

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism 30p

Inside:

The terrible reality of Bush's new world order: pages 6&7

NO WAR FOR OIL PROFITS!



**Build the anti-war movement!
US and UK forces out of the Gulf!
End re-fuelling at Shannon!**

THERE IS an urgent need to build a mass campaign in Ireland against war in the Gulf.

Despite the pro-war propaganda poured out by the media, thousands of ordinary people understand fully what's at stake.

The fundamental issue has to do with controlling the flow and price of oil. The basic conflict is between the mass of the Arab people and the Western capitalist powers.

It is as clear-cut an issue for the Left as Vietnam or

Nicaragua.

Yet far from mobilising against the war, the major forces of the Left are effectively going along with it—merely urging that Bush gets UN “cover” before starting the slaughter.

There have only been the mildest of protests against the Haughey Government providing re-fuelling facilities for US war planes at Shannon. *Socialist Worker* calls on all left-wing and anti-war activists to join in the building of a mass campaign in this coming weeks.

The scepticism and opposition to war which already exists must be given a focus.

We aim to build “No to War in the Gulf” committees in the colleges, union branches, workplaces and communities.

The stakes are high. The collapse of State capitalism in the East has given the West a virtual free hand. If the US-led forces win in the Middle East they will be encouraged to intervene and impose their will anywhere in this world they feel their interests threatened.

GATEAUX BOSS IN NORTH JOBS CON



The SDLP deputy mayor of Derry, Mary Bradley (left) associating her party with the destroyer of Irish jobs, Sir Hugh Bidwell.

The Lord Mayor of London, Sir Hugh Bidwell has been to Belfast and Derry to promise new investment from the City of London. The local media made great play of his announcement that "My colleagues in the 'Square Mile' are keen to provide assistance...in the economic regeneration...of this important area of the United Kingdom".

Sir Hugh has a bit of a cheek to talk of bringing jobs to Ireland. He is a member of the Board of Directors of Allied Lyons, the company which has just closed the Gateaux factory in Finglas, Dublin, condemning 600 workers to the dole. The reality for many workers in the North has been to see their jobs destroyed while politicians and businessmen offer nothing more than vague hints of future job creation.

1. The only passenger and freight service between the North and England, Belfast Car Ferries, is to close with the loss of 200 jobs. Economy minister Needham has said the Tory Government will not step in to save the jobs.
2. Carrickfergus Commercial Harbour is to be turned into a 'maritime playground' with the loss of 300 jobs.
3. Belfast City Council is to close its abattoir, throwing more than 100 on the dole.
4. A Housing Executive "shortfall" of twenty nine million pounds is to result in cuts in its building programme, involving hundreds of job losses in the construction industry.
5. An "accounting mix-up" in the Health Centres service and General Practitioner has ended plans

for a number of new Health Centres and led to cuts in surgery staff. 6. Harland and Wolff is making forty skilled engineers redundant. 7. Thirty jobs are to go at International Leathers, the only remaining tannery in the North. 8. Sirocco is laying off thirty engineering workers.

The jobs being destroyed are real.

The jobs being promised are not.

Workers should take note that the most constructive thing they can do about the need for more jobs is to fight to save the jobs that already exist.

This means, in the first place, no co-operation in pushing through redundancies. Workers should demand that the union officials lead the fight to save jobs, and should organise at rank and file level to ensure that real resistance is put up.

SEAN McVEIGH

Don't let them extradite Dessie Ellis!

"You have to blame the Irish government. They know Dessie is innocent."

"But they are involved in a dirty deal with Thatcher and they want to hand him over."

Martha Ellis was speaking about her brother to *Socialist Worker*.

Des Ellis has been in prison since 1983. He entered the USA illegally in 1982 and served a year facing a deportation order. When he arrived back in Ireland in 1983 he was sent to Portlaoise after being convicted on explosives charges.

Just as his sentence was ending in Portlaoise, he was served with an extradition order to face the courts in Britain. He had not even set a foot outside the prison gates.

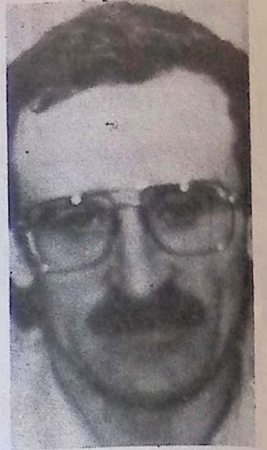
"It's like as if they are trying to double job him. They want to keep him locked up for most of his life," said Martha.

The new charges against Des Ellis claim that some time in the 34 months between January 1981 and October 1983 he caused explosions in Britain.

"The charges are

ridiculous," says Martha. "For part of that time he was in prison in the US. For the rest of the day he was on bail in Ireland. There he had to report three days a week to the police. The Special Branch kept a constant watch on his TV shop. How could he be causing explosions in Britain?"

Martha Ellis has been around the country campaigning for her brother, Des. Everywhere she went she has seen tremendous opposition to extradition.



SYMPATHY

She has also met many of the politicians to campaign for her brother's release. Recently, she met the FF Presidential hopeful Brian Lenihan.

"Lenihan told us that he had every sympathy with the case. He said that Dessie would not get justice in Britain. He promised to do everything he could."

The very next day, however, Lenihan's press secretary rung back to say that nothing could be done.

"It's the same story all over. You get a lot of sympathy from politicians. But they do nothing. It's money and power that counts in this country."

Martha has faced tremendous opposition also in her campaign.

"There is sheer intimidation going on in the Finglas area over this case. My family have been abused by Special Branch officers and called filthy names. They are trying to frighten people off from campaigning on the case."

A recent march in the Finglas area was accompanied by up to ten Special Branch cars. Just as the old Russian KPG operated, Ireland's political police turn up not to gather information but to tell everyone concerned that they are in dangerous waters. Reports abound of visits to employers where someone has been involved in the campaign.

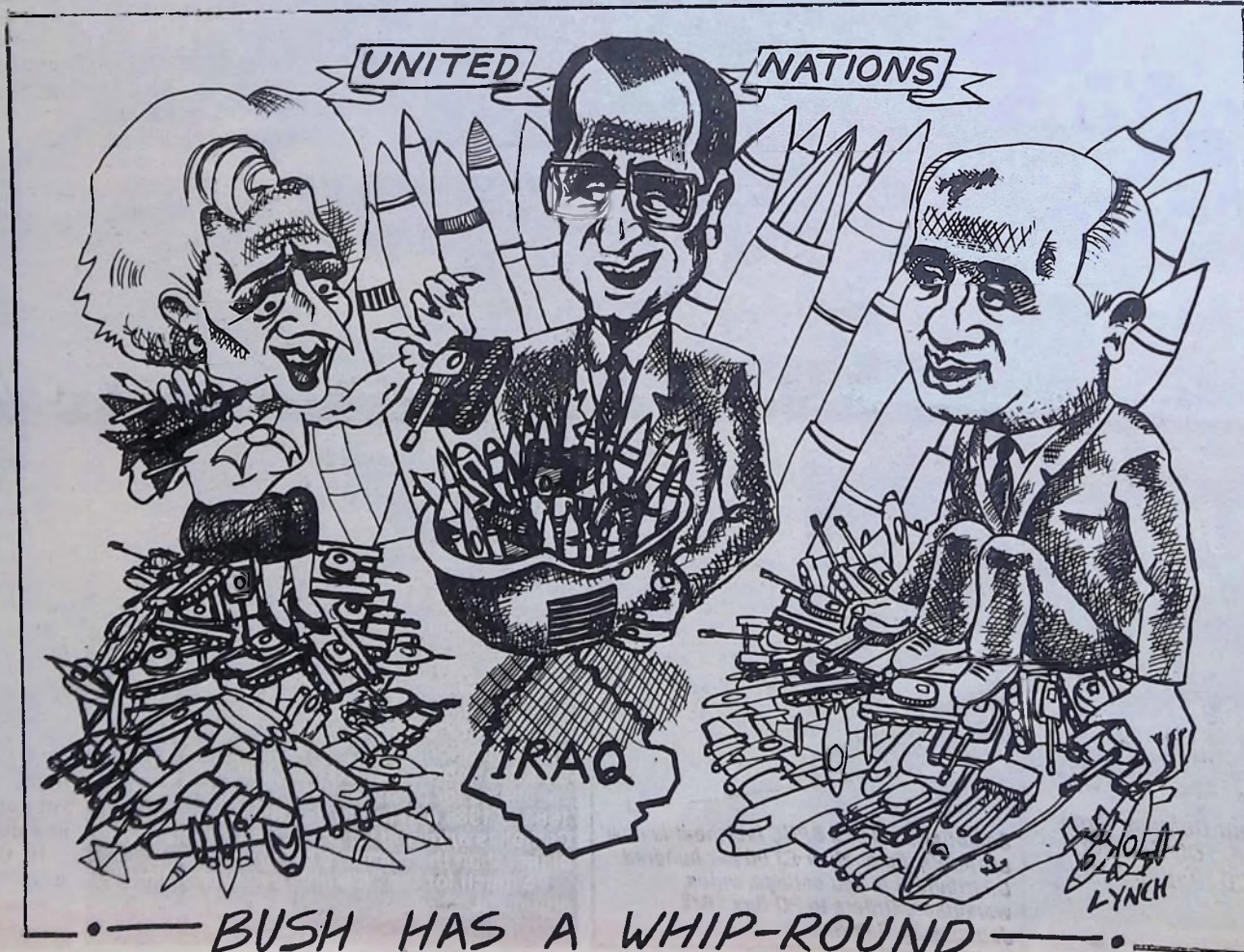
The other problem is the behaviour of the local Workers Party TD Proinsias de Rossa.

MEETINGS

"De Rossa has refused to meet us but he has stood up at union meetings saying that Dessie should be extradited. I do not believe that ordinary Workers Party members are in favour of extradition, though"

Despite these difficulties the campaign is growing. But it will need to make a sharp turn away from lobbying politicians. The hope for the campaign lies in breaking through the intimidation barrier in Finglas and winning real support from the local factories. The recent struggle in Gateaux has shown many workers what is really going in Southern Ireland.

