

IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALIST PARTY

an

comhábhaíochta



THE STARRY PLOUGH

NO 3

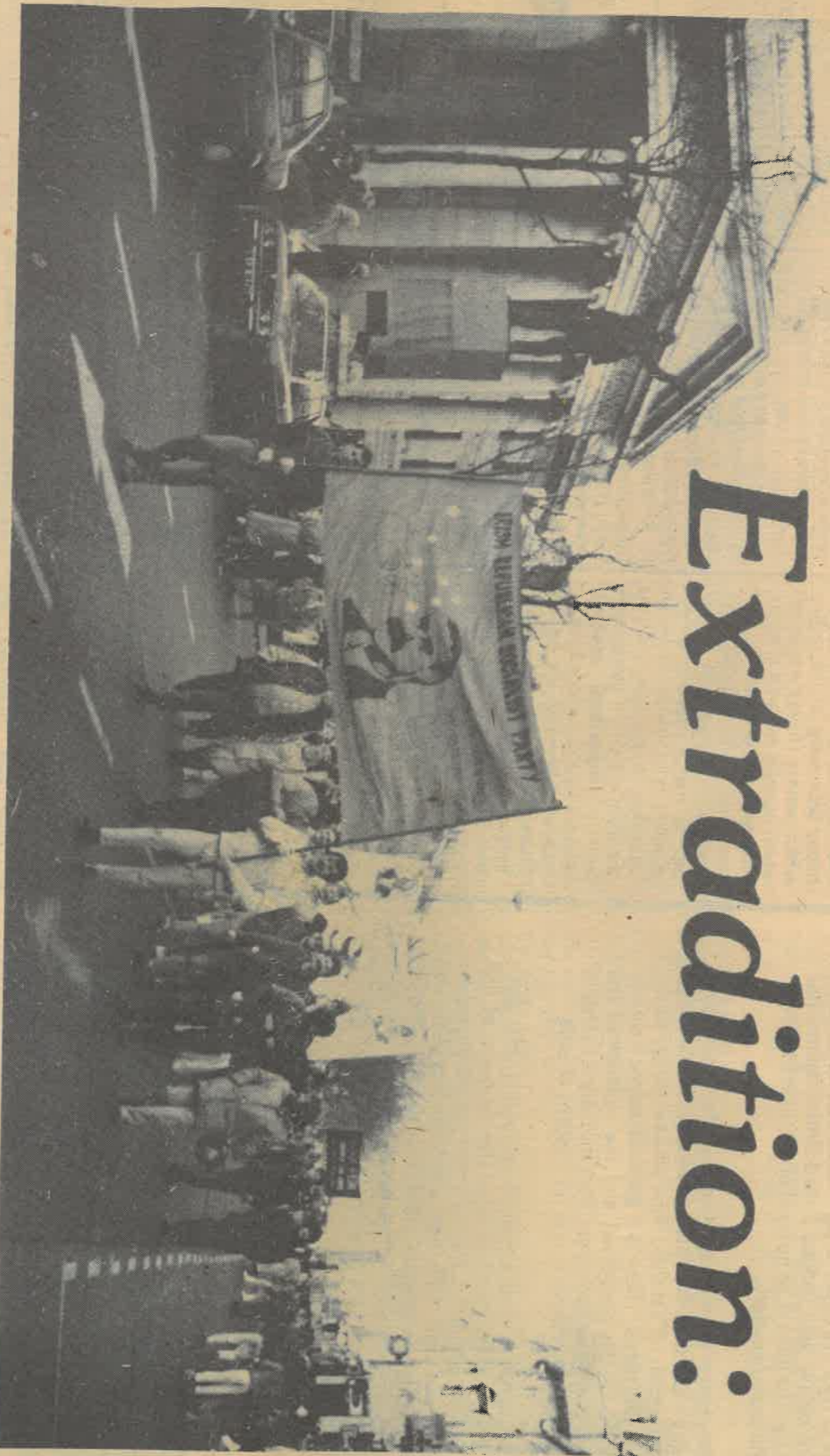
IRELAND

30p

BRITAIN 40p.

Stop

Extradition:



Confront The State

The Starry Plough has in the past stated that the Irish National bourgeoisie has long ago given up any ideas of independence. They are now a totally collaborating bourgeoisie whose interests are completely tied to those of British Imperialism.

Realising this, there is no point in asking them to act over issues such as the Birmingham Six, Guildford Four, Plastic Bullets or Extradition. The working class must take or be pushed to take these issues on board. There is a direct relationship between the Haughey government's attacks on the living standards of health care and education of workers, and his attack on republicans. Both are at the behest of his imperialist masters. It is an indictment on the revolutionary forces that after twenty years of struggle, the working class do not see this relationship. All these attacks are seen to be against "dangerous subversives" and not against members of their own class.

Too many comrades are saying there is a downturn in working class activity. All too often, this is an excuse to do nothing, there is a saying when things get tough, the tough get going. It is the duty of the revolutionary vanguard to inject class consciousness into

the working class and this requires patience, but above all, energy.

The case of Robert 'Goose' Russell should be seen as a test case of the nerve and resolve of the left and republicans. All the stops must be pulled out. Robert is due to be extradited on the 25th August. Every socialist and republican worthy of the name should be raising this issue in their workplaces and in their trade unions. Fear of the secret police should not deter, if we are serious in our commitment. Let's rock this rotten little neo-colony to its core.

Support all actions organised by the Anti-Extradition Committee. But if necessary, the Irish Republican Socialist Party calls on the left and republicans to put their money where their mouth is. Organise total disruption throughout the 26 counties on the day of Robert's extradition. A total blockade of Portlaoise jail should be organised. The working class needs leadership, not craven surrender to the forces of the state.

THE EXTRADITION OF OUR COMRADES MUST BE MADE COSTLY FOR THE 26 BOURGEOISIE. THEY MUST BE MADE AWARE OF OUR STRENGTH. HEADS UP AND AT THEM.



ROBERT RUSSELL

STARRY PLOUGH EDITORIAL



Horror of horrors, the grey horde of the working class have teeth! West Belfast was the scene two months ago, of some of the most heroic actions ever witnessed during the whole twenty years of struggle against British imperialism.

Kevin Brady, Thomas McErean and John Murray, who gave their lives defending the people at Milltown cemetery, in the face of grenades and bullets from loyalist terror, are the bricks and mortar of which revolutions are made. Let their names be forever remembered as heroes of the working class.

In Andersonstown, during another attack on a republican funeral, the same spirit was again in evidence. The I.R.S.P. would like to take this opportunity to state that we consider the gallant people who tackled armed British agents that had attacked the funeral, as no less heroes, than those who died in Milltown cemetery.

The bourgeois media, the Church, the Free State collaborators and their Northern clones have condemned these young men as savages. Yes, we are savage in the defence of our rights. There is a great difference between the violence of the oppressed and the violence of the oppressor. Bourgeois apologists, their morality is rooted in ruling class values. As such, it is no concern of ours.

Two soldiers attacked a republican funeral with guns drawn. They swerved and avoided the vanguard of the funeral and tried to attack the mourners around the coffin. They were executed. This was a morally justifiable act because the working class have the right to defend themselves. Our morality is not based on some idealistic idea of the world, but on the basis of what is good for the working class people.

At this moment 18 people have been charged with a variety of offences relating to the deaths of these two animals. Whilst not wishing to state whether or not these people were actually present at the scene (some of the people have stated they were not present), these people are totally innocent of any "crime". Those who defend the rights of the Irish working class should be lauded as heroes and held up as an example to all revolutionaries and especially to our youth.

The working class must swell with pride when we can produce youth and men of this calibre. These brave people must be taken to our hearts. They are a precious commodity within the working class. We must defend them against their detractors, Church, State or otherwise. We must hold them up as a model of revolutionary youth.

The I.R.S.P. puts forward at this time, that groups should join with us in organising protests against the continuing detention of most of these men. We must demand their total and unconditional release. **FREE OUR HEROES!**

We wish to apologise for the non-appearance of the Starry Plough. This has been due solely to lack of finance coupled with the abysmal response to our Fighting Fund. Comrades, this is just not good enough. Since the republication of 'An Cam- chechta' the response gleaned from people buying the paper has been both positive and encouraging. A common viewpoint being that it was necessary for there to be an organ such as this - creating and stimulating the polemic in a revolutionary situation. How then can it be that the life-blood to sustain a publication - financial support is not forthcoming? So - come on then, comrades, dig deep, ensure the voice of revolutionary communism will continue to be heard and listened to! Send all donations to: An Camcheachta, Fighting Fund, 392 Falls Road, Belfast 12, County Antrim, Ireland.



Essential Allies

A Chara,

I would like to convey some of my impressions of the Starry Plough. I think technically it is well produced. I like the general appearance lay out, presentation and size. I also like the way the articles are presented and the balance of the political content, and on the whole I would agree with the most important part of it all, the actual political line which is being carried i.e. the necessity to build a genuine revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party.

On the other hand, I wasn't happy with some of the passages which came out from the passages which describe essential allies and attitudes towards them. In fact a great deal of the comments on, and analysis of, Sinn Fein seem to me to range from misunderstanding right up to downright distortion. I would like to point out that I am not one of those people with a "superficial analysis" referred to in the second column (half way down) of the editorial (Starry Plough No. 1). I do not believe that the struggle is such that Sinn Fein covets all aspects and there is no role for the I.R.S.P. Nor do I believe that the Republican Socialist Movement cannot fundamentally change.

But I do believe that in the context of the National Freedom/Socialist struggle, Sinn Fein has over the last few years developed, through practical experience and debate, a genuine desire for socialism and their attempt to formulate this into a practical programme are motivated by sincerity. Therefore I find it negative and dangerous to dismiss, almost sneer at, these years of development with such terms as "the petty bourgeois politics of the Sinn Fein leadership who deny the leading role of the working class and therefore class struggle" and in a distorted analysis of "what is offered by the Republican Movement? Some idealistic 32 county republic? ... the nature of the State itself will not change." And taking out of context Adam's statement that "socialism is not on the agenda at this time."

Milltown Relief Fund

The Fund now stands at £8,206, but much more is needed. Please send your donations to any branch of the Bank of Ireland, Account No. 92056061 or directly to anyone of the following trustees:-

Fr. Des Wilson, 123 Springhill Avenue, Belfast 12.
Sean MacSeán, c/o Andersonstown News, Andersonstown Road, Belfast 11.
Liam Burke, 29 Andersonstown Road, Belfast 11.
Leo Wilson, 16 Agnes Drive, Belfast 11.

Letters

moved to this stage, but what are they saying, that in the days, weeks, months, years before adopting this policy they were "petty bourgeois" if you start slanging all those forces which have not declared themselves Marxist-Leninist, you are isolated, arrogant and in fact not Marxist-Leninist.

Adams may not have got a lot of his politics right yet but at least the approach shown in a certain paragraph is as good an understanding of the Marxist-Leninist scientific approach as you could hope to find (politics of Irish freedom, p. 153). "At all times Republicans need to proceed at the level of people's understanding... never getting removed from the actuality of the situation."

I would agree that Sinn Fein need to get their attitude to the I.R.S.P. and others developing Marxism-Leninism on a more realistic level, for e.g. not to persist in the attitude that only Sinn Fein can lay claim to be the party/spokesman for the people. I suppose basically I am saying that it's vital for Sinn Fein and the Republican Socialist Movement to have a close fraternal relationship. In comradeship, **Pete Jordan**
Republican Socialist P.O.W.
Long Larin

Comrade, you misunderstand the nature of the criticism of Sinn Fein. The term "petty bourgeois politics" is a criticism of the "catch-all" nature of Sinn Fein politics. It is not a question of arrogant isolationism but a simple matter of honest assessment. The Republican movement is our natural ally in the struggle for national liberation but we believe as Marxists and Leninists that it is vital to point out the shortcomings in its political direction. As for Adam's assertion that Republicans must proceed at the level of people's understanding, surely this negates the duty of the vanguard party to lead and educate, and in fact propagates nebulous populism. It is only through honest criticism and argument that weaknesses and strengths can be brought into the open. ED.

Unity Of The Left

The public declaration of the I.R.S.P. that they are a Revolutionary Communist Party with a Marxist-Leninist direction is a very courageous one. This "coming out" is to be applauded, as a major step forward.

For far too long, Republican Socialists have stifled their true principles, for fear of frightening away potential support - particularly in clergy dominated areas.

