote. To vote is to vote for racism, to vote will only benefit the opportunist leaders, to vote is to accept an undemocratic constitution.'

The unrest since the elections has been continuous and has generalised over a whole range of issues all related to the apartheid nature of the South African state. Young people still in education organised class boycotts around specific demands: recognition of student representative councils; the abolition of corporal punishment; and the ending of age limits that interfere with the already limited educational opportunities of many

young Blacks. Autumn saw the first legal strike by Black miners. The union, the NUM (National Union of Mineworkers) only won recognition in 1982 and organised a strike in support of its annual pay claim. Violent confrontations broke out leaving 10 dead and almost 500 injured among the miners. Paid only a seventh of what white miners receive the Black miners face a death rate six times higher than miners in Britain. Despite a compromise settlement there were rebellions in nearby townships and a curfew was imposed.

At the end of September rioting broke out after a 20% rent rise in government-owned housing in the townships around Johannesburg. The rioting led to massive police attacks including the use of shotguns, rubber bullets and tear gas. Fifty seven people were killed over a period of four weeks.

The most recent riots in February this year in the Crossroads squatter city near Cape Town broke out after workers decided to remain at home to protect the community from a rumoured forced resettlement operation by the state authorities. Residents at the camp which houses 65,000 people, hid behind iron shields as they stoned police who responded by firing tear gas and rubber bullets. According to South African government figures 13 people were killed.

Clearly all of this mass unrest and the way it has generalised across the whole non-white community represents a massive setback for the piecemeal reformist

strategy of the Botha government. It has succeeded in generating the united mass response which it was designed to counter. The growing anti-apartheid movement in the United States evidenced by Ted Kennedy's tour of Black South Africa and the continuing arrests outside the South African embassy in Washington have given urgency to the growing campaigns for economic sanctions which the regime must now take seriously. Hence the recent cosmetic offer to Nelson Mandela of a conditional release which was decisively rejected.

Clearly the massive contradictions in the South African state have opened up wide fissures. Any moves to further reform will only deepen the process. Faced with this, Botha's only other option is massive repression.

The arrest in November of the leadership of the trade union FOSATU and the mass sacking of its striking members in the state-owned SASOL factory and the most recent arrests of the UDF leadership demonstrate the wide ranging nature of this repression, which represents nothing less than a declaration of war on the whole non-white population.

Action must be taken by trade union and political parties worldwide. The tasks of the world solidarity movement are enormous but the enormity of the repression unleashed on the civilian population makes solidarity action a most urgent necessity.

PATRICK MACKEN.





POBLACHT SHOISIALACH

# Socialist Republic

Paper of Peoples Democracy.

## PUBLIC SERVICE SELLOUT!

Last year's plan and this year's budget herald an enormous assault on the living standards of public sector workers. The budget's proposed 6% over 18 months and a 7-month pay pause would force the majority of workers earning less than £100 a week below the poverty line and expenditure cutbacks would cost many of them their jobs.

### LEADERSHIP?

Once again those union leaders responsible for coordinating the defence of their members' living standards, the public service committee of the ICTU, have limited themselves to the customary rhetorical condemnations but have done little or nothing. Public sector unions have individually gone through farcical arbitration and Labour Court applications which have achieved nothing except to waste 7 to 8 months — almost exactly the length of time of the proposed pay pause. The only common purpose which the union leaderships seem to share is to avoid struggle and an inability to face reality.

The government has of course remained unmoved by the eloquence of the trade union negotiators and has stood firm on their cutbacks. When the endless rounds of timewasting and stalling ran out, the first groups of workers to challenge the Coalition's pay norms found themselves at a severe disadvantage. The Central Bank workers who fought a long strike through the Christmas period had to go it alone. Fine Gael with the support of the elected scabs of the Labour Party and Fianna Fail pushed legislation through Leinster House to allow the work of the Central Bank to be done by other banks. The ICTU stood aside as did other public sector unions who face similar attacks. The strike was eventually settled with only a marginal improvement on the original offer.

### DUBLIN CORPORATION

Other groups of workers also lack leadership. The main general operatives (GOS) union in Dublin Corporation, the 'Irish Municipal Trade Union' (IMETU) voted for strike action beginning the first week in January. This was postponed several times ostensibly for negotiations and to allow for coordination with the other two general operative unions ITGWU and FWUI and the craft unions. During this period the revised pay award offer by Alan Dukes in the January budget was rejected by the unions' executives as it gave no improvement on the initial offer. Strike plans were set for all three unions for Feb. 11. The craft unions meanwhile voted overwhelmingly to support the GOS union's application to Congress for an all out picket. Four days before the strike was due, the all out picket was granted. However, it then became apparent the lengths to which the trade union leaders were prepared to go to avoid a strike.

The three unions called general meetings for the eve of the strike to ballot on a new offer, the substance of which was a £60 lump sum. The confidence that the workers had in strike action, already shaken by lack of information and the postponements of the strike mandate were shattered by treachery and wheeling and dealing in the days leading up to the strike. The negotiators from the three unions had requested postponement of the all out picket for two weeks, citing difficulties with a small section of members.

Of course postponing the all out picket allowed Congress off the hook. They didn't have to back their words with action and the delay increased the danger of allowing the grumblings of a small number to develop into open scabbing.

At the general meetings only one executive, the FWUI Corporation Branch, recommended strike action and it was supported by a 3 to 1 majority.

At the IMETU meeting General Secretary Sean Redmond and the rest of the executive made no recommendations and further confused matters by allowing a vote to go it alone which was passed.