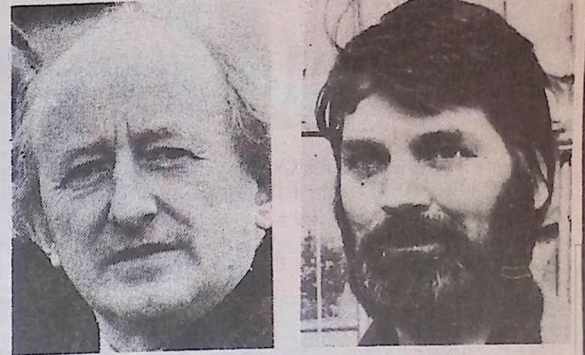
By building a firm, active working class base for the campaign in Finglas, the message can eventually get through to the wider labour movement. This is by no means an easy task. But it will gain far more than lobbying FF politicians who pretend sympathy—but know that they have a lot of power and wealth to defend.



BUSH HAS A WHIP-ROUND

WE THINK

The sham of Irish neutrality



Michael D Higgins and Proinsias de Rossa

THE ISSUE of Southern Irish neutrality has surfaced repeatedly during the debate on the Gulf.

Politicians and ideologists from the far Right (Paddy Cooney, Ronan Fanning, Conor Cruise O'Brien etc.) have taken the opportunity to renew attack on what they call the "sacred cow" of Irish neutrality.

The Southern state, they point out, increasingly coordinates its foreign policy with that of its EC partners—with regard to sanctions against Iraq for example. But it balks at taking the further logical step of joining in military preparations to back the economic situation up.

More generally, they argue, as "Europe" moves increasingly towards political integration the question of a joint defence strategy will unavoidably come onto the agenda. The South can't claim the benefits of economic and political union without accepting its share of responsibility for defence of the union.

Neutrality, they say, was never much more than a reflection of anti-Britishness, and makes no sense at all in the present context.

In fact, since the onset of the Cold War Irish neutrality has been a very questionable concept. The Southern State was neutral insofar as it wasn't a member of NATO.

But ideologically it was as committed to the Western camp as any member of the Alliance. At the UN it was undeviating in its support for the U.S., toeing the line on Vietnam, on Central America, South Africa etc. In deference to U.S. policy, Irish delegates have consistently refused to vote against allowing the murderous Khmer Rouge to represent Cambodia at the Assembly.

Every year U.S. war planes, with Dublin government permission, make use of Irish air space on *thousands* of occasions. There is no recorded case of permission being withheld. Now, of course, the war-planes are landing to re-fuel at Shannon.

On occasion, the notion of Irish neutrality has been very useful to the U.S. The Reagan administration's representatives travelled on Irish passports on the "Irangate" expedition to Teheran. The "neutral" passports provided the perfect cover. The FitzGerald Government asked



us to believe afterwards that it had known nothing about it.

The fact that Irish neutrality was strongly biased toward the West meant that there was no relentless pressure on Dublin governments to become part of the NATO alliance. World capitalism was reasonably content with the Irish ruling class's "neutral" stance.

But things are changing. It is no longer NATO but some restructured "European" defence alliance that the South is inching toward joining.

From the Irish capitalist point of view, ending neutrality now makes a fair deal of sense. "Ireland" can now take its place among the (capitalist) nations of the world—and will therefore have to do its bit to defend the capitalist grouping it is part of.

Unfortunately, this is not the way the main supporters of neutrality pose the issue. People like Michael D. Higgins and Irish CND leaders argue against entering any military alliance on *moral* grounds. During the

Gulf debate in Leinster House last month both Higgins and Workers Party leader Proinsias de Rossa called for the South to give a "moral lead".

The *Irish Times* commented derisively that Higgins had taken such a high moral tone that he was in danger of disappearing into the stratosphere.

The idea that a capitalist government would put considerations of morality about the interests of its own class is ludicrous. The reason Labour and the WP take this line is that they are afraid to face up to the reality—that broadly speaking it *is* in the interests of Southern Irish capitalism to abandon neutrality, but it *is not* in the interests of Southern Irish workers.

It is not in the interest of workers anywhere to defend "their" section of world capitalism.

There is no "Irish interest" which transcends class.

It is in the interest of Irish workers to link up with workers of other countries, not to link up with Irish bosses. That's the reality which the Leinster House Left can't face, the reason they take refuge in abstract talk of moral principles.

They fear that if they were to link the question of neutrality to class struggle at home they would lose the support of the middle-class moralisers.

In the end, it's the class struggle they really want to stay neutral about.

Bigots on the rampage

THE BIGOTS of SPUC are attempting to intimidate students who have given out information on abortion. During the last year in the colleges, SPUC went to the Supreme Court and won an order for costs against students who had defied their injunctions. The amount of the order was £23,000.

SPUC's campaign may, however, backfire. Over the summer a Student Defence Fund has been established in order to raise the money. The Student Defence Fund will now become a focus of activity in the colleges. A week of events has been planned in most of the Dublin colleges.

At this point, it looks like SPUC are also bidding their time. Unlike

last year they have not looked for re-assurances from students that they will not hand out information on abortion in the guide books.

SPUC believe that the students are running scared of the law and will not break the injunctions. They hope that the huge legal costs they inflicted on students will shut them up.

But it is highly likely

that in many of the Dublin colleges and the Regional Technical Colleges information on abortion will be handed out.

If SPUC launch an attack on these students in the courts, a massive campaign must be built. This time around a clear attempt must be made to take the issue outside of the colleges by asking trade union branches for support.

OUT NOW!

Socialist Worker★
FACTSHEET

SPUC: A threat to Irish women

Socialist Worker's SPUC factsheet is now available, 5p each or £3.00 per hundred. Distribute it in your college, union, workplace. Orders to PO Box 1648, James's St, Dublin 8

For information on abortion:
Telephone 01 6794700

Donations to the Student Defence Fund should be sent to: SDF, TCD Students Union, House 6 TCD, Dublin 2.

Limavady bias

AN ARGUMENT that's been growing in popularity in recent years is the one that says that discrimination against Catholics in Northern Ireland will soon disappear, that most remaining discrimination is only at higher levels of management and that this is due to work experience, length of service etc.

This argument has been dealt a blow by the recent Fair Employment Commission report on Limavady District Council.

The FEC investigation found that Limavady Council had 143 employees of whom 94 (66 per cent) were Protestant and 45 (31 per cent) were Catholic. However, the Council area is a majority Catholic one with 52 per cent of the population from a Catholic background and 48 per cent Protestant.

This discrepancy is even more marked when the staff/manual worker breakdown is looked at. Catholics make up only one in five of the staff, one in three of the manual workforce in an area where they are more than half the population.

Furthermore, the FEC took a sample of vacancies for posts with the Council from 1984 to 1986 and found that the number of Catholics applying for posts was substantially higher than the numbers being appointed.

So much for the "it's only a matter of time" argument.

The image contest

HERE'S THREE quotes culled from a radio debate between the people who want to be President of Ireland.

Brian Lenihan: I intend to be an active president, a president of all the people, to make the presidency relevant to the needs of the people. The office can and should be expanded to meet the thinking of our people in this new, modern era.

Mary Robinson: We are in a new situation and there is a great need for new thinking with regard to the presidency. We need a presidency which will fill the needs of the future and which doesn't look back to the past and the past divisions.

Austin Currie: The young people of Ireland are very anxious that the office of the presidency should mean something to them, something more than a cul-de-sac in Phoenix Park. I would visit them as president, the emigrants in London, and relate to them. The presidency should be more to the centre of the lives of the young people

As political debate goes, this stuff wouldn't pass muster among the inmates of a creche for the socially delinquent. But then, given both the nature of the office, and the way this contest has come about, gobbledygook and gibberish is about as much as we have any reason to expect.

Brian Lenihan was selected as Fianna Fail candidate mainly because he nearly died last year and is therefore thought to deserve a bit of sympathy. He flew off to the five-grand-a-week Mayo Clinic to have a liver transplant at a time when pregnant working class women were lying on trollies in hospital corridors because of the cut-backs his government had imposed.

For all we know he was given the liver of some American working class person who had died from the ravages of the Bush regime's similar cut-backs. Maybe this is what they mean when they talk about Irish-U.S. government co-operation.

Lenihan won the FF nomination against the ridiculous oaf from Cavan, John Wilson.

Many were surprised that Wilson made a bid when Lenihan had the vote sewn up. Some sources say it's just that Lenihan isn't likely to last more than a year or so and that Wilson wanted to establish himself as next-in-line for the nod when and if the waxy-faced fixer from Dublin West snuffs it up in the Park.

Then there's Austin Currie, who was coaxed into running by the promise from Alan Dukes of a place in the "shadow cabinet" when he loses, as he definitely will. Currie was the nineteenth choice or something. None of the other possible Fine Gael candidates would even consider the nomination because (a) they all hate Alan Dukes and had no



Presidential hopefuls

intention of doing him any favours and (b) they are well aware that since nobody has any clear idea any more what Fine Gael is for, the party candidate is a dead cert for a drubbing.

Currie, however, suffers from delusions on account of being constantly told by the Dublin papers what a principled and courageous person he was during his time in the SDLP. Deep down (insofar as there is any dimension to Austin Currie which can be described as "deep down") he knows that this is as far from the truth as Larry Goodman is from being an honest man. So maybe he thinks that the electorate will be hoodwinked as easily as the hacks.

Mary Robinson in some respects is the most laughable of the lot. She's being promoted as the candidate of the Left.

RESIGNED

It says something about the Labour Party that it nominated somebody who had resigned from the party in protest against its policy—in this case policy on the North. It says something about the Workers' Party too that they endorsed her as well, instead of running a candidate of their own.

It was all in the interests of "Left Unity", claimed de Rossa. The fatuous nature of this "Leftism" became clear when Robinson—Dukes still hadn't come up with a candidate at this point—tried for the endorsement of Fine Gael as well!

Given that these three deadbeats are the only runners in the race, it's small wonder that most working class people couldn't care tuppence which of them wins.

The presidency is a mere ornament anyway, with no power under the constitution. All the talk about "expanding the office" and "an active presidency" has been heard at every presidential election in the past. Nothing can or will come of it.

This is not to say that some use couldn't have been made of the election if the Labour or Workers' Party or both had a semblance of socialist seriousness about them. The election could have been turned into a referendum on government policy.



For example, Mary Robinson, in her capacity as a leading barrister, has been prominently involved in the case against the ban on abortion information. She would have been well-placed to stomp the country urging people to vote for her in order to indicate their opposition to women being deprived of this information.

Since it's in line with both Labour and WP policy, this could have been the basis for a genuine broad-based campaign.

That would have transformed the nature of the contest.

Instead, not a word of the issue has been heard, neither from Robinson, nor from either of the two Left parties.

Again, this tells us a great deal about how serious they are about seeking real change.