Is it enough? Personally, I do not believe so. I am convinced that the time is now opportune, for a concerted effort to be made, to embrace "all shades" of leftist opinion and most important of all to involve many hundreds of demoralised and disillusioned Socialists, who have been in political limbo for far too long.

I am very well aware that to invite different "leftist ideologies" to unite in one party, is fraught with danger. It is common knowledge that "factionalism" has been the scourge of the Irish Left since time immemorial. Having said that, it is a feasible assumption, that a party with a fair and effective system of Democratic Centralism, (i.e. on the "combination of extensive and profound democracy, with centralised control") should

safeguard the party from the ever present pseudo Revolutionaries.

Tendencies as opposed to factionalism existing within the party, exercising the democratic channels provided may be a healthy and valuable contributory factor. However, in doing so the Party keeps the principle objective in view, this objective consists in dealing a crushing blow to the dire enemy, and in protecting the vital interest of the working class.

I do not want my sentiments to be construed as advocating Broad or united fronts as history has shown unity based on the lowest common denominator as self-defeating, and only highlights the many differences within the Irish left.

The left has been fragmented long enough. Genuine, Revolutionary Socialists will see the urgent need for a solidified party to fight Imperialism and all its accompanying evils.

My letter will undoubtedly be dismissed by many as "claptrap" or as an impossible pipedream. Perhaps, but can we in all honesty call ourselves Republican Socialists, whilst ignoring the need to build a powerful Revolutionary Socialist Party.

DOMINIC MURRYAN

God and Marx



Dear Editor,

After reading Robert Lake's article in the Starry Plough No.2, I began to wonder whether the socialist movement had all of a sudden undergone a conversion to free thought and the materialism of the French Encyclopaedists, and that revolutionary socialism had been replaced with Atheist Evangelicalism.

Comrade Lake makes some amazing assertions in his article. He claims that Communism and Religion are incompatible. Well it depends on what type of communism and what type of religion. The communism of Stalin, Mao, Enver Hoxha, is definitely incompatible with the ideas of Karl Marx. Marx never seriously tried to disprove the existence of God, and his writings on religion were mostly devoted to Hinduism and Lutheran Christianity.

Marx's criticism of Christianity was mainly directed against the political influence of the Lutheran Church in Prussia. Marx certainly never advocated persecuting any religion and he never stated that belief in a socialist society was incompatible with belief in God. A socialist society, if it ever comes about will be made up of people of every religion and none. And since a socialist society is a society of equal producers where the state has withered away. Who really can predict that religion and especially Christianity will wither away.

Marx never spoke about campaigns and struggles against religion. Marx spoke about revolution and humanity's struggle for freedom and the need to



●GERRY ADAMS!

When looking at "The politics of Irish freedom, while it certainly doesn't make any claim to Marxism-Leninism, I nevertheless find it absurd, wrong and potentially dangerously divisive to dismiss Sinn Fein in the present terms used by the I.R.S.P., or at least as shown in the Starry Plough. Of course it is very good that the I.R.S.P. eventually recognised Marxism-Leninism for its political base and that the Congress 86 comrades have

Letters Cont.

establish a socialist society. Marx was the inheritor of the ideas of Aristotle and many of the Greek materialist thinkers. He advanced Thomas Moore's Utopia and turned Hegel upside down. But he thought At every turn, Marx was trying to find the way forward to the absolute freedom of humanity.

When Marx spoke of materialism, he spoke of the method he had inherited from the ancient Greek philosophers, and what he himself had refined and updated. But Marx never completed his studies and method in materialism. Materialism and atheism are two different things.

Many of the great materialist thinkers did not deny the existence of God or of Gods. Marx used materialism in his observation of the world and how he could change it.

Comrade Lake claims that James Connolly and Rosa Luxemburg were wrong in their attitude to religion and that for many socialists of the Second International period, the attitude of not attacking religion was due to their being unable to break with the religion of their childhood or for tactical reasons.

I would assert that anyone who 'knows the history of socialism and of Marxism will know that Connolly and Luxemburg were consistent in the socialist viewpoint to religion. Connolly and Luxemburg made mistakes as does every socialist. The person who does not make a mistake probably never made anything at all. But they did not make mistakes regarding religion. They were both consistent in the viewpoint of Karl Marx, as anyone knows who takes the trouble to examine the views of Marx on religion, not the works of those who distorted Marx after he died.

Marx, Connolly and Luxemburg were always calling workers into action against capitalism and to emancipate themselves for freedom, not belief in God and unbelief now. Now our comrade says that those who follow the theology of Liberation will have to discard the theology of Liberation before they can join the I.R.S.P. or any other socialist group. This is nonsense. Is the I.R.S.P. to become a party of atheists who look down on those who believe in God?

The socialist movement is in the business not only in Ireland or Scotland but world-wide, to establish freedom. We are not exclusive to believers or non-believers. Many of the leading exponents of the theology of Liberation are our comrades. Many do not have agreed opinions on the origins and nature of the world, but they live and struggle, indeed many of them have lost their lives for socialism. We cannot turn our backs on them. They are our brothers and sisters in struggle. They may have approached history from a different viewpoint, but have reached the same conclusion - the need for a socialist society.

John Forde F.S.A.
Scotland.

Religion And Progress

Your article on Marxism and Religion by Robert Lake makes a valid point at the very beginning: We would make a great mistake to think that an institution like a church will be changed by having people running it whom you like or whom you find acceptable. Individual persons will not change the institutions, more likely the institutions will change the individuals. And in any case, any institution, including churches, will allow acceptable people to take positions within them if this is necessary for tactical reasons but



F.R. DES WILSON

eventually these will be replaced when the need is no longer felt to have them there.

We have often made the mistake of thinking that given a good bishop or a good pope or good theologians the church would become amenable and would swing over to the side of the people as a whole. This has never proved to be the case. And even if it did happen, the ability of the institution to change personnel is too easily manipulated. The church is too easily manipulated by "materialist" interests. The word "materialist" here means "profit making" or "power broking" interests. Where people are struggling for a radical change in society some Christians believe that they have to do two things: One is to mobilise all the resources of the churches for use in favour of people, and especially people of no property. The other is to systematically take away the various unnecessary powers which church institutions have. It is a difficult task, and one which seems impossible. How do you, for example, manage to get the money, meeting halls, schools, universities of the church on your side while at the same time campaigning to get these very same resources out of clerical hands into democratic control? The easy answer is that it cannot be done.

But Christians in many places are not so easily discouraged and would like to enter into some kind of alliance with their more radical fellow citizens. One of the reasons for this is that having control of resources like money, land, goods, international connections etc is not only bad for a church but is bad also for the people as a whole. Where there is much there is money and where there is money there is a Calvi or a Marchinus to make sure it gets into the right hands. Churches are just as open to take-overs and manipulation as other institutions.

However, it can be argued that whatever opinion one may have about religion it is highly likely that people will have religious aspirations, ideals and hopes for a long time to come. It may well be argued on the other hand that such religious attitudes will be gradually eroded. But whether in the far future or the not so far future, religion will probably be part of the human being's perception of life for much longer than the period covered by our phase of the struggle for freedom. It would seem then that we have two possible courses, one is to show how religion need not be a hindrance but can be made a help to progress, and thus find a place for 'religious' people within any progressive movement so that one set of ideas need not be an enemy of another. The other thing is to encourage alternative views of what life is from, about and going to. In both cases one of the very mundane things we have to accomplish is taking the resources

now tied up in the hands of clerical establishments and set them free for the use of the whole public.

The process of setting resources free would lead to a great deal of conflict as well as creative discussion - we would learn a lot about control, politics, power and money by trying to set free even the process of education, let alone setting free other processes like wealth creation and use, moral and social development etc.

What one may be truly afraid of is not the conflict such a liberation of resources would cause, but rather an ideological confrontation between Christians and Marxists which might leave us as badly off as before and would change nothing. The Christian - Marxist dialogue often was nothing more than an academic exercise or an attempt to create an illusion that Marxism and Christianity could be reconciled without either of them being changed. What is really needed perhaps is a Christian commitment - at last - to radical change of our society and a Marxist analysis and method to bring about such change. There is nothing in the churches to create anything but everlasting unchangingness in a world where unchangingness is not a virtue. But on the other hand there is nothing in Marxism to require that we should waste our time in dialogue with Christians or anyone else if such dialogue is fated to produce no change. All you get in the end is a crowd of self-satisfied academics with a delightful feeling of daring and the poor still remain as poor as they were before the dialogue started.

One thing should however be made clear. It is that church institutions are not only unwilling but unable to change anything, even themselves except as a measure of self-preservation; the other is that Christians, however, may well have something important to offer the world if they take their own idealism seriously. But to achieve anything they would need to make a great leap forward from present Christian ideas, as great a leap forward from accepted notions of morality and justice as Jesus Christ did in his day.

There are some of us who really believe that it may well be the Marxists who will help the Christians to make the leap. In which case they could well be leaping forward together. That they need each other is beyond doubt. That neither of them needs the vast, expensive and crowding apparatus which the Christian churches insist on inflicting on humankind is beyond doubt as well. Whether Christians or Marxists or both, we can surely work together to remove that!

Des Wilson.

A Question Of Religion

In the first issues of *Starry Plough* there has been much invective written, against religion in general and the Catholic Church in particular.

Of course all Communists are, by the very essence of being Communist, and adherents of Dialectical Materialism - atheists: this is not in contention; what the point is however, is how to show the church for what it is without alienating the opinion of the Irish working class. We should not give the craven priesthood the opportunity of pointing their finger at us Communists, and saying "Here are the anti-christs", and with that condemnation dissipate our support amongst the class.

If atheism means anything for us Communists, it should not seem to be everything - for it is not. Nihilism is the refuge of the middle-class and the simple iconoclast. Atheism alone is no answer; but

rather, it should be woven into our whole philosophy, and projected as such if we are to gain the support of that all important class.

Religion is not a simple thing to comprehend, it is not simply a gross representation of superstition. Religion is socially gained, through humanities collective consciousness and humanities relationship between itself and its environment, through the mastering of some of the connections between ourselves (humanity) and our external world: ever since our ancestors began to master those connections, they have been reflected in the human mind.

With this reflective quality, humanity tended to reflect on its ideas of the unity between themselves and society; thereby partially finding the true nature of things, and partially reflecting upon ideas themselves (idealism) and thus, leading them to dim-sighted fancies that were, misled by refractions and shadows.

This need to understand the true nature of their environment led humanity into the construction of gods, demi gods - religious beliefs. The need also of an oppressed people to find human dignity and spirituality, leads inexorably towards the need of a god, religion and comfort: these legacies, to an extent are still with us today in Ireland.

The idea of the divinity above the universe has been exposed over the years through uncovering the layers which have hidden the actual workings of the universe, by the use of scientific analysis and methodology; and it is with these methods that we explain the concepts inherent in religious beliefs.

However Marxists strive to understand by drawing on all variants: the problem then is how to deal with the very real power of the church in the Ireland of today.

Let us here draw parallels between Ireland today and the Spain of the Civil War period, for although history does not repeat itself exactly, the comparisons between Civil War Spain, and its relationship to the Catholic Church, and contemporary Ireland's relationship to the Catholic Church, are, something more than striking.

During the Spanish Civil War the anarchist movement destroyed many churches through burning, pulling down and various sundry acts of demolition; this led to the alienation of many would be supporters of the left in Spain (Those who wish to pursue a similar course of action, take note).

It is with theory, programme and practice that we as Communists will ease away the oppressed of Ireland from the tenacious and cloying hands of the Catholic Church. It will be the giving back of their soul, in the real meaning of the word, that is the essence of being human which will help emancipate and unfree the shackles binding the oppressed of Ireland, and not the empty nihilism of anarchy: for a socialist party cannot be built in Ireland and indeed most other places in the world if a person is to be debarrred on grounds of religious conviction.

The Catholic Church is at one and the same time a supporter of capitalism, and has the mode of capitalist accumulation; its means of production are births, marriages and death: therefore any part of a socialist programme relating to the church must unequivocally state: expropriate the expropriators - this the working class and small farmer of Ireland will understand and will be ready to identify with.

Yours fraternally

Sean Ryan
(For the Irish Workers League).

"FOURTH CLASS"

Comrades,

I wish to draw the reader's attention to the letter which appeared in last month's *Starry Plough*, signed 'unemployed youth' which outlined the activities of the unemployed group in Antrim who are currently organising a "Take up Benefit" campaign in that town.

While they are to be applauded for their genuine concern in attempting to alleviate the difficulties facing the unemployed, they must exercise great caution in their statements and in their actions.