This vote broke an agreement with Congress by which an all out picket would only be granted if the votes of all three unions were aggregated. That wasn't the end of the confusion. Before the strike ballot was taken Redmond saw fit to warn his members that the union had only three weeks' strike pay available. Not surprisingly the deal was accepted by a narrow majority.

The ITGWU branch secretary didn't mince his words at their meeting. Warning his members that they had no chance of winning a strike. As they would be taking on the government he announced a lightweight couldn't beat a heavyweight and showed the depth of his solidarity with the British miners' strike by using it as an example of the difficulty they would face! The desired result was achieved, a 2 to 1 majority accepted the offer.

The now isolated FWUI held a further ballot and reversed their strike decision.

The end result of this so-called leadership has been to achieve absolutely nothing. The Corporation GOS's have an agreement which means further cuts in their living standards. It is also likely to be the norm right across the other local authorities in the 26 counties where workers haven't the muscle of Dublin Corporation workers, and were not brought in to back up the dispute.

They have struck a blow against unity such as no boss or government would dare attempt.

### FURTHER ATTACKS

It is precisely maximum unity which is essential in the public sector now. The industrial 'peace' which the trade union leadership seems intent on achieving at the expense of members' interests is likely to prove wholly illusory. Massive cutbacks and attacks are in the pipeline for the public services in general. These are of course no secret and have been well advertised by the Coalition. The only people who seem to act as if they are unaware of what's happening is the trade union leadership. Health Board cutbacks amount to £40 million which could mean a loss of 2,000 jobs and poorer services for everyone. The loudest voices against this have been the members of the various health board committees and local authorities councillors.

On government plans to 'reform' local authorities, again the unions are silent.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS

There are well advanced plans to make sweeping changes within the local authorities. Dublin Corporation is to be broken up into several smaller autonomous areas under a greater Dublin authority. These plans, linked in with the imposition of local charges such as water charges and, ultimately, charges for other services such as bin collection, sewage services etc. This means in effect that workers who already pay the vast bulk of taxation through PAYE and VAT will have to pay twice over for increasingly second-rate services. These plans will also facilitate the demands of private enterprise for further cutbacks in public spending so that the tax dodging business community can avail of more handouts from workers' taxes in grants, payroll subsidies etc. They also wish to see large sections of the public sector privatised and handed over for personal profit to the very people who caused the present economic mess and have thrown 250,000 onto the dock.

### FIGHTING BACK

The people best placed to defend public services are the trade unions. Retreats on the pay issue weaken the ability of the unions to fight on issues such as health, education and local authority services which affect the standard of living of every worker in the country. Many thousands of workers have still to settle their pay claims. Workers in Bord Telecom, An Post, CIE, and 10,000 craft workers and clerical staff in the local authorities are all set to clash with the government on pay and are also facing reorganisation — cutbacks — and privatisation. Real coordination of these struggles can be by linking up with community campaigns such as the water tax campaign begin the process of building unity against government cutbacks. The immediate task for



Trade unionists within the public sector is to limit the scope that their leaders have for betraying their interests. Trade union officials need to be tied to policies which ensure that attacks by government and employers are met with a united, coordinated trade union response. Workers have to begin fighting in their unions for demands which ensure such a response

- end two-tier picketing
- support the anti-water tax campaigns by refusing to handle administration of the charges

- Against privatisation
- An alternative plan for expanding employment and services

The finance for such an alternative plan is available. £2¼ billion of taxpayers' money was spent on interest to the multinational bankers of the IMF. Fight for a moratorium on these payments. Let the rich pay for their debts and their crisis — end handouts of taxpayers' money to the bosses.

## Water Rates Campaign

The campaign against water rates in Dublin is moving into a new phase. In the two weeks before Christmas 90,000 threatening letters were sent out by Dublin Corporation's legal representatives.

In these letters householders were threatened with court action plus substantial legal costs. In February final warnings were sent out to the effect that non-payment of rates was now out of the Corporation's hands and legal proceedings would begin immediately.

This action is a massive bluff by Dublin Corporation, or more relevantly, by the Coalition who are the real culprits behind these attacks. Information on the number of households who have paid is not available but it is clear that the vast majority have not paid. The threat of legal action is an attempt to boost the number of payments up to 50% to make a harder line more feasible. A

slight increase in payment occurred initially by people who were frightened by these threats, particularly by elderly people, many who subsequently found they were exempt anyway. The increased payments have not however substantially altered the figures. The threat of substantial legal costs is also a bluff, as legal costs would be related to the size of debts owed. In most cases £80 is owed so far. In the event of further proceedings tenants and residents would not have much

difficulty covering costs.

### TRADE UNIONS SUPPORT CAMPAIGN

While the trade union movement has widely condemned the introduction of water charges, practical support to the campaign has been almost non-existent. There have been some exceptions, the plumbers and fitters unions have refused to allow their members to be involved in the turning off of water for non-payment of charges. On the other hand, a serious blow to the campaign was effected by the decision of the LGPSU to administer the clerical work involved in operating the scheme — sending out the demand and collecting the charges.

The decision to carry out these functions was agreed by the LGPSU on the basis that regarding claims which the LGPSU were having with the Corporation, and which were unrelated to the extra work involved in administering the water rates would be agreed.

Activists within the water rates campaign should fight to have this disgraceful decision reversed. It should be raised within tenants and residents organisations and within the trade unions to force the ITGWU to take a position of active rather than vocal support. Pressure through the trade unions should also be exerted on Labour Party TDs and councillors who pretend to some sort of allegiance to the trade unions and workers movement.