It's quite likely Robinson will do well. In the absence of sharp political debate, "image" and "personality" will play a big part. In that regard she won't be overshadowed, and could even give Currie a real run for second place. A low poll would boost her percentage rating.

It's a fair prediction she will win a higher percentage than the combined "Left" vote in recent general elections.

The danger is that the opportunists in Labour and WP leaderships will then argue that this is the way forward—no sharp ideas, no sense of struggle, no commitment to anything "controversial". In other words, it will strengthen the hold of right-wing ideas in both parties.

The SWM will be intervening in the campaign to try to engage Left-wing supporters of Robinson in debate on these issues, and to argue for the need to build a genuine socialist party of struggle rather than encourage illusions in "progress-by-consensus".

Politics of beef scandal exposed

THE GOODMAN affair has exposed the sleazy relationship between big business and the Fianna Fail government.

More important it has shown the way government ministers in a capitalist society inevitably act as agents of the capitalist class.

Not only did Fianna Fail arrange to use the tax-payers' money to cover Goodman's exports to Iraq—even though much of the beef didn't come from Ireland at all—but we now learn that former FF Finance Minister Ray MacSharry used his position as EC Agriculture Commissioner to get Goodman favoured treatment from the Dutch bank, Amro.

MacSharry approached the former Dutch Minister for Agriculture, Gerrit Braks, to intervene with Amro and persuade them to hold off a legal action to liquidate Goodman International until such time as legislation had been rushed through Leinster House to appoint an examiner to the company.

It is also known that MacSharry discussed the affairs of Goodman International with Charlie Haughey before he intervened.

All this was part of the payback for the money Goodman has contributed to Fianna Fail over the years.

MAFIA

The whole business has ripped the mask off Irish capitalism. Haughey, MacSharry etc were operating like a Mafia "family", stitching up deals and calling in favours around Europe to see their favourite millionaire right.

The Goodman company was built up by Fianna Fail as a model of the way Irish capitalism was going to work in the 1990s.

The basic strategy, worked out by whizz-kids in the Industrial Development Authority, was to create a number of Irish multinationals big enough to compete in the EC once tariff barriers had come down. In 1989 IDA executive director Sean Donnelly talked of building up 10 companies with a turnover of more

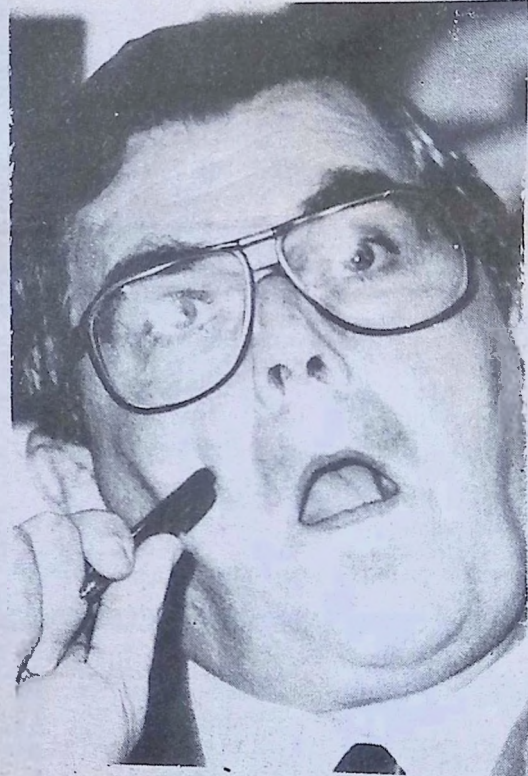
than a billion pounds a year, and sixty companies with a turnover of £100 million plus.

Goodman's close association with Fianna Fail helped to have his company selected as the first to be State-assisted in this way. Three months after coming into office in 1987, Haughey appeared at a press conference with Goodman to announce a five-year "development plan", involving £23 million from the IDA, £70 million in tax relief and £30 million in EC assistance, also to be

arranged by the Government.

In addition, Fianna Fail reinstated the Export Credit Insurance Scheme, of which Larry Goodman was by far the main beneficiary.

In return Goodman undertook to build four new meat plants and to "create" over 1,000 new jobs. Instead, he used the tax-payers' money for speculation in the British food industry. It was the fact that his gambles there didn't come off, coupled with losses of more than £100 million in Iraq, which brought the



McSharry exposed

★ We see that the retired radical and apprentice Dublin "character" Joe Duffy has completed the process of selling-out.

The portly chap who once paraded the land as a rollicking revolutionary has now appeared in a full page ad shovelling praise on the coal merchants, CDL.

After a "long day working" on the Gay Byrne Show, the copy written for him by some striped-shirt yuppie in an advertising agency tells us, Joe loves to come

home to a "real coal fire made from CDL Smokeless".

"Smokeless Joe" will be well aware that 37 CDL workers recently had to abandon a bitter 24-week strike to save their jobs—largely because union officials wouldn't help spread the dispute.

★ The right-wing hysteric who contributes a column to the Waterford News & Star—has been lamenting the political downfall of his PD soul-mate Martin

whole house of cards tumbling down.

The affair smells of corruption. In many countries the government, or at least a number of ministers, would have resigned by now.

But it is important to remember, too, that the strategy for building Goodman up with State assistance was as rational a strategy for Southern Irish capitalism as any other. The fact that Goodman turned out to be a "wide boy" doesn't change this.

NINETIES

The affair has arisen not so much out of the particular relationship between Goodman and FF—although that adds spice to the scandal—but out of the operation of the capitalist system, which required that the Irish economy should somehow ready itself for unfettered competition within the EC in the nineties.

It is this which makes the response of the major parties of the Left so inadequate. Both Labour and the WP have concentrated on the "FF connection", instead of using the issue to expose the nature of the capitalist system to the working class. There has been no statement from any leading member of either party making the straightforward observation that this sordid business is rooted in the operation of capitalism.

ACTION

They have called for unspecified Government action to safeguard the jobs of Goodman workers, but offered the workers no lead as to how to fight. No mention of occupation, for example, to force the government's hand, or demands that the State fund the workers to run the industry.

Both parties have lost contact with the idea of working class struggle. What the story demonstrates is precisely the need for class politics, and for a party based on class struggle.

But then that's the type of outfit you end up supporting when your "radicalism", as we recall, was always the sort that had more to do with creating a "controversial" personality than contributing to the struggle of working people.

Cullen—and blaming the S.W.M.!

We can only say that we hadn't realised that our highly active members in Waterford had acquired quite this degree of influence. But we are delighted to plead "guilty" to the charge.



THE WORLD is facing one of its bloodiest wars for decades. General Swartzkopf, the US commander in the Gulf now controls over a quarter of a million soldiers.

Among his firepower are nuclear weapons on aircraft carriers such as the US Eisenhower.

Up to now Bush and Thatcher have hesitated in launching an all-out war in order to complete the military build-up. Bush will soon have enough troops and weapons in place.

But there are some signs of nervousness among the US establishment. The *Wall Street Journal* reported that "officials worry that the US could bite off more than it could chew in the Gulf... The administration is sobered by memories of the Korean War, when the US... ended up bogged down in a long war that succeeded only in preserving the status quo."

In the Korean War 200,000 were killed and five million were left homeless. Today the level of weaponry could make those figures look minuscule.

Despite some of these worries in the US establishment, the overwhelming argument is in favour of war. A number of factors account for their willingness to unleash this savagery. First, there is no guarantee that the blockade of Iraq—a country with thousands of miles of frontier—will work. Second, a long blockade will cost the West dearly. The US and Britain are already on the verge of recession. The long blockade pushes up oil prices and places immense costs on these economies.

COMPENSATED

Third, and most important the US have recognised that their declining economic power can only be compensated for by showing that it is the military policemen of the world. The US Secretary of State, James Baker staked this claim when he said recently that the US is now "the only nation with the economic, political and military capacity to take on the crucial role of international leadership."

It is for these reasons that there is every likelihood of a bloody war. In this situation socialists should be working flat out against the war drive. Protest meetings, marches, petitions should be organised to mobilise the anti-war mood.

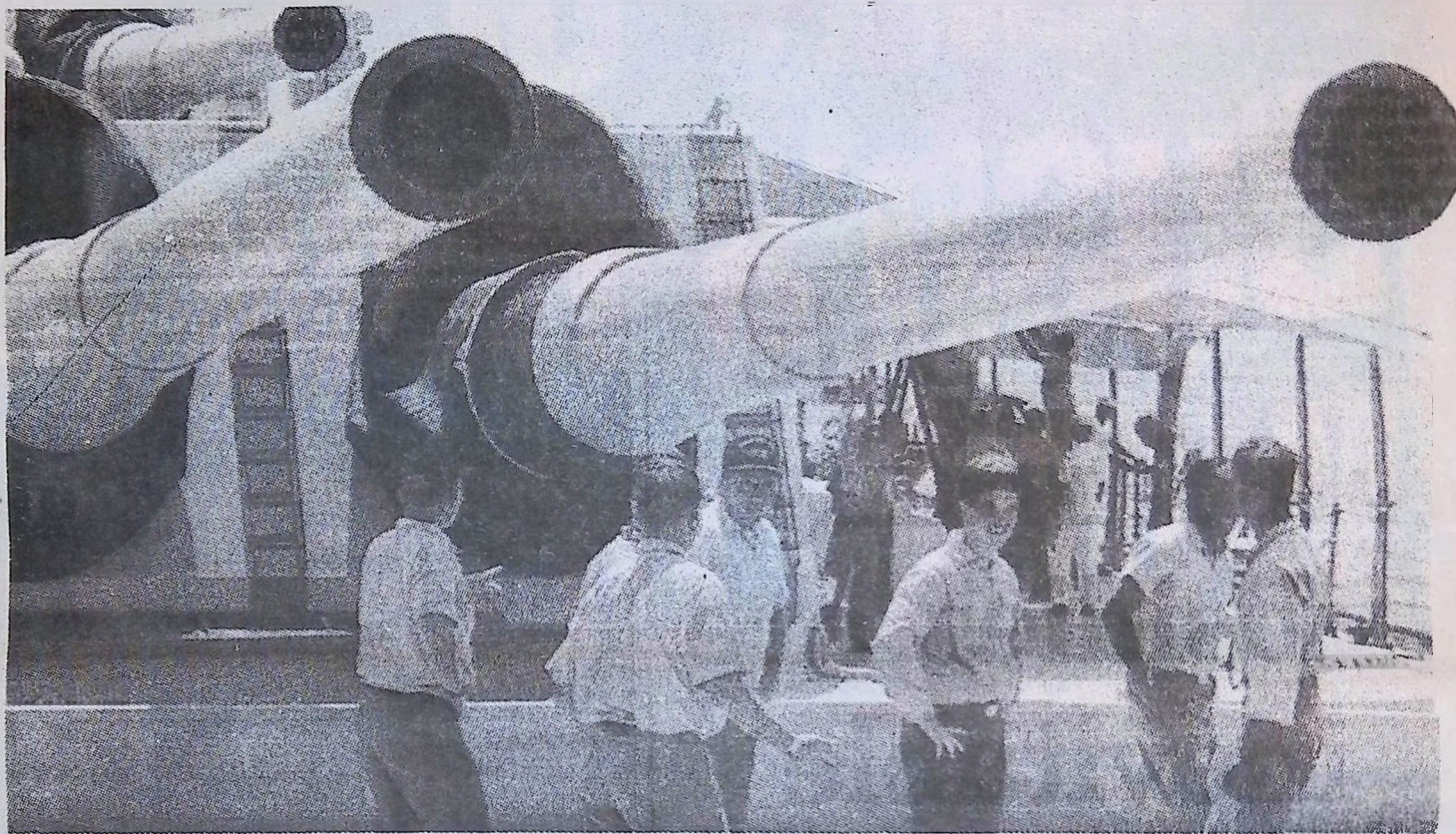
But it is also necessary to show that war and capitalism are inevitably linked. A year ago after the collapse of the Russian empire, many believed we would live through a long era of peace under capitalism. Today the words of Connolly in 1915 ring more true. "War" Connolly wrote, "is a relic of barbarism only possible because we are governed by a ruling class with barbaric ideas... the working class of all countries cannot escape the horrors of war until in all countries the barbarous ruling class is overthrown".