It is pure folly for them to ape the methods of the ruling class and the inherent danger is that we, while attempting to unite the working class are indeed guilty of doing the dirty work of the imperialists.

Thatcher and her cohorts have been hysterical in their attempts to divide the proletariat by fostering and propagating such notions that the unemployed are scroungers and that the proletariat must be divided and if we describe them as the "fourth class" as did the Antrim group, are we not guilty of doing Thatcher's work?

Comrades, if we are guilty, albeit in a misguided way, then we are indeed aping the ruling class. Yes, yes, yes, comrades to organising the unemployed but it must be in the context of the working class as a whole and not sectionalised in any shape or form. We must involve and concentrate our work among "all organisations, unions, associations and first and foremost in the proletarian organisations" (Lennin, collected works).



All our efforts, comrades, must be devoted (including developing the Republican Socialist Movement) to one and only one aim, to destroy forever the oppression of imperialism. And the only people, the only force capable of doing this are the masses of the proletariat! The workers, and those who live a Philistine life, who have no hope for the future. These are the only people to bring about the overthrow of imperialism.

Therefore comrades, we must guard against such imperialist schemes that would purport to make life 'tolerable', to live your life with your head just above water! In the interim they are necessary but we must never be satisfied with them. We must be of the people, where appropriate form communes of skilled and unskilled workers allied with the unemployed to create work for themselves. We must create centres to show how the unemployed and the workers can work together and show up the cancer of capitalism. These are our tasks, comrades, let us keep that always in our minds. Ever onwards to victory.

Republican Socialist POW
Long Kesh

Letters Welcome

If you have any comments, questions, or you want to reply to any of these letters, please write to the Editor, *Starry Plough*, 392 Falls Road, Belfast 12, Ireland.

Religion And The Party

The following article is meant as an addition to Comrade Lake's article on Marxism and Religion. Since this article was published there has been many comments and letters, some of which are published in this issue of the Starry Plough, and others which have been held back due to lack of space. This article is short and addresses the immediate problems for marxists, but we hope to continue this debate in future issues.

Yes, Ireland is a country where statues move, where pulpits can swing referenda, but it is also a country where Sinn Fein achieved electoral success despite the efforts of the Catholic Bishops. In other periods of intense struggle in Ireland, the Catholic church's much vaunted "sway" over the masses has proved to be tenuous.

This is because in periods of struggle, the church (all churches) always supports the status quo (the State) and in doing so is thus exposed in the eyes of the masses. There can be no doubt that because of the intense struggle being waged in the six counties, that the power of the Catholic church to dictate has been dramatically curtailed.

It is the duty of marxists to combat all ideas, superstitions etc., that stunt class consciousness in the working class and lead to feelings of helplessness and apathy. Religion promotes these feelings and as such it must be fought in a principled manner.

It must be fought in a principled manner yes, but marxism does not declare war on religion but rather subordinates the struggle against religion to the overall good of the class struggle. Religious prejudice can be combatted much more readily by the deepening of the class struggle than by a thousand philosophical pamphlets.

Marxists cannot afford to shoot themselves in the foot and drive away many genuine opponents of imperialism on the grounds that they are not atheists. The basic essence of marxism is dialectical materialism and as such we must combat religion, but we know and understand the source of religious faith in the working class in order to be able to combat it.

Marxism teaches us that "Man created the gods" and not the reverse that "God created man" or "Man makes religion, religion does not make man"! But why did man make religion? He did so through fear and misery. He looked up to heaven to where he sought a superman who would help to make his terrible hardships bearable. As Lenin puts it: "Impotence of the exploited classes in their struggle against the exploiters just as inevitably gives rise to the belief in a better life after death, as impotence of the savage in his battle with nature gives rise to belief in gods, devils, miracles and the like".

So long as the working masses are oppressed under the yoke of capitalist slavery, the longer they will cling to the crutch of religious prejudice. So how does Marxism combat religion, Lenin has this to say: "But under no circumstances ought we to fall into the error of posing the religious question in an abstract, idealistic fashion, as an "intellectual" question unconnected with the class

struggle, as is not infrequently done by the radical-democrats from among the bourgeoisie. It would be stupid to think that, in a society based on the endless oppression and coarsening of the worker masses, religious prejudices could be dispelled by purely propagandic methods. It would be bourgeois narrow-mindedness to forget that the yoke of religion that weighs upon mankind is merely a product and reflection of the economic yoke within society. No number of pamphlets and no amount of preaching can enlighten the proletariat, if it is not enlightened by its own struggle against the dark forces of capitalism. Unity in this really revolutionary struggle of the oppressed class for the creation of a paradise on earth is more important to us than unity of proletarian opinion on paradise in heaven."

choose or none at all. Religious discrimination would not be tolerated and all mention of a person's religion on official documents would be abolished. A person's religion would be of no concern of the state.

But the state must ensure that religious groupings stand on their own feet. There must be a rigorous separation of church and state with no financial or other support given. All landed property and capital would be stripped from the church and re-distributed to the people. Here in Ireland, we must also remove the church from its position in education.

However religion will still be with us for a long time to come. Despite the belief of the materialist philosophers of the past that the rise of science would deal a death blow to religion. Religion has proved itself to be adaptable and tenacious despite the explosion of science.

It is important that all propaganda against the church is sensitive so as not to cause division amongst the working class on religious grounds. Unity is the most important weapon in the working class in the battle against poverty and ignorance. The church is a past master at counter-revolutionary activity and if given the chance they will be only too willing to divide the working class on religious grounds.

It is important that we as marxists stress the point, that it is marxism not religion that stands for the essential dignity of the human being. Religion would drown us in ignorance and misery would perpetuate the exploitation of man by man and generally coarsen the lives of the working class.

Marxists must work patiently but determinedly for the day when the scourge of religion is totally eradicated. "The criticism of religion disillusions man, so that he will think, act and fashion his reality like a man who has discarded his illusions and regained his senses, so that he will move around himself as his own true sun. Religion is only the illusory sun which revolves around man as long as he does not revolve around himself."

1. Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, Marx's early writings, Penguin books 1975, p. 244.
2. Lenin on Religion, Progress publishers, Moscow, p. 7.
3. Ibo, page 10.
4. Marx Ibo, p. 244.

SEAMUS MORGAN



The Party

Having religious beliefs is not a barrier to joining the Party but having said this, it does not mean that the revolutionary Party can ever treat religion as a private affair. The Party can never be indifferent to lack of class consciousness. The "fog" of religion must be combatted but combatted in such a way as not to insult the religious beliefs of others. This can only have a negative effect and serve to entrench those ideas more firmly. Religion can best be combatted by drawing workers into the struggle against the "dark forces of capitalism" which is the root of religion today.

The Socialist State

For the state, religion must be a private affair. Everyone must be free to follow any religion they

U.D.R. Is Clean Says Brigadier!



At the end of April, UDR chief, Brigadier Michael Bray came out with the usual predictable statement we have all heard many times before. He stressed that a careful review of all soldiers was carried out every six months "As a result of doing this for the first time last autumn. I was satisfied that we do not have a problem of association with para-military organisations". Of the 6,500 soldiers, only one was dismissed for taking part in an UDA parade. "Nowhere else did we find a reasonable case for concern."

Surprise, surprise, Brigadier Bray, during the last three weeks, we have seen a part-time UDR Greeninch, Joanne Garvin charged with supplying the U.V.F. with information including photographs and particulars of motor vehicles, about alleged republicans. Her boyfriend, Scots soldier Corporal Cameron Hastie was charged alongside her. UDR soldier, Paul Gavin Peacock was charged with possession of a sub-machine gun, belonging to William Bell, who was charged with murdering G.A.A. businessman Jack Kietly.

Not that these latest charges would cause any embarrassment to the so-called upholders of 'law and order'. After all, look how many have been charged with the murder of catholics over the years. In 1984, the I.R.S.P. published a pamphlet entitled 'UDR a defence force'? The pamphlet outlined a number of sectarian attacks carried out by members of the U.D.R., including the brutal murder of Armagh catholic Adrian Carroll, carried out by an entire patrol of the 2nd Battalion, U.D.R., who were all subsequently convicted. This murder like many others was carried out under the cover name of the Protestant

Action Force. In August 1975, the U.V.F. announced they had merged with the Protestant Action Force which had now become a "Battalion" of the U.V.F. Links between the U.D.R. and protestant murder gangs is well established and many have dual membership.

Bail

Both Garvin, Hastie and Peacock were granted bail almost immediately, not for them months, sometimes years, on remand inside a prison cell, usually on flimsy or concocted charges with the vast majority of nationalists have to look forward to.

Sentences

They will probably get the usual slap on the wrist in the form of suspended sentences or a few years for their 'misdemeanours'. Only recently a U.D.R. man, McFarlane, convicted of robbing the armory and selling guns to loyalist murder gangs was jailed to the lengthy tune of five years! This is a different picture if an unfortunate nationalist finds himself before the Diplock courts, possession of weapons can bring sentences up to twenty years.

Discrepancy in sentencing not just applies to so-called upholders of 'law and order', but to members of loyalist para-militaries as well. Only recently, Mary Logan common-law wife of UVF Dennis McClean, sentenced to life for an array of offences including three murders, was herself given a suspended sentence for six charges including possession of guns and information on alleged republicans. Unlike Jacqueline Burke, from Derry, who was given three years for transporting arms even though she had just given birth inside jail.

I.R.S.P. Denied Speaking Rights

SEAMUS MORGAN

The Irish Republican Socialist Party wishes to draw attention to the fact that despite having had three of its comrades sacrifice themselves in the 1981 Hunger Strike, it was refused speaking rights at the annual Hunger Strike Commemoration in Birmingham.

Having heard rumours to this effect several months ago, a letter asking for clarification was sent by the Party to the Birmingham Hunger Strike Commemoration

Committee. Receiving no reply, a second letter was sent. It has since come to our attention that a motion was passed by the committee to ignore the existence of both letters.

This decision has absolutely nothing to do with Sinn Fein who have stated clearly to ourselves that they are not in the business of stifling the I.R.S.P. and have no problem in appearing on the same platform. It transpires that the Hunger Strike Committee entirely of their own volition. We find it incomprehensible,

unpalatable and contemptable that a committee which was formed in England, supposedly to commemorate the deaths of young Irishmen on Hunger Strike, should take it upon themselves the responsibility of denying the political organisation of Patsy O'Hara, Kevin Lynch and Micky Devine the right to present its political point of view. Furthermore by their action they stand against the unity of action and purpose of the Hunger Strikers, and indeed desecrate the principles for which these men died.

Campaign For Lifers

On the 29th May, the Conway Mill was the venue of the second public meeting to be organised by the Campaign for Lifers, which was set up recently to highlight the plight of prisoners serving indeterminate sentences. Most political organisations and parties were represented alongside relatives of prisoners, Bernadette McAiskey, David Wall NIACRO and Father Faul. The campaign centres around six demands:

The scrapping of indeterminate sentences. Not only are they inhumane but under specialie. Diplock courts, they are unsafe.

Considering that, at present, a Review Board can put a prisoner back for the equivalent of a 10 year sentence, all prisoners should have the right to legal representation at a Review Board hearing.

If a lifer, or SOSP, is put back, he or she, should be informed not only of the date of the next review, but also of the reasons why he, or she, was put back.

As the present review system is based on subjective reports by prison staff, education and so, an objective criteria for release should be made known to all Lifers and SOSP's to prevent the personal and/or political bias of those reports preventing the release of a prisoner.

An ending of secret reports being submitted on Lifers and



SOSP's. All reports should be open to challenge by the prisoner involved.

A prisoner to be informed of the names of people sitting on a Review Board in his, or her, case and the right to challenge the inclusion of at least two, if mitigating circumstances exist which may prejudice a fair hearing.

There are at present 154 republicans serving life sentences in the six counties, many have served over ten years, some like Brendan Mailey have served nearly sixteen years, having been periodically turned down by the Review Board with no explanation given. Contrast this with the recent releases and re-instatement of Private Ian Thain convicted of murdering Thomas 'Kiddo' Reilly, after serving only two years of a life sentence and republican

'supergrass' Kevin McGrady, also serving a life sentence, released after only six years.

The plight of Lifers in English jails is compounded by the fact, that they are constantly moved from jail to jail, far away from their loved ones and so visits are sporadic and they often spend many long periods in solitary confinement. Mrs. Hill, talking about her son, Paul, one of the Guildford Four, spoke of how Paul had endured a total of 1,500 days in solitary confinement and had been moved a total of 46 times.