In the particular case of the Gulf socialists must also tie their anti-war position to one of total opposition to imperialism. Here many have real difficulties when faced the figure of Saddam Hussein. The propaganda of the Western war machine has gone out to portray him as the new Hitler.

Labour Party TDs, such as Michael D Higgins, conclude from this that he is worse than democratic America and give support to the blockade of Iraq. Others conclude that Bush and Hussein are equally bad and they should simply say "a plague on both your houses."

Both views are mistaken. Hussein

Build the anti-war movement



The West has mobilised the biggest intervention since World War 2

is not a new Hitler and Iraq is hardly the Third Reich. Up to 1958 Iraq was a virtual colony of Britain, ruled by the puppet King Feisal. Hitler commanded a major imperial power with vast resources.

Iraq is also completely dependent on one commodity—oil. Despite its importance, Western capitalism has shown after the oil crisis in 1973 and 1979 that it is capable of forcing down the price of oil. Germany in 1933 possessed a vast industrial complex that sustained its military drive.

More importantly, the image of Hussein as the new Hitler ignores the very simple fact that it not him but Wall St and the Pentagon which poses the greatest threat to the world's working class. Across the world millions starve because their governments pay back debts to US banks; nationalist regimes such as the Sandinistas in Nicaragua or Gadaffi in Libya were constantly threatened by the firepower of the Pentagon.

Those who take the position of "a plague on both your houses" ignore these elementary facts. Iraq is a country that is dominated by imperialism even if it has grown comparatively wealthy through oil. In that situation the duty of every socialist is to side with Iraq.

To see why, we must consider what a victory for the US would mean. It would mean the permanent presence in the Middle East of large concentrations of Western troops. This would mean a return to the days when the British and French

divided the area between them and imposed puppet regimes. Already regimes such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and even Syria are binding themselves closer to US imperialism to protect themselves against the anger of their own people.

Victory for the US by means of war—or through diplomacy—will also strengthen the dominance of the Pentagon over the rest of the world. It will give confidence to the US generals to reverse the Vietnam syndrome and deal more severely with "uppity regimes" such as Nicaragua or Libya.

Does this mean, therefore, that socialist support Saddam Hussein? Here one needs to be absolutely clear. It is possible to side with Iraq in its conflict with imperialism without giving the slightest political support to the Hussein's regime.

Socialists have to do this many times. During the War of Independence in Ireland in 1918-1923, British socialists supported Irish republicans in their fight with the empire. The Russian Bolsheviks were the first to recognise the unofficial republican government of Dail. But this did not mean giving the slightest endorsement to the right wing politics of Eamonn de Valera or Arthur Griffith.

In the case of Iraq, we are for the overthrow of Saddam Hussein but by the Iraqi and Arab peoples, not by US imperialism. Hussein is a tyrant—but the US is not fighting him because he is a tyrant. They simply want a more docile thug in his place.

Hussein has been forced by circumstances to call on the mass of poor Arabs to rise up against the oil sheiks and to attack regimes which are puppets of imperialism. The effects of this rhetoric can be explosive.

In the West Bank and the Gaza, Palestinians have organised a one day general strike in support of Iraq. In Syria, 100,000 marched to demand unity between Syria and Iraq and were met by bullets. In Jordan and Yemen huge movements have grown.

GENUINE

None of this means that Hussein is a genuine anti-imperialist, however. Despite his own rhetoric he is not even a new Nasser. He has already shown that he was willing to do the dirty work of the US and the Western powers when he launched a war against Iran.

But if the US generals crush Hussein, they will send out a message that any defiance of the imperial powers will lead to the most brutal punishment. In this situation socialists who want to stay neutral, will end up acquiescing in the brutality of the US war machine.

Socialist therefore have to stand on the same side of the Iraqi regime—insofar as it is fighting imperialism. But we also warn from the outset that the only chance of defeating imperialism would require a mass popular upsurge across the Middle East. A government that armed its own workers, made the

rich pay for the crisis caused by the blockade, granted freedom to oppressed groups such as the Kurds would be in a far better placed to inspire that mobilisation.

Hussein's own brutal class rule over Iraq means that he will never allow this sort of a fight against the Western war machine. Instead he will, despite his own rhetoric, seek a way out through compromise.

Our primary concern, however, is with our own rulers in the West. Here we have to remember the experience of the Vietnam war. In the early sixties opposition to the war was drowned in the chauvinist propaganda of the US. The "domino" theory made out that if the NLF in Vietnam was victorious the whole of Asia would "fall to the communists". Many believed this—just as many believe today that Hussein is a new Hitler.

But as soon as the truth about the war leaked out from the late sixties on, a mass anti-war movement developed in the US and America. The anti-war mood undermined the US army on its home front. Eventually the most powerful military machine in the world was defeated by the Vietnamese.

Today it will be the revolutionary socialists who will be the backbone of at the start of the anti-war movement. But as the truth about Western imperialism role in the Gulf leaks out that movement will be joined by thousands. It is for this reason that the SWM is setting out confidently to build opposition to US imperialism today.

The terrible reality of Bush's new world order

The brutal reality of the "new world order" is starkly clear not just in the Middle East but throughout the so-called "Third World".

The most recent World Bank report admitted that more than a billion people live on less than four pounds a week each.

More than 80,000 children—the population of Derry—die every day of preventable diseases.

It is vital for socialists to keep clearly in mind that this is what is being defended when Bush talks of the rich and powerful—whether under U.N. auspices or not—taking it upon themselves to maintain the "rule of law".

In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, 20 percent of all children die before the age of five. Only half those who survive get any education. Life expectancy is 25 years less than in Ireland. The degree of poverty is steadily increasing, not decreasing.

Yet sub-Saharan Africa is not "naturally" poor. It has oil, iron ore, bauxite, uranium, gold, diamonds, coal, copper etc. etc., and a climate and soil which could easily yield harvests

sufficient to feed the entire population very well.

The only reason sub-Saharan Africa is very poor is that the system of political and economic organisation ensures that this will be so. This system has been imposed by imperialism.

With the exception of Ethiopia and Liberia, all of the countries in the region are to a large extent creations of European colonialism. The borders essentially mark out the limits of the control of the various European powers in their hey-day—Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Portugal.

PROMOTED

Within the artificial borders, each of the European powers encouraged and defended its 'own' client rulers. Tribalism and hatred of neighbouring peoples were promoted.

In return, the corrupt native elites became fabulously wealthy alongside the major Western companies.

Political independence for the African countries has left the essentials of this system intact. Tiny ruling classes—the vampire elite—work closely with

major Western companies and pile up profits for themselves alongside the piles of corpses of the poor.

The average annual income in Zaire, for example, is under one hundred pounds. But the personal fortune of the vicious tyrant President Mobutu is estimated at three thousand million pounds.

INSTALLED

He didn't manage this on his own. He was installed by the CIA, with the connivance of the UN, in 1965. Over the next ten years, U.S. firms—having replaced the Europeans as world leaders of imperialism—invested more than \$3 billion in the country. Meanwhile, the U.S. provided "aid" largely used to build up a military machine with which Mobutu could defend his regime—and thereby defend U.S. economic interests.

Today, Mobutu remains America's number one African ally. The U.S. wouldn't hesitate to intervene to prop him up if he was seriously threatened from within or without.

This is the "new world order".

However, there are signs of hope. In May students demonstrated against Mobutu's despotism. Eighty were massacred. In response, workers in the crucial copper mines came out on strike.

Mobutu was forced to back off, and release student leaders and other political prisoners. 'Liberalisation' has been promised.

In Zambia, too, miners have struck this year against repression and price rises, and the universities are still shut after militant student protests against the one-party system of Kenneth Kaunda.

In Kenya the dictator Daniel arap Moi is trying to deal with growing opposition with a mixture of coercion and concession.

In the Ivory Coast—where 80 percent of the people live in poverty and the Pope opened a one hundred million pound church last month—civil servants, teachers and students have been on the streets for political change this summer.

It is to these developments that socialists should look, not to any new "order" agreed between Bush and Gorbachev.

AFTER THE US-USSR summit in Helsinki last month George Bush talked about a "new world order" which would replace the East-versus-West split of the Cold War era.

The idea was that the most powerful countries would join together to maintain the 'rule of law' in international relations.

The operation in the Gulf was presented as a possible model of the way this might work.

This was welcomed almost universally in the media, including the Irish media. Cooperation would now take the place of confrontation, ran the argument, making the world a safer place for everyone.

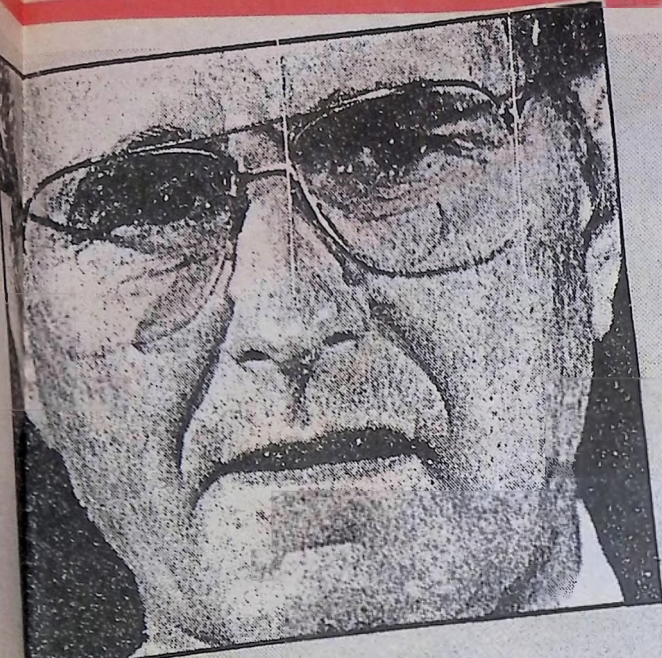
In fact, while the confrontation between the Eastern Bloc and the Western powers might be coming to an end—because the state-

capitalist East have compete enterpris world is becoming The rea



New Order means old starvation for millions

USSR
last
talked
order
ce the
plit of
at the
ntries
er to
law in
s.
ie Gulf
as a
e way
omed
in the
Irish
would
of con-
argu-
orld a
one.
con-
n the
d the
ght be
end—
tate-



Gorbachev is going along with—is that the rich and powerful will police the world so as to maintain not a “new order” at all, but the old order which has given rise to misery, want and war.

Some socialists find themselves disorientated by these developments. For decades they have seen all questions in the international arena as reflections of an East-v-West division, with the East as the more “progressive” side. They now find themselves unable to take a clear line on what’s happening.

Campaigners who saw “peace” as a progressive aim in itself, find it awkward to object to the results of the “Cold War” ending.

In fact, the case for opposing US-led imperialism is stronger than ever.

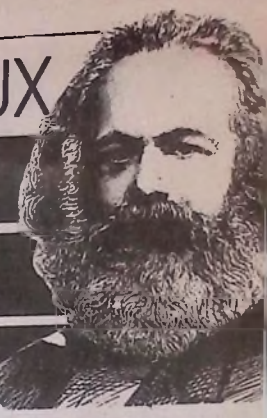
capitalist economies of the East have proved unable to compete with their free-enterprise rivals—the world is by no means becoming a safer place. The real confrontation,

between those who control the world’s economy and the masses who suffer exploitation, is likely to intensify, not diminish.

What Bush has in mind—and what

JOHN MOLYNEUX

★ Teach yourself Marxism



THE STOCK exchange

Marxism and terrorism

THE Carlton Club—watering hole of the Tory establishment—the Stock Exchange and now Ian Gow, the Tory party’s number one Orangeman.

There is no doubt that the IRA is improving its choice of targets.

Every socialist would prefer to see the IRA directly attacking members of the ruling class rather than blowing up ordinary working class people, as occurred in the terrible tragedies of the Birmingham pub bombings, Enniskillen and a number of other occasions.

But does the identity of the target substantially affect our political attitude to the tactic or strategy of individual terrorism? The answer is no.

The Marxist criticism of terrorism as a method of struggle is not something to be wheeled out as an alibi or excuse when some appalling disaster occurs and then quietly put to one side on the occasion of a spectacular “success” like the assassination of Ian Gow.

In the first place it should be noted that no matter how carefully the target is selected it is inherent in the nature of bomb planting and other terrorist operations that accidents can and will happen, resulting in the deaths and injury of innocent people.

But this is not the main point. Obviously Marxists regret the loss of innocent life and would prefer methods of struggle that avoid this, but this is not the basis of the Marxist objection to terrorism.

Revolution and even more so civil war may also result in the death of innocents. However, we do not therefore renounce revolution and civil war any more than bourgeois politicians, for all their talk of peace, renounce their bombs and artillery on the grounds that war kills civilians.

The stakes in the class struggle are so high—the progress and liberation of all humanity—that if terrorist tactics served to advance this struggle then revolu-

tionary Marxists would be obliged to support them and indeed engage in them.

The point is they do not.

The fundamental Marxist objection to terrorism is that it attempts to do for the working class and the masses what the working class and the masses can only do for themselves.

Terrorism rarely succeeds in even shifting government policy, still more rarely does it produce the overthrow of a government and under no circumstances can it bring about genuine social transformation, the social revolution.

Heroic

Let us take two historical examples: first, Russia around the turn of the century. It was then that the Marxist case against terrorism was first fully developed by Lenin and others in opposition to the Narodniks (Friends of the People) and Social Revolutionaries.

The latter showed enormous courage, pitting themselves revolver and bomb in hand against even more blatant oppressors and tyrants than Ian Gow and the members of the Carlton Club, namely the Tsar and his ministers.

In 1881 they succeeded in assassinating Tsar Alexander II. Nevertheless it was not the heroic terrorists who forced Tsarism into major political concessions, it was the mass of workers in the 1905 revolution.

Nor was it the terrorists who overthrew Tsarism in 1917. Again it was the working class through mass action in the factories and streets.

And it was they, led by the very Marxists who had rejected individual terrorism, who went on to smash capitalism in Russia.

The second example is the Brighton bombing which so nearly disposed of Thatcher in 1984. There is no doubt that this evoked quite widespread sympathy from sections of the working class not only in Ireland but also in Britain. “A pity they missed her,” was a comment frequently heard on the streets.

But did the Brighton bombing mark a turning point in the struggle? Did it wrest concessions from the government or force a change in policy?

Did it bring Irish freedom and unity any nearer and, had Thatcher been killed, would it have prevented the British ruling class from replacing her with someone else equally reactionary and equally committed to British imperialism?

The answer to all these questions is no.

Terrorism shares with the capitalist media, with liberalism and social democracy, an enormous overestimation of the role of individual oppressors. The real task is to defeat the class these odious individual represent.

That can be achieved only by mass action.

The problem is that, far from encouraging this mass action, it actually disorients it. Intentionally or unintentionally terrorism says to the working class, “The real struggle is our secret conspiracy. Your role is only secondary.”

It subordinates the masses to a few heroic individuals acting on their behalf.

This point was so well expressed by Trotsky writing in 1911 that I can do no better than quote his words

Moralisers

“In our eyes individual terror is inadmissible precisely because it belittles the role of the masses in their own consciousness, reconciles them to their powerlessness and turns their eyes and hopes toward a great avenger and liberator who someday will come and accomplish his mission.”

Needless to say, this rejection of terrorist tactics in no way puts us in the same camp as those moraliser and opportunists who seize on every terrorist attempt to pour out their hypocritical condemnations of “evil, cowardice and violence” and to glorify squalid little bigots like Ian Gow.

Nevertheless it is a principled position which we maintain in fair weather as in foul.

Kuwait: a product of imperialism

The Western forces and their allies say they are in the Gulf to assert the independence of Kuwait and restore the government which fled when the Iraqis moved in. This is exactly the type of operation the “international community” would undertake under the “new world order”.

Kuwait is a honey country. It is a creation of imperialism.

The borders of Kuwait were drawn by the British High Commissioner to Baghdad, Sir Percy Cox, in a tent in the desert in 1922. This was part of the carve-up of the region between Britain and France following the defeat of the Turkish Empire in the First World War.

The reason for setting up Kuwait was to prevent the new state of Iraq having direct access to the Gulf. Its very existence has always been intended to damage Iraq.

The British appointed the al-Sabah family as rulers of Kuwait. The al-Sababs had been looking after British interests in the port of Kuwait for decades, for a fee of fifteen thousand pounds a year. Kuwait remained a British protectorate until 1961.

The discovery of oil made

it even more important for the West to maintain control of Kuwait. The al-Sabah family became highly valued “allies” not just of Britain but of the U.S. and the rest of the Western powers.

INVESTMENTS

They became fantastically rich, and now have an estimated hundred billion dollars of assets and investments in the West. The fact that the vast majority of the population were immigrant workers with no rights at all didn’t trouble Western governments. What they wanted was that the interests of the major oil companies should be looked after, and the al-Sabah family was doing that very well.

When Saddam Hussein marched into Kuwait he was challenging this set-up. That’s what Bush, Thatcher etc. have against him.

Thus the very borders of “countries” like Kuwait are part and parcel of the system by which the population and the wealth of the region is exploited by international capitalism.

All of the other borders in the Middle East were devised in the same fashion by the colonialist Percy Cox on the same day as he “invented” Kuwait. There is no way in which the imperialist domination of the region can be ended without ripping up these borders.



...vation for millions in the Third World

THE UNITED NATIONS



Unity in whose interests?

SPEAKING on the Gulf crisis in Leinster House last month, Proinsias de Rossa of the Workers Party laid great stress on 'Ireland's responsibilities to the United Nations'.

Michael D Higgins, famous Labour left-winger and his party's Foreign Affairs spokesman, demanded the fullest implementation of UN sanctions.

And a fierce debate has been raging in the *Irish Times* and elsewhere on Ireland's 'neutrality'. All sides accept, it would seem, that the United Nations represents the 'international community' and stands above great power politics.

A glance at the history of the UN shows this has never been the case, and couldn't be the case.

During the Second World War the United States, Russia and Britain referred to themselves as 'the united nations'.

After the war Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin, who between them carved up the world into spheres of influence, also agreed to establish the 'United Nations Organisation'.

Whatever the UN Charter says, its function was not to defend human rights, freedom, democracy and the right to self-determination. Rather it was to act as a figleaf for the superpowers as they tried to police the world.

WORTHLESS

From day one, resolutions passed in the General Assembly of all the member nations have been worthless rhetoric unless they were backed up by the superpowers sitting on the UN Security Council.

The UN could operate only when the United States needed it—for example in the Korean War, the Suez crisis and now in the Gulf.

Without US blessing nothing happened. So 15 years of UN sanctions against Rhodesia after its unilateral declaration of independence achieved nothing, nor did hundreds of UN resolutions condemning South Africa's illegal occupation of the UN protectorate of Namibia nor similar resolutions condemning Israel's occupation of Gaza and the West Bank.

UN troops first saw action in the Korean War in 1950. The cold war was beginning to hot up with the US and Russia fighting on the fringes of their empires. When Russia temporarily boycotted the UN, the US seized the opportunity to pin the UN flag on its own troops.

The US provided the bulk of the UN troops in South Korea, their funding and the command structure. US General MacArthur was in charge. For him the war was an anti-Communist crusade. He wanted

to drop nuclear weapons on North Korea and invade China.