The S.D.L.P. represented by Joe Hendron, whilst endorsing the six demands, opportunistically called for an eighth demand to be added, "an end to violence from every quarter". This was scathingly attacked from the floor. Bernadette McAiskey addressing the meeting pointed out: "... The

six demands quite specifically relate to changes that can be brought about by enactment of legislation. It is not within the power of anyone in this country to legislate for peace....It is not something which we as relatives can take on, nor is it something which should be used as a stick with which to beat us."

"...Are we to walk the streets like the Salvation Army, renouncing violence we didn't create but were born into, in the hope that people in high places will say we will now let the prisoners out on condition that they join in the merry tambourine band?"

Agents of Imperialism

The most sinister attempt to divide the forces rallied around the prisoners, was the intervention made by Father Faul who refused to support the six demands. For the past year, countless statements and letters to the press on the subject of Lifers and SOSP's have emanated from Faul. The central thread running through Faul's rhetoric has been, and was at the meeting, that these prisoners must denounce violence as a pre-requisite for release, and that relatives should also come out publicly and do likewise.

Some might just dismiss Faul as insignificant, but it is important to see exactly whose interests Father Faul represents? During the Hunger Strike, he was instrumental in manipulating and causing division and demoralisation amongst the prisoners' relatives. With the introduction of

the 'supergrass' system, Faul was denouncing it on the one hand, and calling for people to inform against those involved in the struggle on the other.

We now have Faul continuing his pro-imperialist stance by demanding that prisoners condemn the struggle for national liberation in return for their release, re-enforcing British strategy of holding these prisoners as hostages. It is clear in whose interests Father Faul represents, those of British imperialism. Imperialism has many agents to divide the forces of revolution, they come in different guises, many wearing clerical collars.

Part of N.A.T.O. strategy to combat the revolutionary forces in Europe has been to use agents either inside or outside the jails to try and cause demoralisation and dissension. In Germany, Italy and Spain, offers of an amnesty to those prisoners who denounce the struggle has caused widespread problems for the revolutionary movements. This must not be allowed to happen here, forewarned is forearmed. From Europe we got the H Blocks, the 'supergrass' system and now, all the signs are that the British may soon try to use so-called 'reformed' prisoners, with messages of gloom and doom, to the effect that the struggle is over.

We, in the Irish Republican Socialist Party fully support the Campaign for Lifers around the six demands and denounce those who would cynically try to use the prisoners and the sufferings of their families as a weapon against the national liberation struggle.

Fund Raiser

A benefit social organised by the London I.R.S.P. support group, on behalf of I.R.S.P. prisoners, was held in North London on 22nd April.

The social was attended by well over 100 people who were treated to an evening of fine Irish music. The main band 'Jacket Potatoes', who are a popular and successful feature on the London circuit were supported by a group of traditional musicians making their debut appearance from Camden Working Men's College.

The main speaker, Eamonn Mullen of Belfast I.R.S.P. thanked the audience for their support and spoke of the need for the plight of Republican Socialist prisoners to

Gibraltar

*By what name shall I call myself, if I ever bow to you
You faceless, nameless butchers of Thatcher's murder crew
What were the orders that you had when you raised your arm to fire*

*Did you ever see their eyes? You cruel puppets of the liar.
No! You could not have looked at them for therein you'd have seen
no fear in those proud young Irish eyes
When you slaughtered them from behind, under guilty colonial
skies*

*What you would have seen, had you not been the cowards you are
Was the spirit of a nation and the will to remove your scar.
And then we heard the puppeteer mouth words, rehearsed before
the death*

*Sanctioned, stamped and sealed by her, while they still were
drawing breath
And this matriarch of murder she rubbed her hands with glee
But she'll never quell a people who have risen from the knee.*

*From the tree of freedom, three of her finest leaves were torn
And the forest cried for justice and thousands more were born
And the roots are ever spreading and the branches grow firm and
strong*

*And they'll smother out the weeds of hate, and start to right the
wrong.*

*For 800 years or more you've tried to beat us to the ground
But if it takes 800 more you'll never keep us down
There will always be those who'll fight you, just like the noble three
To send you back where you belong and make our country free.*



Prisoners Aid

Since the foundation of the Irish Republican Socialist Movement in 1974, the Movement has been engaged in the struggle for National Liberation and Socialism. During the course of the struggle, many members have lost their lives and liberty, in pursuance of this objective.

Today, there are 47 political prisoners incarcerated in British and Irish jails who belong to the Irish Republican Socialist Movement, and are not in receipt of Green Cross. It is the responsibility of the Irish Republican Socialist Party to provide their families with financial assistance, which enables the prisoners' relatives to supply a weekly parcel and also helps with travel expenses. The prisoners also need books, clothes, political literature etc.

In the past facile arguments have been raised by people who believe that to support Republican

Socialist prisoners, would in fact be charity and as such are politically opposed to contributing to charitable organisations.

Arguments such as this, show either political naivety or complete indifference to the plight of our P.O.W.'s who have risked life and liberty in their efforts to rid Ireland of British imperialism and establish a political and social system whereby the Irish working class control the means of production, distribution and exchange, in other words, the establishment of a 32 county Socialist Republic of Ireland.

In October of 1987, the I.R.S.P. issued an appeal to supporters of the Movement for help in providing material assistance for our prisoners and we also investigated a scheme whereby individuals, trade unions, political and cultural organisations could "sponsor" a Republican Socialist prisoner. This scheme has met

with considerable success and Prisoner support groups were established in Britain.

In an effort to consolidate and expand on this success, we have decided to form **Republican Socialist Prisoners Aid**. This initiative is aimed at co-ordinating the activities of our prisoners support groups throughout Britain and will also provide a central fund for donations from people who, for whatever reason, are not willing to actually join a prisoners' support group but who want to provide assistance on an individual basis.

Accordingly, the Irish Republican Socialist Party have organised a meeting to be held on **July 2nd, starting at 12 noon at the Red Rose Social Club, Seven Sisters Road, London N4 (nearest tube, Finsbury Park)**. This meeting will be used as the formal launch of Republican Socialist Prisoners Aid and is open to all who are interested in giving support to our prisoners and the development of the I.R.S.P.

Building the Vanguard



What is hegemony and what relevance does it have to us? This question is of immense importance to us if we are to become the vanguard party of the proletariat. But what is the vanguard party and why is securing the hegemony so central to it? To explain this we need to briefly look at the development of class society.

From the perspective of historical materialism, we can chart the development of society into different classes and social strata, each with its own particular class interests etc. Marx correctly recognised that people make history, not the other way round, and, in 'The Communist Manifesto', Marx and Engels state: **The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.**"

Historical Phase

The class which is able to assert its ideology and its control over the forces and relations of production becomes the 'ruling class', until, through its own in-built contradictions and the ever present class struggle, it is overthrown or out-moded and gives way to the new more advanced ideology and relations. Thus we can see the historical progression through primitive society, slave-owning society, feudal society, and then to capitalist (bourgeois) society and its higher manifestations of monopoly capitalism and imperialism.

The next inevitable historical phase, given the contradictions and crisis within capitalism, is the abolition of capitalist, class-based society and the establishment of socialist (and its manifestation - communist) society. This latest historical phase is already underway with the creation, in the first instance, by the successful socialist revolution in the U.S.S.R., of the 'world socialist system.'

At this point we must ask ourselves: How was the quantum leap in the development of human society achieved and what lessons must we draw from it? This is precisely where the need for the vanguard party is highlighted, and to see how success hinges on this, it is necessary to examine the different social forces at work in capitalist, class-based society.

Social Forces

Modern capitalism is dependent on increasing manufacturing and industrialisation. This, in turn, is dependent on the exploitation of the 'Labour power' of wage labourers - the proletariat. It follows from this that the working class, and not their bourgeois bosses, are the real 'prime movers' in capitalist society, since the production of material wealth is dependent on their labour. This is the basic, fundamental contradiction of capitalism: That between 'Capital' and 'Labour'. Hence Marx and Engels state in 'The Communist Manifesto', that, **"The bourgeoisie has produced its own grave digger: the proletariat."**

Capitalism can truly be said to contain the seeds of its own destruction! But simple observation shows us that, even with the growth of the world socialist system, capitalism is still very much alive and well in the world.

There are a number of reasons for this. One is the creation by the bourgeoisie in capitalist society, of the bourgeois 'state machine' and all its institutions for the defence of capitalist interests. The state is an **"organ of class rule"** and has many means at its disposal, such as: economic sanctions, law, political pressure, military might etc. to help ensure the continued existence of this 'class rule'. Understandably, the power of the state alone is hard to shake!

Another reason is the use of the **"smokescreen"** of pluralist (bourgeois) democracy by the state and the bourgeoisie in general. Pluralist democracy, as we know it, is a purely bourgeois concept, used to give a seeming legitimacy to an exploitative system which is devoid of any real democracy. This is not the place to go into a discussion of pluralist electoral politics, but suffice it to say: **"If voting changed anything, they'd abolish it."**

Perhaps one of the biggest factors which ensures the continued presence of capitalism in

much of the world is the class system itself and the very fragmentation of what can be broadly termed 'the working masses', into different and often antagonistic classes and sub-strata working against their collective best interests. The 'working masses' comprises the majority of any society, who, through their labour, produce all material wealth. It includes, not only the proletariat, but also the semi-proletarian and petty bourgeois peasantry, "professional" people, students, military etc.

As all have little or no control of the means of production etc., and as all 'toil' for a living, therein lies the possibility for a united front against their common oppressors. However, as mentioned above, the bourgeoisie has many means with which to blur these common interests and set the workers against each other. Thus, Marx and Engels made an objective analysis of each class within capitalism with a view to identifying that with the best conditions for development, that with the most 'revolutionary potential'.

Their 'verdict', as outlined in 'The Communist Manifesto' was the proletariat. This somewhat lengthy quote may help to illustrate their reasoning: **"Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product. The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as factions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative...if by chance they are revolutionary they are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat; they thus defend not their present, but their future interests, they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat."**

Because the proletariat is the **"special and essential product"** of capitalism, it holds a position of strength greater than the proportion it represents of the population. It is, after all, the nerve centre of capitalism without which capitalism would be unable to function. It also more accurately embodies and expresses the real interests of the 'working masses' as a whole and as such has the potential to rally these masses around a united, anti-imperialist front. Unfortunately, the proletariat often acts as a **"class in itself"**, not a **"class for itself"**, and



REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIAN WORKER-VOLUNTEERS

party, the concept Lenin expanded upon and brought into actual being. The **"Party of a new type"**: the most enlightened and dedicated section of the most revolutionary class - the working class. Built on so sound a foundation, and guided by the most advanced, revolutionary ideology (communism) the vanguard party at the forefront of an anti-imperialist alliance, offers the best prospect for success against capitalism and the machinations of the bourgeoisie.

The vanguard alone cannot achieve victory. It is not, after all, an elite **"messiah cult"**; it must rally the working masses in a 'united front' with itself as the spearhead. In those whose



does not readily recognise its revolutionary potential to change society. Under capitalism, it is not a monolithic body of class-conscious political activists. To recognise what Marx said **"It will historically be compelled to do"**, it needs its own working class party and ideology to guide it.

Vanguard Party

Here we have the basis of the vanguard

'active' support it cannot enlist it must at least try to create an attitude of 'passive neutrality'. Such passive neutrality from otherwise belligerent elements, may, in some cases, be the decisive factor to tip the balance in favour of victory.

The vanguard must rally the majority of workers to the banner of socialism by showing them, through **"their own experiences"** in struggle, that the path to socialism is the

correct path to secure their 'collective' best interests. In other words it must **"secure the hegemony"** of the working class.

To do this it must involve itself in any and every struggle that the working class is engaged in. As Lenin said **"only a party that will organise really nationwide exposures can become the vanguard of the revolutionary forces in our time."** Although correct theory and strategy are essential prerequisites of victory, it is not enough to sit in 'ivory towers' and theorise. The vanguard must be a body of disciplined, professional activists, committed to raising the political consciousness of the working class. **"Working class consciousness cannot be genuine political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to all cases of oppression, violence, and abuse, no matter what class is affected."** (Lenin).

This was clear warning that the vanguard must not act in the manner of well-meaning but ineffectual intellectuals, must not sit back in little pockets of inactivity and await the **"spontaneous uprising"** of the workers, but must, at every opportunity, actively advance the workers cause and so, **"stand the least risk of missing the revolution"**. Only by such a disciplined principled, and dedicated approach can the real hegemony of the working class be achieved.