When it came to negotiating the peace the US was even more dominant than it had been in the fighting.

UN troops were next used in Suez, after Britain, France and Israel invaded Egypt in 1956 to 'teach a lesson' to President Nasser, of Egypt, who had just nationalised the Suez Canal.

Eisenhower, the US President, saw his chance to replace British



UN FORCES welcomed in Korea. They left behind thousands dead to protect US interests

and French influence in the Middle East.

The UN was 'asked' to put together a 'peace keeping force' for the Middle East and dispatch it within 48 hours. Once again US troops dominated.

Right wingers in the British Labour Party could happily raise the slogan 'Law not War' and oppose British military intervention—instead they supported UN action. They thus supported the US line.

DECLARED

One of the bloodiest UN operations was in the Congo in 1960. The Belgian colony had been governed by the crudest divide and rule techniques and consequently, when independence was declared, the country began to break up.

The mineral-rich province of Katanga, where Belgium and British business interests were concentrated, tried to split from the rest of the country. This move was physically

supported by Belgian troops and mercenaries and verbally backed by Britain and Rhodesia.

Patrice Lumumba, the left-wing president of the Congo, appealed to the UN for help. The US was delighted. The Central Intelligence Agency already had Lumumba marked down as a Communist.

India, Ireland, Sweden and Ethiopia provided the soldiers for the UN force, but the US set the strategy and the targets.

The US wanted a Congo without special Belgian and European interests and so the Katanga secession was smashed. Along the way, President Lumumba was abducted, thrown into a UN plane and later murdered. He was replaced by the pro-American Mobutu, who to this day runs one of the bloodiest regimes in Africa.

In the last 20 years UN troops have policed Cyprus, the Middle East and the India-Pakistan border. But they have only acted when the superpowers wanted to separate

lesser nations warring over regional dominance.

When the US Navy sailed into the Gulf in 1987, ostensibly to defend freedom of navigation, but in reality to back Iraq in its war against Iran, US President Ronald Reagan refused point blank to allow it to fly the UN flag.

The reason was simple. Reagan wanted to protect US oil interests by preventing an Iranian victory. But he also wanted to mark the end of the 'Vietnam syndrome' and show the world that the US was prepared to use its military muscle.

Once the US had tipped the balance of the war, it allowed the UN to take some credit for the eventual cease-fire.

In the current Gulf crisis the US needs the UN to give spurious legitimacy to its renewed efforts to secure its Middle East oil supplies.

But if the 'concensus' at the UN breaks down, it will try and act alone, as it did in Vietnam.

History has shown the UN is

certainly not independent and impartial and does not enforce 'common sense' and 'honesty' around the world.

Like every other police force it defends the status quo and its paymasters—especially the United States.

The end of the cold war will change nothing. It certainly won't bring about the idealistic hope for a UN that is the custodian of social justice, as Labour and Workers Party leaders seem to think.

Power still lies in the Security Council—with the US, responsible for the Nicaraguan Contras, Grenada, Panama and much else, with the USSR which won't grant freedom to the Baltic states and has massacred hundreds in Armenia and Azerbaijan, with China, the butchers of Tiananmen Square, and with Britain and France, both of which have blood on their hands.

The deployment of troops under the UN flag anywhere in the world does not represent a gain for socialists and never will.

Marxism in Ireland



16, 17, 18, November

Institute of Adult Education
Mountjoy Square, Dublin

Ireland's foremost conference on Marxist ideas takes place in November.

MARXISM IN IRELAND consists of a series of lively discussions and meetings.

The conference is especially geared to those who want to see how socialists analyse and set about changing the world today. Jargon and nit picking are positively discouraged. Meetings are conducted in an open and serious way. Those who are new to socialist ideas are encouraged to contribute or ask questions.

This year's MARXISM IN IRELAND programme includes meetings on:

Did Lenin lead to Stalin?

Marx and Democracy

James Connolly and the 1916 Rebellion

The Politics of the Workers Party

What do socialists say about Pornography?

The Upheavals in Eastern Europe

Will the market be always with us?

Genetic Engineering

George Orwell

Arab nationalism and the crisis in the Gulf.

Tickets for MARXISM IN IRELAND cost £6 when booked in advance. Creche facilities are available during meetings.

To order tickets or further details on the programme write to:

MARXISM IN IRELAND, P.O. Box 1648, Dublin 8.

STUDENT DAYSCHOOL

Socialist Workers Student Society (SWSS) Dayschool
Saturday, 20th October at 12 noon in Central Dublin

Sessions on:

★*The crisis in Eastern Europe—is Socialism Finished?*

★*Imperialism and National Liberation*

★*Students and the Struggle for Socialism*

All SWSS members should attend, SWSS supporters welcome. For details contact your college SWSS group or local SWM branch, or phone 304750.

Join the anti-war drive

THE SOCIALIST Workers Movement has been centrally involved in the movement against the Gulf war.

Well attended public meetings have occurred in Derry, Dublin, Cork and Belfast.

At the Dublin meeting, there was a lot of support for SWM's call to build a broad *No to the War in the Gulf Committee*.

On September 29th, the this committee organised its first protest meeting at the GPS. 150 people turned up to here Eamonn McCann attack the growing war hysteria.

SWM has also been setting up a petition across the country against the re-fuelling of US war planes at Shannon.

Street sales of the last Socialist Worker with its headline "Stop the War Drive" has doubled.

In Belfast, the SWM organised a lively picket outside the U.S. consulate.

With the opening of the colleges, SWM and the *No to the War in the Gulf Committee* will

be pushing resolutions at student general meetings to denounce the war drive and demand Western forces out of the Gulf.

The SWM is the only organisation which has mounted this level of activity against the war drive.

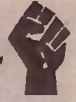
If you are seriously concerned with the war drive and want the imperial forces of Britain, U.S. and France withdrawn, Join the Anti-war Movement.

THE LATEST town to see some SWM activity is Limerick. Following a successful meeting on the *Politics of James Connolly*, a Socialist Workers Discussion Group has been formed.

The Group will be holding regular discussions on SWM politics. The first meeting is on "Socialists and the Gulf Crisis".

If you are interested in joining this discussion group contact: SWM P.O. Box 1648, James St, Dublin 8.

What we stand for



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

FOR REVOLUTION, NOT REFORM

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

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

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

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

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

FOR AN END TO PARTITION

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

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

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

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

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

FOR AN END TO ALL OPPRESSION

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

FOR A FIGHT IN THE UNIONS

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

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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

Join us!

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

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

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....



'Field' digs up the truth

THE Field is Jim Sheridan's follow-up to the Oscar-winning *My Left Foot*.

It opened to massive praise from the media in Dublin last month. The film critics and establishment commentators welcomed it as another triumph for

the Irish film industry. They hope it will enhance the image of Irish film-making and perhaps attract more investment.

For socialists however, the importance of the film lies in what it tells us about Irish society and about the forces which shape, or

mis-shape, the consciousness of Irish people.

The story centres on a field cultivated from rock to fertile land by generations of the Bull McCabe's family. The Bull is brilliantly played by Richard Harris.

When the widow who actually owns the land decides to put it up for auction the local community agreed that the Bull should be the only bidder.

But the appearance of an American, played by Tom Berenger, as a second bidder creates a dispute.

The dispute is used as a vehicle to illustrate the importance of the security and the hope of a more prosperous life involved with the ownership of land to the rural population in the Ireland of the 1950s.

More importantly it shows the lack of control people have over their own lives and the madness they can be driven to as a result.

The Bull McCabe, embittered by stories of the coffin

ships, the hypocrisy of the Catholic Church and the terror of the Black and Tans, clings determinedly to the land as his only form of fulfillment. When this is threatened he is carried by a tide of events past and present—the suicide of his first son, the rejection of the land by his second—to his own self-destruction.

The Field is not only an historical film, it deals with the theme of alienation. The Bull McCabe displays the spirit of resistance and solidarity which binds the local community together in its efforts to defend generations of toiling.

The film puts too much emphasis on the Bull's individual charisma, and the travellers shown in it owe more to Hollywood than to Ireland in the 50s.

But on the whole it's an honest and successful representation of the way people's lives are distorted under a system based on exploitation.

■ Ben Yeates



Ghetto resistance

The Ghetto Fights by Marek Edelman, Bookmarks, £5.00 from SW Books, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8

MAREK Edelman's *The Ghetto Fights* traces the development of Jewish resistance leading to the Warsaw uprising of 1943.

The book describes the attempt by Jewish socialists—members of the Bund—to oppose the Nazis' policy of extermination.

The conditions under which resistance was organised were unimaginable. At one stage 6,000 of the ghetto's inhabitants were being loaded onto cattle trucks for the Treblinka extermination camp every day.

Hunger forced thousands to volunteer for the death trains in return for three loaves of bread.

Even under such circumstances—with mass round-ups and random killings—organisation continued.

Throughout late 1942, socialists printed papers and bulletins attempting to win the population to armed resistance.

Such calls faced not only Nazi repression but also the opposition of the ghetto establishment, the Jewish Council, which along with the Jewish police force collaborated with the programme of depopulating the ghetto.

The Bund also had

to overcome the all-enveloping fear inside the ghetto itself that led thousands to refuse to face the reality of what the Nazis planned.

Painstakingly, the Bund, in conjunction with Polish socialists outside the ghetto and Jewish youth groups inside, pieced together and armed the ZOB—the Jewish armed resistance organisation—which led the rising in April and May 1943.

UPLIFTING

The battle itself, described brilliantly by



Nazi persecution of Jews

Edelman, is as uplifting as the first part of the book is sobering.

He paints a picture of heroic resistance to Nazi forces, but also of the deep socialist commitment of many of the ZOB fighters. (He describes May Day celebrations amidst the ruins of Warsaw.)

At a time of rising anti-semitism across Europe, the publishing of *The Ghetto Fights* is timely.

It gives a picture of Jewish resistance to their oppression. It also shows the Bund's belief that anti-semitism could be fought by both Jews and others, such as the Polish socialists, committed to fighting fascism.

The book can be a useful tool in the fight against anti-semitism today.

■ MIKE BRADLEY

INDUSTRIAL NOTEBOOK

Can the multi-nationals be beaten?

DURING the recent Gateaux dispute, Pronias de Rossa the Workers Party leader and TD for the Finglas area of Dublin was asked by the strikers in his constituency to help organise a boycott of the products of the parent company, Allied Lyons. He refused because, he claimed "you can't beat the multi-nationals."

De Rossa's view is, unfortunately, not an exception. The training department of the ICTU has developed a handy little industry of encouraging all manner of pessimism. In coming up with some original, home grown arguments for New Realism they have laid great stress on the invincibility of the multi-nationals.

It is an important argument. 40 per cent of all employees in manufacturing industry now work for foreign companies. The areas which show the greatest sign of expansion are electronics and chemicals which are dominated by the multi-nationals.

It is easy enough to point to cases where the multi-nationals have been beaten. The most recent, for example, has been in Liebert in Cork where a long strike led to a complete victory for workers in a case that arose over sacking.

Significantly, this strike was won after magnificent solidarity from the industrial estates which other multinationals dominate.

It will be claimed, however, that this is an isolated example. And in one sense this is correct. Throughout the Irish economy, workers have been taken a hammering. There has been few victories anywhere. Our friends in the ICTU now want to use this experience, to generalise for all time and claim that industrial struggles against multinationals never work.

To see why they are wrong, it is necessary, not just to look at the last five years but at the much longer period which started from when the multinationals began to come into Ireland.

ARRIVAL

The first thing you will notice here is that trade union membership actually increased with the arrival of the multinationals. Union membership in Ireland has grown from 25 per cent of the workforce in 1945 to 44 per cent today. The highest growth came in the 1970s when 55 per cent of all workers were union members.

Now it was not that the multinationals were in love with unions. Quite the opposite. American electronics companies, who led the way into Ireland for other multi-nationals, were viciously anti-union.

But in 1968 the multi-nationals were taught an important lesson. In the EI factory in the Shannon In-

dustrial Estate a strike broke out to demand union recognition. It became one of the most militant strikes for decades. Scab buses were burnt, demonstrations were organised, strong picket lines were maintained. Eventually, the company was beaten. The right to join a union was won from the multinationals.

The second thing to remember is that working class militancy increased significantly in the period when the multi-nationals arrived in Ireland. In the overall period between 1975 and 1984, Southern Ireland had the third highest number of strikes per thousand employees in Europe. Only a quarter of these strikes occurred in the public sector. Many of them occurred in factories owned by the multinationals. The employer dominated Commission on Industrial Relations reported in 1981 that the average number of workers involved in disputes trebled since the multinationals arrived in Ireland.

The third thing to remember is that these strikes brought real gains. Throughout most of the 1970s, the unions were hamstrung by National Wage Agreements. But in many cases workers at shop floor level used the increases granted by the multinationals under the NWA as a basic rise. They also sought, and won, other increases under the guise of fake productivity deals, extra allowances, better shift premiums etc.

In many instances these gains were won by short, unofficial strikes. Three quarters of strikes during the period of the NWA

were unofficial. Eventually the employers came to recognise that there was too much "wage drift" under the NWA and pulled out of them in the early 1980s.

Far from the recent history of the Irish working class being one of defeats by the multinational, it has been until the mid 1980s one in which workers were able to squeeze major gains from these firms. But has all this not changed now? After 1992 can't the multinationals hop around the globe and "source" their products from factories who are turned into each others rivals?

ARGUMENT

There are a number of things wrong with this argument. It is simply not the case that a multinational can hop around the world at will. The IDA reports that possible investment projects that come to Ireland can take up to three or four years to negotiate.

Multinationals seek the best possible deal from the local states in terms of grants, tax breaks, political stability etc. In the majority of cases they are not in a position to simply pull out when confronted with the threat of strike. They are more likely to play on the fear that has developed about their invincibility.

Multinationals operate on a global production line. This again has been taken as a great source of strength for them in their battles with workers. But recent changes in the organisation of multinational

firms can mean that the reverse is true.

Many multinationals have now adopted the Japanese method of organisation, Just in Time. This means that instead of holding huge stocks in a particular firm they now use computerisation to keep cut down on storage space.

What this means is that they have often very little stocks in store when strikes occur. This point is particularly relevant to Ireland. The multinationals that have arrived here are mainly engaged in final assembly.

Components manufactured in other countries are assembled here before reaching the markets of the EEC. In this situation, often, as in the case of companies such as Digital, when there are few other final assembly plants, this can give workers great power when the market is tight.

In a funny way the lengths to which the Penn Chemicals are prepared to go to defeat the union shows that management understand the strategically important part the plant plays in their European operations.

None of this is to argue for a stupid optimism. Workers do need to develop links across countries. Shop stewards do need a realistic assessment of the strengths of their own membership and their willingness to fight. We are also facing into a major world recession which will produce even higher levels of unemployment. But if we listen to the doom and gloom merchants in the ICTU, we might as well roll over and die.

Opposition to PNR grows

OVER 150 trade unionists and unemployed activists met on September 15 to discuss opposition to any new Programme for National Recovery.

The conference was organised by Trade Unionists and Unemployed against the Programme (TUUAP), which has already received the support of over 300 shop stewards and committee representatives from both the public and private sector unions and from several unemployed and community groups and activists.

Members of all the major unions from eleven cities and towns attended the conference.

The conference spent some time discussing the organisation, building and tactics for spreading the campaign in the unions and workplaces around the country.

The morning session discussed the experience of the last PNR—how it had failed to deliver on any of the major areas: pay, jobs, poverty—while profits increased dramatically over the life of the programme.

As a member of the ATGWU put it, "We gave wage restraint and they gave nothing!". The morning session finished with a discussion of the PNR's effect on the trade union movement, introduced by Jimmy Kelly, ATGWU Convenor, Waterford Glass. This session discussed the principle of opposition to any talks with the government for a centralised wage deal.

The Socialist Workers Movement is opposed to any such deal because of the effect it has on the working class movement. The working class does not have any common interests with the bosses.

Any new PNR reinforces working class support for this country's major bosses' party—Fianna Fail—by agreeing to a programme that pretends to serve the interests of everyone in Ireland.

It further deepens the division in the unions between those at the top and the rank and file members. It leads to passivity because members are not expected to fight for their wages and conditions. This creates a mood of "new realism".

Because the deals are negotiated at the top, there is no incentive to join or stay in the union.

We have seen the future in the US where this type of trade unionism has resulted in a fall of union membership to just 19 per cent of the workforce. When unions get so weak the employers refuse to recognise them. This has led to a fall in pay, worsening conditions and safety, even in traditional union industries such as autos, steel and coal.

SAFETY NET

Supporters of the PNR claim it provides a safety net for the low paid and unemployed. But experience shows that in periods of free collective bargaining, the strong sections set the norm which the weaker sections follow.

Instead of planning another PNR, the trade unions should be campaigning for a minimum wage; fighting all redundancies to protect jobs. There should also be unemployed sections in the unions to give a voice to the jobless. The alternative to talks with Fianna Fail is a trade union movement that involves all its members in fighting for proper wages and conditions and decent living standard for all. In its closing session the TUUAP conference discussed where the cam-

paign went from here. As Albert McCready of the ATGWU put it, "This is the most important meeting of trade unionists and activists since the seventies". Given the economic and political climate of the past ten years it was no mean achievement to bring together 150 activists.

DELIVER

Other speakers talked about it being the basis of a new rank and file movement that could offer the leadership to decisively change the direction of events.

The SWM believes this is to pretend the movement is bigger and more influential than it is in reality. This runs the risk of sowing the seeds of disillusionment in the future, particularly if we are unable to deliver a decisive No vote.

The task is to build on this modest beginning to create a network of shop stewards and activists—spreading propaganda and raising support for workers in struggle—that can rapidly become the focus for rank and file organisation when industrial struggle rises in the future.

In the next few months TUUAP's main emphasis will be on building the contacts in the Union branches and getting the anti-PNR propaganda to as wide a circle as possible in order to maximise the No vote.

■ PAUL O'BRIEN, SIPTU

SIPTU discuss PNR

THE FIRST union conference of the SIPTU was held in mid September to discuss the Programme for National Recovery and a political fund for the new union. The conference showed that there was far more opposition to the right wing Labour party leadership than was expected.

In the discussion on the Programme for National Recovery, the union's General Secretary, Billy Attley argued that militancy got the unions nowhere. They had to go into partnership with the government instead.

An SWM delegate to the conference, however, got a rousing reception when she claimed the SIPTU leaders were directly helping Fianna Fail to keep their influence over working class voters.

HEALTH CUTS

"The PNR has meant that the union leaders do nothing to help workers in struggle, such as the Waterford Glass workers or the Gateaux workers. Instead they co-operate with Fianna Fail in running down the public sector and in pushing through the health cuts".

Speakers from 11 branches of the union came out against even entering into discussions with FF. These included branches in Dublin, Cork, Kilkenny, Galway and Limerick.

Tragically, a number of left wing figures spoke for a new PNR. One Workers party Executive member of the union denounced the "ideological opposition to central bargaining".

When it came to the vote, 150 voted against opening new talks while 450 voted in favour. But many who voted in favour had very high demands to make of a new PNR.

The impact of SWM delegates at the conference was shown in a good sale of over 50 copies of Socialist Worker afterwards.

**Trade Unionists and
Unemployed Against the
Programme
Contact TUUAP
c/o 10 Comyn Place, Drumcondra,
Dublin 9
Phone: Des Derwin (01) 375376**

Penn 44 defend trade unionism in Cork

by DOMINIC CARROLL

The Programme for National Recovery (PNR) has failed to deliver right across the board. But it's also been used as a weapon to weaken the unions. At Penn Chemicals in Cork, where 250 workers are employed producing the anti-ulcer drug, Tagamet, the PNR has been used to split the union (SIPTU) in half. *Socialist Worker* spoke to John Mackey, a shop steward at Penn.

SW: What's been happening at Penn during the last four years?

JM: The situation arose following a strike at Penn in 1987, when one of our staunch trade unionists was sacked for refusing to do a particular job. The rights and wrongs are not the issue, because we know for a fact that management both wanted and provoked a strike. When the strike was on, management thought they'd seize the opportunity to bring in a system of individual assessment.

Some of us did as our union advised, and stayed in collective bargaining, but those that signed, though still paying their script, have abdicated all their responsibility to the union. However, management are now paying them £40 a week more than those who remained loyal to the collective

bargaining system.

SW: Why are they on more money than you?

JM: Firstly, they have forgone all their trade union rights. Management can control them. But when this assessment was introduced, we went to the Labour Court seeking a pay rise based on parity with those on Individual assessment.

The Labour Court went against the company for discriminating against us with their offer of a lower pay rise. But since the PNR, the Labour Court have endorsed the Programme and agreed to police it. When we went back there a year into the PNR, they ruled that we were bound by the strict pay restraint of the Programme, and rejected our claim.