Hospital workers get ready for work

vanguard

Party



United Front

Let us now elaborate a little on the strategy of the vanguard within a 'United Front'. Due to the array of different groups, parties, and class interests etc. within a United Front it is possible therefore to reach and influence much broader sections of the working people than would otherwise be the case with simply preaching to the converted. However, this also raises the possibility of being unduly influenced by popular demand (which can be very volatile) rather than influencing it, and being absorbed in bourgeois democracy.

Within capitalism, deferring to popular demand can be a thorn bush on which it is all too easy to become impaled, rather than 'drawing them with us' and revolutionising them, it would mean chasing after and placating the many groups etc, which make up a 'United Front' and indeed society, and would mean the dissipation of available personnel and resources. It would entail an incredible juggling act, which is precisely the kind of circus act the bourgeoisie want us to become embroiled in. This isn't to say that we don't remain conscious of, and in touch with, popular feelings, and do not take up the workers struggle anywhere, at any time. After all we must have no interests separate from that of the proletariat.

What it does emphasise is the role of the vanguard in influencing the correct line of

which tend to restore the bourgeoisie. **Whoever weakens ever so little the iron discipline of the Party of the proletariat (especially during the time of its dictatorship), actually aids the bourgeoisie against the proletariat.**"

The interests of the development of society and socialism must rank above the interests of the Party, and while this doesn't concur with the narrow, politically sectarian views of petty bourgeois reformists and opportunists, it poses no problem for communists who have, as their "raison d'être", the advancement of society towards 'classless' socialist society. This is our primary concern; and, if we have the courage of our convictions to pursue it, then we must establish our hegemony and take the lead in a broad, anti-imperialist front.

This should not be interpreted as elitism; by advancing the Party of the revolutionary proletariat to the fore, we also advance and extend the social revolution itself. To do otherwise would be to leave the 'United Front' floundering in the grip of the real elitist reformists and opportunists.

For the vanguard to simply 'tag along' with the other trends, etc, within a 'United Front' would be a contradiction in terms, as it would abdicate any claim to the very title of 'vanguard', and would amount to its being absorbed within the 'Front'.



This doesn't negate the idea of a United Front, but shows that the vanguard must constantly extend the demands of the Front; must constantly expose the impotence of those (within the Front as well as outside it) who would claim to represent the people. Only by such means - exercised by the vanguard party, acting on the theory and principles of Marxism-Leninism - is the correct line of march ensured; hegemony of the revolutionary proletariat secured and the social revolution itself advanced.

We cannot claim to be a genuine communist, vanguard party if we don't take these lessons on board and apply them **in practice**. To do otherwise is to become, at most, a political fan-club with the ability simply to 'mobilise bias', or a radical pressure group within a predominantly petty-bourgeois alliance.
P. McPhillips

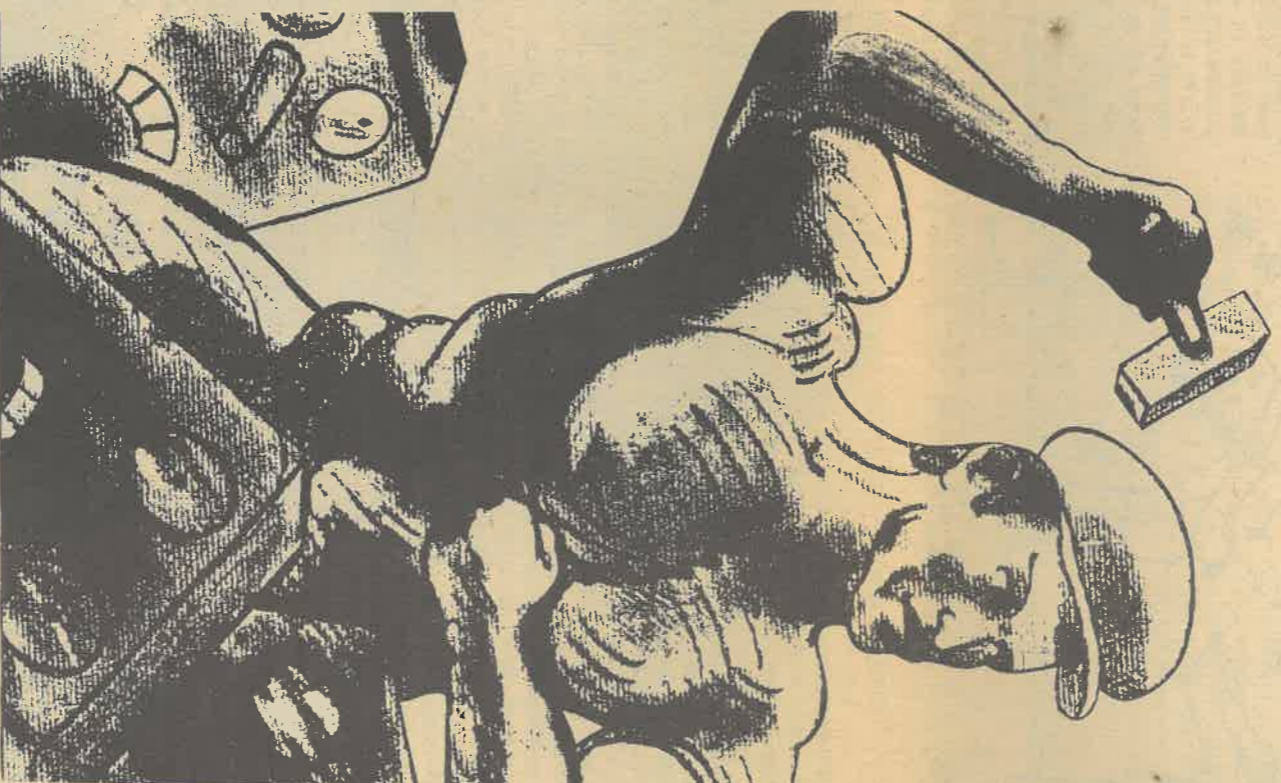
of the most progressive sections of the working class. Lenin said: **One has to learn how to work legally in the most reactionary Parliaments....**" But this doesn't mean being sucked into the morass of bourgeois reformism. On the contrary, it provides an opportunity to publicly expose the corruption and inconsistency of the bourgeois and petty bourgeois reformists and opportunists; to show that 'bourgeois democracy' is irreformable and must be completely dismantled and socialism established. All avenues must be availed of to 'popularise' socialism and make the broad masses of the working people more receptive to its message - a necessary step towards securing hegemony.

This is also the case within a 'United Front'. The forces within such an alliance should, of course, be striving towards certain commonly agreed goals; however, as each Party would retain its own autonomy and its own interests in striving after these goals, there is the risk of the social revolution being subverted and hegemony secured by a basically reformist, opportunist Party, perhaps simply due to its numerical strength and the resources (economic etc.) at its disposal. It is important to realise, therefore, that hegemony doesn't necessarily go to those with correct views.

Hegemony is also a question of strength. It means that one class has made the other classes accept its predominance and leadership, but not necessarily actively support it. It doesn't imply that those having the hegemony are totally unopposed or that their views are correct. Simply that the majority are willing to accept their leadership and that their leadership is not effectively challenged.

For communists however, hegemony and correct views are inseparable. Communists don't want hegemony for the 'sake' of holding power but because it is the means to advance society's development along socialist lines. It is, in fact, essential to have the 'active' support and acceptance of the working masses if the social revolution is to be brought to its only acceptable conclusion for communists: the obliteration-complete and irrevocable-of capitalism and the bourgeois state machine, and the establishment of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" and socialist relations of production.

Great importance must be given to the words of Lenin, therefore, when he said "It is a thousand times easier to vanquish the centralised big bourgeoisie than to "vanquish" the millions and millions of small owners; yet they, by their ordinary, every-day, imperceptible, elusive, demoralising activity, achieve the very results which the bourgeoisie need and



BUILD THE

PARTY NOW!



Light procession against Health cuts.

Slave Labour

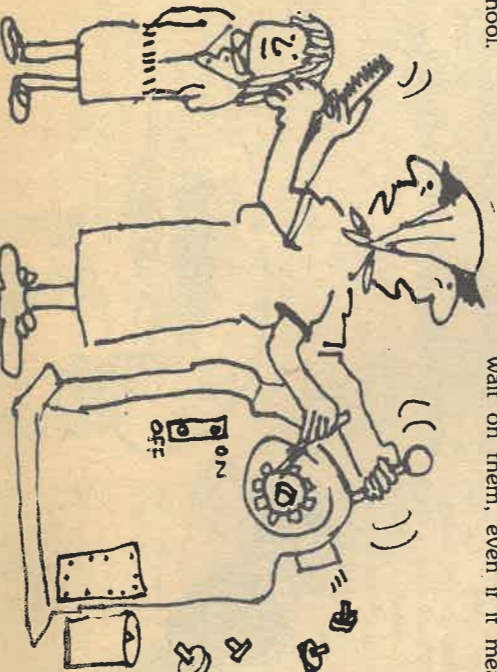
In Derry tonight and every night, dozens of people, mainly women, leave home to go and try to earn a bit of money which they desperately need to survive in these dark days of Thatcherism.

Some of these people head towards the more up-market establishments where they will wait on tables but the majority of them go to work in chip shops and fast food take aways. The hours are long and the rewards are pitifully low.

The I.R.S.P. in Derry were given the following two stories which serve to illustrate the exploitation of women as a cheap source of labour.

Case I

Rose is an unmarried mother with a boy of ten and a girl of fourteen. They live in a vast housing estate and keep very much to themselves. The children have on occasion been subject to verbal abuse about their mothers marital status so they usually stay indoors when they return from school.



"THE WORKING MOTHER"

Four nights a week at 6.30 their mother leaves them on their own not by choice, but because she wants to give them the same food, clothes and home comforts most of their school friends enjoy.

Warning her daughter to make sure to unplug everything when going to bed at 10 o'clock but to keep the sitting room light on as a deterrent to burglars, Rose heads off to face a gruelling twelve hour shift, serving in an all night cafe. It will be 7.30 in the morning before she returns home.

Under her over-coat Rose is wearing her uniform which, by the way, she had to pay for herself but which was chosen by her boss. She arrives at work around 7 o'clock and is told right away to start cleaning tables, fill salt cellars etc., in between which she has to take orders from and serve customers.

In a statement issued through the Republican Socialist Publicity Bureau on June 13th, 1988, the I.N.L.A. claim responsibility for planting the bomb at Ward Park, Bangor, where an Israeli bowling team were to play. Today's action was carried out in solidarity with the Palestinians expelled from their lands, and is in support for their struggle for a return of their "homeland" and with the Palestinian People's uprising in the Israeli occupied territory, this is in line with the policy of our allies, the P.L.O. - the sole representatives of the Palestinian nation.

The I.N.L.A. will continue to attack, where and whenever it deems necessary British imperialist policy of normalisation, which includes inviting such groups into Ireland's war zone. We now warn that any groups and representatives of International imperialism visiting Ireland do so at their own risk.

The first rush usually lasts two to two and a half hours. Things then ease for a while until the drunks and such like start to come in and for the next four or five hours, Rose hardly gets a chance to draw breath.

In between serving and clearing tables she is expected to clean up vomit or run for cover when a brawl breaks out, after which she of course has to once again clean up. In the back of her mind is always the nagging thought of keeping her uniform clean. Should she get it dirty or stained, Rose could face a public dressing down from her boss if he decides to pay one of his unannounced raids to check on everyone.

Around three in the morning, sanity slowly returns. The last drunk has left and things cleaned up. It is time for a cup of tea and a cigarette. All the girls, maybe five or six of them, are exhausted but have still four hours to go, yet the worst is over.

Now the taxi drivers start to drift in but at least they are a civilised lot and it is a pleasure to wait on them, even if it means

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Case II

Gloria is married with three young children. Her husband has been unemployed all their married life. They live on the meagre hand-out from the D.H.S.S. In the years of their marriage, her husband John has only managed to get a few weeks work on the "QT". He is unskilled and the only job which he could get would be of a low-waged manual type. That's if there were jobs.

About two nights a week, Gloria goes to work as a silver-service waitress in some of the larger eateries in the area. The work is usually to serve high five or six course meals at a function for the more affluent people in the city; civil servants, legal eagles and such like. The work is not regular in the sense, she could work for two nights a week for a fortnight and then have nothing for another two or three weeks.