SW: What have SIPTU officials done about the situation?

JM: The union bureaucrats probably want to forget that there is a problem in Penn. Although we've done what they advised, I have no doubt that the bureaucrats would be happy if we all signed individual assessment so that they would have no more trouble with us. Management would control us and that would be it.

SW: Why were those that signed individual assessment not disciplined?

Glass sourcing scare



WATERFORD Crystal's management have gone on the rampage, just months after a long strike at the company has ended.

They have carefully leaked and then built up a major scare campaign about their "sourcing" of glass production to the German firm, FX Nachtman. Originally, Nachtman was to produce 5 per cent of machine cut giftware.

But management have also seen that new opportunities will arise if they increase the threat to the glass workers. They are now threatening to increase production in Nachtman to as much as 30 per cent if the unions do not agree to even more drastic changes in working conditions and redundancies.

The Waterford Crystal management understand that there is no let up in the class struggle. The agreement they signed with the workers in May is not worth the paper it is written on if it stands in the way of higher profits.

The new threat has emerged for two reasons. First, the US financial backers of Waterford Crystal, Morgan Stanley, are already facing into a

major recession in the US. Consumer spending has also begun to fall drastically.

Second, the Irish fat cat O'Reilly has always argued in management circles for an emphasis on good "brand names". With a good brand a company can do anything, O'Reilly has claimed.

REPUTATION

And that is just what they hope to do to boost profits. The reputation of Waterford Glass was built up over decades by the blood sweat and tears of Glass workers. O'Reilly hopes now that it can hijack this brand name and market computer set machine cut crystal under its name. If he is successful the result would be the devastation

of jobs in Waterford. What should the Glass workers do?

On no account should they enter the road of making more concessions to "stay competitive" against Nachtman's. Going down that road will bring untold hardship. There is simply no way that they can compete.

Instead the Glass workers should adopt a dual strategy. The ATGWU should contact the Nachtman workers and build the type of close ties that will be needed in the future.

But they must also begin a clear campaign for the nationalisation of Waterford Crystal under workers control. The argument for nationalisation is simple. O'Reilly and Morgan Stanley have shown that they have little interest in hand cut crystal which preserves jobs. They are nothing short of Yuppie asset strippers.

A campaign for nationalisation is one that could unite the workforce. It would also steel workers for the struggle ahead.

JM: They were 'branched' at local level, but then the union top brass came up with a strange reason for overturning the decision. They said that since there was no prior notice of the motion before the general meeting to discuss individual assessment, the majority against it was not binding. This was simply a cop out based on a technicality that took them a year to decide.

SW: Now Penn are demanding fifty redundancies. What's been the response?

JM: We suspected their would be redundancies after the merger of Beechams, which owns Penn, with Smith-Kline, both big multi-nationals corporations. Always after a merger, the shareholders want more profits and in order to do this, they cut in on the workforce. They want to take money from them and to introduce rationalisation which means less workers doing more work, pushing profits up.

QUESTION

When redundancies came up, we decided at a general meeting that nobody would take redundancy until the union found out exactly what Penn were after. We didn't see it simply as a question of redundancy, but a whole question of rationalisation. But our plan fell through

and workers accepted the redundancies. We still have had no talks with management and don't know their plans. But it will create enormous difficulties for us. We'll have to fight for the rights of the entire workforce whilst people on self-assessment continue to stab us in the back.

SW: How do you assess Penn's offer of £2,500 per year of service?

JM: When you compare this with other places, such as Gateaux (£500 per year), it does appear generous. But the reason for this is that Penn is a very viable operation, and unless they make an attractive offer, they wouldn't get people to go. But the price will be paid by the workers left behind. We work with a lot of dangerous carcinogenic chemicals, and you have to be careful all the time. Mad production isn't on. So things will be difficult with management pushing all out for more production and workers being concerned about health and safety.

SW: What's at stake in Penn?

JM: What has occurred here could happen in any workplace in the country, and could destroy the trade union movement. But the attitude of SIPTU officials is "forget the 'Penn 44', they can't win against a multi-national". But we believe that if we're given the backing, we can beat Penn.

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism 30p

Broaden the fight against political vetting

THE NORTHERN Ireland Office has agreed to reconsider its decision to cut off funds from Glor na nGael, which operates eight Irish-language nursery schools in Belfast.

This follows protests from the Dublin Government, the SDLP, the Catholic Church, and a wide range of other groups including the union NUPE which represents 15 workers whose jobs were threatened.

The eighty thousand pounds public funding had mainly been used to pay the full- and part-time

Action for Community Employment (ACE) workers who taught up to 140 children. (ACE is the northern equivalent of the

SES schemes in the South.)

The NIO had alleged that Glor na nGael had paramilitary connections.

It is interesting that some of the organisations which supported Glor na nGael had not supported other victims of the political vetting policy, such as the Conway Mill. The Conway Educational Centre was the first group to suffer from political vetting, losing creche workers and funding.

CAMPAIGN

This indicates the strength of local support for Glor na nGael, as was evidenced by the poster campaign in Belfast. The constitutional nationalists and the Catholic Church are acutely aware of their need not to lose contact completely with the west Belfast grass roots.

During October, public meetings are being held all over the North to get even wider support for the campaign against vetting. Glor na nGael has committed itself to going ahead with these meetings even if their funding is restored in the meantime.

However, the issue has also illustrated a weakness in the response to political vetting.

The thrust of Glor na nGael's response was to adamantly deny any paramilitary connection. For example, a lot was made of the fact that Mairtin O Muilleoir, one of the founders of the committee and a Sinn Fein councillor, is no longer an active member.

This comes close to conceding the NIO's right to politically vet voluntary groups. It is saying in effect, we are

innocent, rather than rejecting the NIO's right to make such a judgement in the first place.

In the short-term, in relation to this particular issue, this might strengthen the argument against the NIO. But in the long term it's the NIO position which is bolstered.

We have to consider the impact on community groups which are dependent on public funding. To the extent that they have to prove that they are 'reliable' and not 'tainted' they can cease to be active, campaigning groups and become bogged down in the increasing administration and training required to keep their ACE workers.

With every instance of political vetting the message is clear—keep your head down and obey the rule or your funding is cut. When groups begin to think that maybe it would be better not to have a Sinn Fein member on the committee, or not to employ SF members, the NIO has virtually achieved its object.

Although many people become involved in such groups as a political activity, this dependence is a recipe for political quiescence, not political action.

We need to fight against the principle of political vetting. This is not a fight which can be carried through by voluntary groups which depend on public funding to continue in operation.

While defending groups like Glor na nGael against specific attacks, it is necessary also to be fighting on the broader front against the system political vetting is designed to shore up.

■ JOAN MCKIERNAN

NORTH TALKS OFFER NO HOPE

PRESSURE is building up on the SDLP and the Dublin Government to make some concession to the Unionists so that talks on the future government of the North can begin.

Unionists want Dublin to stay out of the discussion until the general shape of an "internal" settlement has been agreed between the Northern parties.

Dublin and the SDLP want a definite date for the South to become involved. Otherwise they fear, the Unionists would drag out the "internal" talks and prevent any effective 32-county dimension emerging.

Northern Secretary Brooke has now set a three-month deadline for the "process" to get under way. The Dublin media and opposition parties have been virtually unanimous that Haughey and the SDLP should back off, so that constitutional nationalism won't be left carrying the blame if the deadline isn't met.

The pressure on Haughey comes from those who want the nagging disagreements over the North sorted out on any terms available, so that the two countries can establish sane, stable relations at last. If that means abandoning the Northern nationalists and dropping an "Irish dimension" altogether, so be it.

Haughey and the SDLP believe on the other hand that such a "Settlement" would simply leave the Republican Movement as sole claimants to the nationalist tradition. They reckon it would not bring stability.

Stable relations between a capitalist Britain and a capitalist Ireland are what both brands of constitutional nationalism are after.

While these prospects are discussed in great detail in the media, on the ground in the North they have attracted little interest. Hardly anyone holds out hope that even if talks take place they will lead to a settlement.

This mood of fatalism and apathy reflects the widespread understanding that no settlement is possible within the basic constitutional structures.

But at the same time the main force committed to smashing the structures, the Republican Movement, cannot carry



Brooke and Collins sorting out nagging disagreements

its struggle through to victory.

For as long as the mass of Catholic workers in the North see the way

forward as through nationalism—and thus fail to link up with the struggles of workers in the South—the deadlock

is likely to remain.

This emphasises the need for socialists to redouble the effort to build an active campaigning

party to link the fight against the Northern State to the specific interests of the working class North and South.

Belfast health sell-off protest

THE campaign to prevent the privatisation of hospital services got a boost last month when workers at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast stopped a visit by a private cleaning firm when they threatened to walk out in protest.

The workers warned that they would block the hospital main entrance to show their opposition to privatisation. But just before the protest was planned to begin,

management announced that the visit by the private contractors has been cancelled.

RESIDENTS

This was a backdown in the face of stiff and well-organised opposition by the workers, who went ahead and had a "celebration rally". They were joined by local residents and women's groups.

The lesson from the action is clear. Determined rank-

and-file action is the way to stop privatisation, and the job cuts and loss of services that go with it.

But of course this was a preliminary skirmish, not the decisive battle. Preparation should be made for co-ordinated action across the Eastern Health Board area, bringing different hospitals together and linking privatisation of services to the fight against hospitals like the Down "opting out" of the NHS.

Waterford victory

ORGANISATION pays! That's the clear message from the success of Social Employment Scheme workers in Waterford who already have had two of their main demands met only a few weeks after joining SIPTU.

The SES workers had been denied the back-to-school allowance given to long-term unemployed in early September. This can mean up to £100 for a worker with three children.

The Department had denied SES workers the allowance on the ground that they weren't unemployed. The allowance will now be paid after talks between SIPTU's SES Committee, the Department and the Corporation which employs the men.

It has also been established through talks with FAS that the SES scheme is not

compulsory, and workers can't be cut off the dole for refusing a place.

ORGANISING

SIPTU has asked anyone who is cut off to contact them—you don't have to be a member.

SES workers in Waterford are organising further meetings to press

other demands—a sick pay scheme, paid holidays, an end to "double docking", the double week at Xmas, payment for using certain equipment etc..

There are also numerous complaints about the bullying attitudes of gangsters towards the men.

However, union organisation and this initial success resulting from it, has given the SES workers confidence to defend their rights and interests. There is a lesson in this for SES workers elsewhere and for ACE workers in many schemes in the North.

■ Waterford SWM