While working, Gloria has to wear a black skirt, stockings and shoes with a white blouse and black tie, all of which she has to pay for herself. On top of this she must supply tea-towels and a large silver spoon and fork (for serving). The towels are to protect her arm from the scalding heat of the platters of food she is required to carry around while serving. These are not always enough protection as the burn scars bear witness.

An annoying feature of Gloria's work is that she has to be at the beck and call of her boss. It could be 3 o'clock in the afternoon when she will get word to report for work at some hotel at 7 o'clock that night. She must be there or she might not get work again.

A typical night's work will start when she must get dressed and ready before six. She has been told to report for work at a hotel on the other side of the city at 7 sharp. The first part of the journey is a simple bus ride into the city centre but it is here that her problems begin. The bus which could take



Karen can you TRY and SMILE at the customers

Hello can I help you

her to the hotel doesn't leave until 7.30 and she would be late, so she can either walk the two miles or take a taxi. As the walk will take her through an area infamous for soliciting and kerb-crawling, she must opt for the taxi.

The taxi costs £1.50 which on top of her bus fare means she has already spent £1.83 even before she has got to work. Well, anyway, she arrives in good time and sets about laying out her station (table) where she is to serve that night. The table normally has 12 settings but Gloria has served as many as 16.

When this task is finished, it is around 7.15. She has been told to be there at seven so where are the diners? She looks around the dining room where the other girls, and the odd man, have finished so they all retire to the staff room which is just a bare room with a table and some chairs.

Now comes the most trying of experiences. After being told to report for work at 7, Gloria and her co-workers are expected to wait around until the diners make up their minds to appear. At that moment most of them will probably be in the hotel bar swilling their brandies or what ever.

It is usually around 10 o'clock, sometimes later, when the diners decide to appear. After serving the dinner, Gloria and the rest of the staff must wait until all the boring after-dinner speeches are over before they can clear the tables

and get ready for home.

Gloria's wage is a set rate of £7. Never more or less. Even although she is expected to serve and pamper the diners, as a casual worker she is not entitled to any of the tips which all go to full time staff. If she is lucky and some of her co-workers are going home in the same direction she can share a taxi. Even so it will cost at least 50p, bringing her travel costs to £2.33 to be deducted from her £7. Gloria arrives home around midnight, having been away for five or six hours, all for less than £5.

These are just two classic examples of the catering trade, not only in Derry but I dare say throughout the whole of Ireland. It is easy to estimate that the wages average £1 an hour. The workers have no rights, no protection from bosses. It is one of the most blatant examples of exploitation of people's poverty.

The six counties has experienced the worst effects of the cuts implemented by the Thatcher government. Unemployment in some nationalist areas is as high as 70%. Women are forced to take low paid part-time jobs in order to feed their families. They are exploited by their bosses who want to maximise their profits by paying low wages. The capitalist system is based on exploitation, it is only when it is smashed and replaced with socialism, that exploitation will cease.

BILLY MURPHY

Fighting Fund

The republication of **An Camcháchta** (The Starry Plough) has from initial reports been met with a positive response. This is good to know.

It is hoped that **An Camcháchta** can become the revolutionary party which is essential to the success of the struggle for socialism in Ireland. We realise at this time that **An Camcháchta** is not of the same calibre as **Iskra** but it is a step in that direction. To change an essentially Republican paper to a vanguard paper does not happen overnight.

In Ireland today there is a barrenness of political theory, a complete lack of direction and leadership which is reflected in the low ebb of the struggle at this time. We hope that **An Camcháchta** will fill this void

by stimulating debate and fierce polemic.

The importance which we, as revolutionaries, attach to the up-keep and survival of **An Camcháchta** must be recognised. However, papers do not produce themselves out of thin air, furthermore no left-wing publication runs at a profit. Therefore in order to ensure that **An Camcháchta** can continue to appear regularly, every month, a monthly fund of £600 needs to be realised, comrades. We need you to send in regular donations. Help maintain the raised banner of revolution! Send whatever you can to:

An Camcháchta Fighting Fund, 392 Falls Road, Belfast 12.

International Action



THE I.R.S.P.

Please send me more information about the Irish Republican Socialist Party.

Name:

Address:

SEND TO: Secretary, I.R.S.P., 392 Falls Rd., Belfast 12, Ireland.



Afghanistan: Revolution Betrayed

On May 15th, after almost nine years of stemming the tide of counter-revolution, Soviet armed forces have begun their withdrawal from Afghanistan. This betrayal has world-wide implications for all revolutionaries.

As was pointed out in An Cancheacta No. 2, the withdrawal has nothing to do with the good of the Afghan people and everything to do with Great Power politics. In the interests of placation and appeasement of the Imperialist powers, a living revolution (for all its shortcomings) is being left to fight for its survival against the counter-revolution of Islamic fundamentalism.

Despite all the supposed negotiations of the past several months, the only definite thing to emerge is the withdrawal itself. The fundamentalist Mujihideen have clearly indicated that the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan plays no part in their plans for the future, in fact the different Mujihideen factions are united in their determination to wipe it out. The continuing attacks against the government serve to illustrate the fate which is in store for the P.D.P.A. should the counter-revolutionaries win power - physical elimination.

The government and the P.D.P.A. of Nairbulah are a far cry from the dynamic Khalqi P.D.P.A. of Hafizullah Amin which brought about the April 1978 revolution. The U.S.S.R. bears a large part of the responsibility for the execution

of Amin, 97 comrades and the adoption of piecemeal reforms rather than the sweeping revolutionary changes (particularly in the land question) which were the only possible way of defeating the counter-revolution before it had time to consolidate. Instead, the reformist Karmal was installed. As Emine Engin states in 'The Revolution in Afghanistan', with the crippling of the revolution, the U.S.S.R. became not the prop of the revolution but the wheelchair. Now the cripple is being kicked out of the wheelchair and being told to fend for itself.

So, where next? There are several fledgling and even some reasonably established revolutions which will look with trepidation on the example of Afghanistan. Nicaragua is the first "Hot-spot" which springs to mind, but equally hot, if not quite so prominent in the media are Angola and Khampuchea. In all three situations, there are active, imperialist backed counter-revolutionary forces: The Contras in Nicaragua, the UNITA forces in Angola, and the forces based on the Khmer Rouge in Khampuchea. The logical step following the Afghanistan example would be the withdrawal of soviet aid, something of which, no doubt, the governments in question are acutely aware.

Implications

So, where next? There are several fledgling and even some reasonably established revolutions which will look with trepidation on the example of Afghanistan. Nicaragua is the first "Hot-spot" which springs to mind, but equally hot, if not quite so prominent in the media are Angola and Khampuchea. In all three situations, there are active, imperialist backed counter-revolutionary forces: The Contras in Nicaragua, the UNITA forces in Angola, and the forces based on the Khmer Rouge in Khampuchea. The logical step following the Afghanistan example would be the withdrawal of soviet aid, something of which, no doubt, the governments in question are acutely aware.

Imperialist Aims

The danger with appeasement is of course that the demands increase while the appeaser becomes weaker. As was pointed out by Ian Mahoney in "The Leninist" (no. 64), the front line of world revolution is the country where the question of revolution or counter-revolution is posed point blank, therefore withdrawing from the front line only serves to bring the point of conflict nearer to base.

Islamic

Fundamentalism

Should the counter-revolution succeed in Afghanistan, and there is every indication that it will, the Soviet Union will be faced with



Soviet troops leaving Afghanistan after fighting counter-revolution

another Islamic Fundamentalist state on its borders. Already we have the problem of nationalism in Yerevan, with trouble between Armenians and Azerbaijanis. How much greater will be the problems of spreading fundamentalism, given the large Moslem population in the Southern U.S.S.R., with the extension of the border with fundamentalism.

Peace or Pacifism?

In his book 'Perestroika - New Thinking for Our Country and the World', Gorbachev promotes a "far reaching conceptual turning point." He states: "For the first time in history, basing international politics on moral and ethical norms that are common to mankind, as well as

humanising inter-state relations, has become a vital requirement." In other words peace is the end goal in inter-state relations. Very laudable - except for the small truth that there can never be peace while exploitation exists, and exploitation in its highest form is embodied in imperialism.

True peace will not be achieved without the destruction of the capitalist system and unfortunately that system will not be destroyed without a hard struggle.

In the words of Hafizullah Amin: "We have a common front with all the workers of the world against all the enemies of the working class."

FRANCIS GLENN

Cuba: An Example of Internationalism

In contrast to the U.S.S.R.'s action in starting to withdraw from Afghanistan, Cuba recently re-inforced their Internationalist contingent in Angola. The Cubans together with their Angolan comrades were able to halt a major South African offensive and subsequently to push the racist South African forces and their local agents back, almost to the Namibian border.

The Battle For Cuito Cuanavale

The South African attacks on Cuito Cuanavale started in December. They amassed a force of about 6,000 men around the town with the objective of capturing the airport there. The capture of the airport would have enabled the South Africans to bomb and disrupt the work on the Benguela railway which is being repaired. This railway is vital to the economy of Angola and the othering "Front Line" states and South Africa has continually disrupted and sabotaged the railway systems of both Angola and Mozambique.

The South Africans were so confident of their success that they announced the capture of the town on January 23rd. However, the braggards had underestimated the heroic tenacity with which the Angolan armed forces (FAPLA) and their Cuban internationalist advisers would fight hand to hand for every inch of ground.

Cuito Cuanavale did not fall and the defenders hung on until Cuban re-inforcements arrived and sent the South Africans into retreat. The defence of this town must be a great psychological boost for the Angolan people and others especially the people of Mozambique who also suffer greatly from U.S./S.A. financed and equipped counter-revolutionary gangs.

Many Blacks in Cuba are descendants of slaves brought



The strong embrace between Dos Santos and Fidel constituted the symbol of the indestructible bonds linking the two peoples, Perils and governments.

over from Angola and this has created a bond between the two peoples. The Cubans have stated that they will fulfil their international commitments, no matter what the cost and their recent commitment to Angola has proved this. They must be congratulated for their internationalism especially at this time when the U.S.S.R. is seemingly abandoning theirs.

The following is reprinted directly from Gramma:

"As reported in an April 28 communique announcing to the Cuban people the regrettable air accident that took place in Angola, South Africa's latest major escalation against that sister nation has been practically defeated, beginning with the disaster inflicted on the enemy at Cuito Cuanavale and the bold and unstoppable movements of the Cuban-Angolan-SWAPO for-

ces on the western flank of Angola's southern front.

As the Ministry of the Armed Forces communique of March 17, 1988 explained, since mid-November 1987, South Africa, using infantry troops from the UNITA counter-revolutionary organisation, troops of the so-called Territorial Forces of Namibia and regular units of its own army, with artillery and air support, has unsuccessfully tried to occupy Cuito Cuanavale.

After assessing the seriousness of the situation created by the racist's new adventure, the leadership of the Cuban Party and government, in full agreement with the leadership of the MPLA-Party of Labor and the Angolan government, decided to reinforce the Cuban internationalist contingent with a few dozen advisers,

pilots and experienced military specialists provided with the necessary forces and combat equipment to guarantee further the territorial integrity of the sister nation and the security of Cuba's troops.

The re-inforcement operation was carried out rapidly and efficiently; a strong group of motorised infantry units, tanks, artillery and anti-aircraft defence means were transferred on short notice to Angola, thus creating the most favourable conditions ever to confront the South African aggression.

The South African troops' and their allies' repeated attempts to break through Cuito Cuanavale's defence have continued to be thrown back. The last such attempt took place on March 23 and was a fiasco for the South African troops who in a display

of impotent arrogance have continued to harass our positions with their long-range artillery, receiving in return a deluge of artillery fire and air raids.

Given the South African's stubbornness and their irrational decision to maintain the occupation of a portion of the territory of the People's Republic of Angola while continuing to attack the Cuban-Angolan forces defending Cuito Cuanavale orders were issued to begin on March 11 a displacement of Cuban-Angolan-SWAPO forces stationed along the 15th Parallel in the direction of the Namibian border. Now our troops are deployed over 200 kilometers south of their previous position.

The courageous, well-coordinated and admirable action of the Cuban-Angolan troops and the seasoned SWAPO fighters as they move along has pushed back the racists almost to the border with Namibia, a territory occupied by South Africa. Its troops will no longer be able to act with impunity in southern Angola as they have done over the past few years with absolute disregard for the norms of international law.

It was a firm, decisive and crushing response that was given to South Africa's escalation. Cuito Cuanavale has become an unconquerable bulwark and a historical symbol. The Cuban fighters, together with their African brothers, will fulfil to the last consequences the internationalist mission assigned to them by the Cuban Party and Revolution.

SEAMUS MORGAN

Review: 'Socialist Republican'

Recently a new publication has appeared on the Irish political scene. The 'Socialist Republican' is the quarterly publication of the Socialist Republican collective. This evaluation will concentrate on the political viewpoint and *raison d'être* which is expressed in four sections, "One class-One Nation", (P.1), the editorial (P.2), "A Way Forward", (P.3) and "The Winds of Change", (P.18).

The first thing that is apparent is the great leaning on Connolly, Mellows and Costello, with many calls for the formation of a "Broad Front". (Presumably a broad Anti-imperialist Front). The editorial states: "The aims and objectives of our group and our paper are the establishment of a 32 county Socialist Republic based on the principles of Scientific Socialism as interpreted in the Irish context by James Connolly and his followers", and also "The creation of a Broad Front and the simultaneous creation of a revolutionary vanguard within such a front." The article "A Way Forward" ends with the exhortation "Build the Broad Front, a Republican Congress and a Revolutionary Vanguard Now!!"

What does it all mean? To begin

with, scientific analysis should not be open to such divergent interpretations as Connolly's writings have been subjected to. Scientific analysis takes concrete facts and draws a concrete conclusion. Connolly, Mellows and those involved in the Republican Congress had one thing in common, they failed to see the necessity of building a revolutionary Party of the working class. They failed to provide the missing political focal point for the working class, a party with ideological clarity capable of leading and educating.

The Socialist Republicans appear to advocate a "vanguard" formed from the various bodies which would make up the "Broad Front/Republican Congress" "...a revolutionary vanguard must be created - simultaneously - within the Broad Front... The coming together of the most advanced class conscious elements inside one platform will allow for a cross pollination of revolutionary theory and practice and so place 'That perfect agreement upon the end to be reached within our grasp.'" (P.4).

This shows a total incomprehension of the nature of a vanguard Party of the working

class. What is advocated is a kind of common denominator which would result in a directionless hybrid of disparate ideologies. The burning need at the present time is for a genuine communist Party with ideological clarity. At some future time it may well fight alongside other anti-imperialist groups under a common banner, yet it will "march separately" and retain its distinctive ideological clarity and line.

In the "Winds of Change", an article in the League of Communist Republicans mould with relevant questions aimed at the Republican Movement, we find the following conclusion: "Only open and as far as possible comradesly polemic, leading to a synthesised revolutionary Leninist Party can safeguard the future struggle for National Liberation and Socialism". (P.20). This is practically the only reference to the necessity for a revolutionary party, but even here we have more confusion than enlightenment. What is a synthesised revolutionary Leninist Party? Does it mean the coagulation of the various elements of a Broad Front into such a party? The resulting morass certainly would not be a Leninist Party.

The call for "comradely polemic" is very praiseworthy, as is the recognition of the need for the combining of revolutionary theory with revolutionary practice. At this point it is necessary to point out some omissions in the Socialist Republican pedigree outlined in the editorial. The majority of the individuals involved in the Socialist Republican collective are ex-members of the I.R.S.P., who in January 1967 supported the attempted enforced dissolution of our movement. There is obviously some unexplained gap between the theory of "open comradesly polemic" and its practice. By their actions shall we know them!

Overall the Socialist Republican publication, both in appearance and political content, attempts to mirror the L.C.R. publication, 'Congress 86'. There is a major difference, however, in that the L.C.R., despite the shortcomings in their analysis, openly espouse communism, whereas the four major articles (remarkably similar in style) studiously avoid the word.

The only international reference is a call for sanctions in South Africa and a facile equation of the situation of Black people there with that of the Irish. There is

obvious confusion as to the nature of the 26 county state and its position in the world economic system. It is not a third world economy, it is a medium-developed capitalist economy, meaning in simple terms that it is a capitalist economy which has not the capability of exporting capital and becoming an imperialist economy.

There is the apparent denial by Jimmy Brown that the 26 county state is a republic (P.1). Certainly it is not the Republic envisaged in the 1916 proclamation, but it is a republic by any definition of the term. Its references such as this, the unquestioning leaning on the ideas of Connolly, Mellows and Costello, the lack of international perspective and the studious avoidance of the "foreign ideology" which place the Socialist Republicans firmly in the left nationalist camp.

Woolly and at times incomprehensible left rhetoric will not assist in the formation of a genuine communist party. As is pointed out in their editorial, political groupings are merely "moments in the history of the working class". It must also be remembered that some have historically proved to be of significance.

FRANCIS GLENN

Inquest On A Long Finger

Three months after the execution of three IRA volunteers in Gibraltar and the ensuing horror of the loyalist attack in Milltown Cemetery, information continues to be judged, witnesses' characters blackened and the signs of the typical British cover-up are apparent.

The inquest has been postponed, with the postponement being announced by the British government rather than by the Gibraltar Coroner. The effect of this is obviously to avoid awkward questions in the Westminster Parliament which will be in recess when it is held. Responsible for the rearguard action defending "British Integrity" are the two stalwart teams of the Tories and the tabloids.

S.A.S. Murder Squads

Since the onset of this latest phase of the struggle against British imperialism, there has been a long catalogue of killings, followed by cover-ups from Bloody Sunday through to Aidan McAneaspie. Any action involving the SAS in the six counties has always resulted in killings.

The SAS have never, nor as far as can be ascertained, have they ever, attempted to take prisoners. It follows logically that once the SAS became involved in the Gibraltar affair, murder was inevitable, and no one believes that the long postponed inquest will expose the whole truth of the matter. Indeed those SAS who were involved in the executions are in fact immune from prosecution under a British law which applies to Gibraltar: the foreign Jurisdiction Act 1890, updated in 1965 and 1967 gives immunity to anyone who "if at the time that the offence is alleged to have been committed was a member of Her Majesty's Forces."

Role Of The Media

Media interest has been strong from the beginning. From the point of view of the international



● VOL MAIREAD FARRELL

dimensions of the incident and the mass of judged and contradictory information emanating from government sources, it was clear that there was much to be exposed.

Both ITV and BBC broadcast investigations which caused hysterical reactions from the government. The ITV programme took the heaviest flak because it was broadcast throughout Britain, whereas that of the BBC was confined to the six counties. The British government have no desire for the British public to gain the impression that there is in existence a British death squad.

How, the British Foreign Secretary attempted to persuade the Independent Broadcasting Authority to withdraw the programme. They refused and amongst the condemnations afterwards was a suggestion from a Tory MP that the IBA should be abolished.

The tabloids moved into action and began character assassinations. Carmen Proetta who stated that Mairéad Farrell and Danny McCann had their hands up when shot, was labelled a prostitute, she is in fact a translator for a Spanish legal firm. Alex Thompson, the BBC journalist who reported for the Spotlight documentary, says he was worried about reporters from the 'News of the World' asking questions about who he slept with.



● VOL DANNY MCCANN

This has had the effect of scaring witnesses and at least two have made it clear that they will not give evidence to the inquest under any circumstances. Chris Finch who is legally representing the families of the volunteers in Gibraltar, said that it was very difficult to find anyone prepared to come forward as a witness since the campaign of vilification by the British gutter press.

Collaboration

Throughout the whole process of surveillance, it is self-evident that there was a high level of consultation and co-operation on an international scale. Obviously Spain must have played the biggest role in assisting the British. Spanish death squads (Le Gal) have regularly operated in France and have been responsible for assassinating leading members of E.T.A.

Less obvious is the involvement of the Free State. While Haughey poses and rhetorically demands action, the truth etc. from the British government, there is no clarification of his own role in the affair. They almost certainly provided information which helped the British in their identification of the volunteers. Despite the fact that the inquest will only establish the cause of death, Free State ministers intimated that they were satisfied



● VOLUNTEER SEAN SAVAGE

the deaths would be fully investigated by it! Obviously they hope the matter goes away as quickly as possible.

Amnesty International

Amnesty International's demand for an independent enquiry into the shootings was met with open hostility from the establishment. It is one thing for Amnesty to investigate human

rights violations in 'undemocratic' countries but horror of horrors, they actually have proposed an investigation into Britain's role. I mean to say, Britain, the pillar of Western "democracy", where human rights violations don't exist!

True Justice

It is clear that the SAS operation was sanctioned at the highest political level, the Tory cabinet. Gibraltar is also an example of international imperialist collaboration at the highest level with Spain playing the central role. The continuing British presence in Ireland ensures that what happened in Gibraltar and elsewhere will be repeated.

It is essential to continually highlight and expose the role of British imperialism in Ireland. It is also important to recognise that true justice will only be achieved when both British imperialism and the southern state have been destroyed and the building of socialism begun.

KATE DOYLE

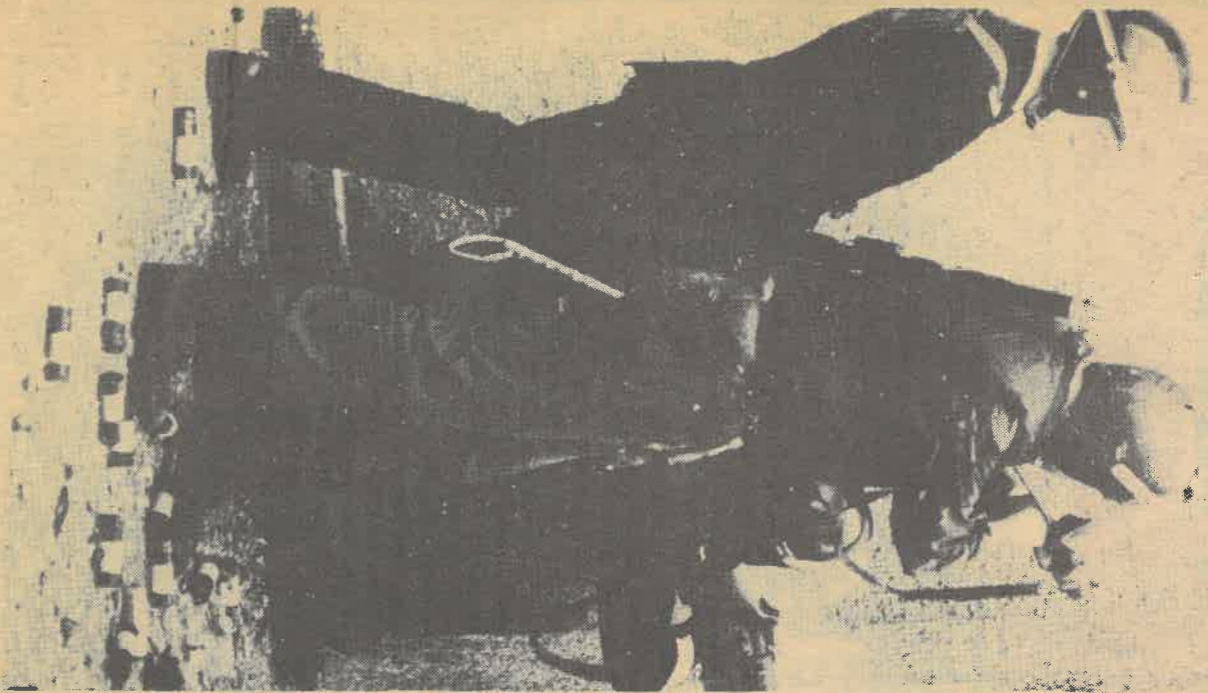
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The 20th May saw simultaneous demonstrations organised by the United Campaign Against Plastic Bullets in Belfast, Birmingham, Amsterdam, Paris, Berlin, Oslo and Stockholm, marking the 7th anniversary of the murders of two children, Julie Livingstone and Carol Ann Kelly. Earlier in the day a letter of protest was handed into Maggie Thatcher, calling for a total ban on the plastic bullet weapon.

The United Campaign Against Plastic Bullets (UCAPB) was set up four years ago, by the relatives of those killed and seriously injured. Sixteen people, seven of them children have been murdered by plastic bullets and many others seriously maimed. The campaign's main objective is the total banning of the weapon and they have achieved considerable success in persuading plastic bullet manufacturers to cease production.

In 1982, Emma Groves, who was blinded by a rubber bullet in 1971, was successful in pressuring an American manufacturer to cease producing the plastic bullet round.

The latest victory, occurred on the 26th of May, when Standard Fireworks (formerly known as Brocks) in Sarquar, Dumfries, announced that it will not be renewing its contract for plastic baton rounds with the Ministry of Defence. This was according to the UCAPB due to pressure from protests at the Standard factory.

There is only one other British company producing the baton round: **Astra Pyrotechnique** at Sandwich in Kent. Spokesperson for the UCAPB, Claire Reilly stated "We will embarrass them as we did Standard and leave them no alternative but to give up."

The Lubicon Cree Fight For Survival

Box 3962
Regina, Saskatchewan
Canada S4P 3R9

"I strongly feel, win or lose, whatever happens to the Lubicon will happen to all native people across Canada. It's not just a land claim they're fighting for, it's survival now."

Aaron Greycloud.

This letter comes to you by way of an appeal to your readership in support of aboriginal people of Canada, the Lubicon Cree in particular.

Until 1980 this band of Cree Indians were self-supporting, welfare and social problems were virtually unknown. Since then, massive oil development has hit the land where the Lubicon live, hunt and trap. Revenues generated from this development are estimated to exceed one million dollars a day for the resource companies and the provincial government of Alberta, unfortunately, the Lubicon have not profited from any resource development that has sprung up around them, instead they are experiencing dependency on social assistance, alcoholism, suicide and chronic unemployment. Today social and health problems have reached a frightening level, nearly one-third of the Lubicon Cree have tuberculosis.

In Calgary recently, Chief Bernard Ominayak announced that the decades of peaceful protest were coming to an end. He (Ominayak) said that the band were determined to stop drilling operations on Lubicon land and will take up arms if necessary. Without their own land base the future of this land is in question, a way of life is vanishing, and so are its people in the name of profit and political expediency. The brutal exploitation of the Lubicon Cree has endured half a century, enough is enough!

Hopefully those of you who read this brief outline of the situation at Little Buffalo Lake, Alberta, Canada will add their voices to the growing tide of support for Chief Bernard Ominayak and the Lubicon-band. Letters of support should be sent to:

Lubicon Support Committee
C/O P.O. Box 3962
Regina, Saskatchewan
Canada. S4P 3R9

Support the last stand of the Lubicon Cree.

Sincerely,

Mike Quinn, Kevin Daniels.

In Memory

The Central Committee of the Irish Republican Socialist Party remember with love and pride our fallen comrades:

Vol. Brendan McNamee, Belfast Brigade
INLA murdered on 20th May, 1975.

Vol. Tommy Trainor, Armagh Brigade,
INLA murdered by loyalists, 8th March,
1978.

Vol. Kevin Barry Duffy, Armagh Brigade
INLA murdered by counter-revolutionaries,
March 21st, 1987.

Vol. Emmanuel Gargan, Belfast Brigade,
INLA murdered by counter-revolutionaries,
March 22nd, 1987.

Vol. Danny Loughran, Belfast Brigade,
INLA (PLA), murdered by Workers Party,
6th April, 1975.

Vol. Jim Power, Belfast Brigade, INLA
killed on active service, May 7th, 1981.

Vol. Matt McLarnon, Belfast Brigade,
INLA killed on active service, May 12th,
1981.

Vol. Patsy O'Hara, P.O.W. INLA died on
Hunger Strike, May 21st, 1981.

Vol. Paul Bonanza' McCann, Belfast
Brigade, INLA killed on active service, June
15th, 1984.

Vol. Miriam Daly, Belfast Brigade, INLA
murdered by loyalists, June 26th, 1980.

We remember their resolution, their
uncompromising manner — they were good
socialists, good soldiers and good friends.
They shall never be forgotten.

The Republican Socialist Prisoners of
War, Long Kesh, Maghaberry, Magilligan,
Portlaoise and England remember with love
and pride our fallen comrades:

Vol. Brendan McNamee, Belfast Brigade
INLA murdered on 20th May, 1975.

Vol. Tommy Trainor, Armagh Brigade,
INLA murdered by loyalists, 8th March,
1978.

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Brigade, INLA killed on active service, June
15th, 1984.

Vol. Miriam Daly, Belfast Brigade, INLA
murdered by loyalists, June 26th, 1980.

They may kill the revolutionary but never
the revolution. Victory to the Irish
Republican Socialist movement! Victory to
the Irish people!

The Irish Republican Socialist
Committees (North America) remember
with pride:

Vol. Brendan McNamee, Belfast Brigade
INLA murdered on 20th May, 1975.

Vol. Tommy Trainor, Armagh Brigade,
INLA murdered by loyalists, 8th March,
1978.

Vol. Kevin Barry Duffy, Armagh Brigade
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Vol. Paul Bonanza' McCann, Belfast
Brigade, INLA killed on active service, June
15th, 1984.

Vol. Miriam Daly, Belfast Brigade, INLA
murdered by loyalists, June 26th, 1980.

They fought to forge the Irish link in the
golden chain of world socialism.

The I.R.S.P. support groups: Bristol,
Glasgow, London, remember with pride:

Vol. Brendan McNamee, Belfast Brigade
INLA murdered on 20th May, 1975.

Vol. Tommy Trainor, Armagh Brigade,
INLA murdered by loyalists, 8th March,
1978.

Vol. Kevin Barry Duffy, Armagh Brigade
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6th April, 1975.

Vol. Jim Power, Belfast Brigade, INLA
killed on active service, May 7th, 1981.

Vol. Matt McLarnon, Belfast Brigade,
INLA killed on active service, May 12th,
1981.

Vol. Patsy O'Hara, P.O.W. INLA died on
Hunger Strike, May 21st, 1981.

Vol. Paul Bonanza' McCann, Belfast
Brigade, INLA killed on active service, June
15th, 1984.

Vol. Miriam Daly, Belfast Brigade, INLA
murdered by loyalists, June 26th, 1980.

When the freedom of our country and
class has been won, let us guard it well,
remembering it was paid for in the blood and
lives of those now dead. The building of the
revolutionary Party is the only tribute
befitting our fallen comrades.

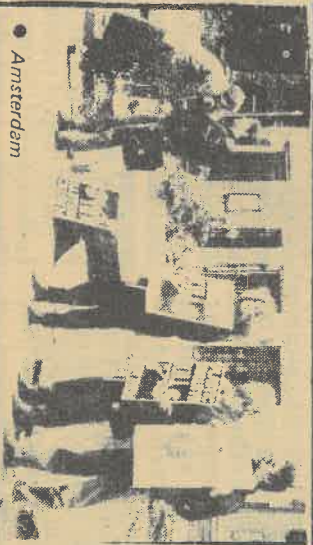
We would like to remind our readers
that all insertions must reach our
office before the end of the second
week of the month in which they wish
their insertion to appear.

Deaths

Brownlee (June 12th 1988) It is
with great sorrow that we learn of
the deaths of our friends and
comrades Bernardo and Anne
also their baby daughter Michele.
Our deepest sympathies are
extended to their daughters and
sisters Kelly, Anne and Charlene.
Our sympathies also to the
Brownlee and Smith family circles.
**Sadly missed and deeply
regretted by the Staff and
Comrade Volunteers of the
Republican Socialist Move-
ment.**

**Brownlee, Bernardo, Anne,
Michele**

Suddenly, June 12th 1988. It is
with great sorrow and deep regret
that we learn of the deaths of our
Comrade Bernardo, his wife Anne
and their baby daughter Michele.
Our deepest sympathies are
extended to their daughters Kelly,
Anne and Charlene, also the
Smith and Brownlee family circles.
**Sadly missed by the Re-
publican Socialist Prisoners of
War, Long Kesh, Magilligan,
Maghaberry, Portlaoise and
England.**



Amsterdam



THE STARRY PLOUGH



Glasnost

The following article by Robert Lake does not represent policy of the I.R.S.P. on the nature of the Soviet State. Rather Comrade Lake's article is a contribution to the development of I.R.S.P. policy towards the U.S.S.R.

Every now and again a new fad emerges. One day it's yo-yo's, the following day it's cabbage patch dolls. Children apparently thrive on these fads, which are generally the result of an artificially produced demand. Kids are very susceptible to Media influences. "So what's new?" I hear the bewildered reader ask. Well, it appears, as if we didn't already know, that adults, including many of a socialist hue, are also rather susceptible to hype generated by the bourgeois Media. Take Russia for example; take dear old Mikhail Gorbachev - the man who Thatcher "can do business with." The Media and a number of bourgeois politicians, for various reasons, like the man or rather they like his policies. As a result, he's 'in', Russia is 'in'. Gorb, because of his Glasnost and international policies, has most definitely become an 'in-person.' He's a democrat, a working class hero, a peacenik, a bloody Lenin! Russia has suddenly become a popular destination for school tours. Some kids are beginning to replace their AC/DC or Bowie badges with little red stars and badges of Marx, Engels and Lenin. Even poets are blathering on about "going home to Russia."

It would appear, from most accounts, that Russia is back on the right track, and consequently communism is becoming respectable. Martin Walker in his recent book, 'The Walking Giant,' informs us that "Gorbachev's revolution promises to be as profound and may yet prove as dramatic as that astonishing year of 1917." All one can say, as a revolutionary socialist, in reply to Walker's assertion is... "HUMBUG!" The recent apparent attempts at

democratisation within the USSR come as neither astonishing or unprecedented for those socialists with any familiarity with the Eastern European socio-economic system. Glasnost is something which cannot be seen in isolation. Marxists must avoid being swept along in the wave of approval for 'Gorbachevism.' Socialists should ignore the hype and concentrate on the reality of the Russian situation.

PERESTROIKA

In actuality, Glasnost (openness) is but one element of Gorbachev's attempts at reform in the USSR. The other more important element is *Perestroika* (restructuring). *Perestroika* is perceived as a necessity by the Russian bureaucracy because of their recent economic problems.

Economic development slowed down considerably between 1979 and 1982 following what a Russian economist has called "a heavy decline in resources increment and a string of crop failures."

This internal situation allied to a poor international economic situation inevitably led to economic crisis in the USSR. During the '70s, in a drive to increase growth, most Eastern European states expanded their trade with the West. Russia was no exception. Trade with the West grew to some importance hence the world economic crisis affected the Russian economy far more than it would have in the 1950's or in the 60's. In November 1982, Yuri Andropov, the then General Secretary of the CPSU, began the struggle to overcome the crisis. His efforts, which revolved around the tightening up of 'order' and 'discipline' in the workforce, succeeded to some limited extent. Industrial output went up by approximately 4.2 per cent in 1983 and 1984. Agricultural output rose by approximately 9 per cent.

The Andropov regime and the subsequent rather short Chernenko regime did little to

fundamentally restructure or modify the economy. For Gorbachev an economic restructuring is absolutely necessary if his aim to establish Russia as an industrial superpower is to be achieved. He envisages a substantial increase in the rate of economic growth when the *Perestroika* is completed.

Essentially the present aim is to make the economy more dynamic by intensifying production and boosting efficiency. To achieve this desired efficiency factories and firms which cannot become profit-making are being closed down and workers laid off. Cutbacks and closures, similar to those in the West, are occurring.

Other methods are also being utilised in an attempt to increase the production rate. Bonuses and some wage packets are becoming 'performance-related.' An experiment in the city of Novosibirsk has convinced the bureaucracy that this is an effective method of increasing production. 15 enterprises were paid for a year in accordance with their rate of production and, not surprisingly, labour productivity went up by 15 per cent. Wages, incidentally, only rose by 6 per cent. capitalist exploitation how are ya?

The granting of a certain degree of autonomy to various firms or sectors is also being done in an attempt to boost efficiency. Local managers are less likely to establish unrealistic aims than bureaucrats 500 miles away. This policy is analogous to the decisions by the multi-nationals in the '70s to treat their plants as almost independent entities. Profit-minded managers are actively encouraged.

Perestroika, therefore, means an increasing exploitation of Russia's 129 million workers. As a result the ruling bureaucracy needs to delude the working class by dangling a carrot in front of it. That carrot is *Glasnost*. Aside from anything else, *Glasnost* helps to convince the workers that

they have some involvement in the system. This, from the bureaucrats point of view, helps because as Gorbachev pointed out at a C.C. meeting in June 1987, "a house can only be put in order by someone who feels like he owns the place." *Glasnost* was conceived in order to serve a particular need of the bureaucracy. Discontent at *Perestroika* will supposedly be dissipated and unrest like that in Poland in 1981/2 will be avoided. That, at least, is the underlying theory.

DISSENT

In reality, *Glasnost* has opened a Pandora's box for the Russian bureaucracy. With the advent of public debate, rifts within the policy, i.e. the CPSU and its bureaucracy, have become more obvious. Gorbachev finds himself confronted by two 'extremes' within his Party. As well as the anticipated clamour to praise *Glasnost* there has also been a conservative backlash against it. Many bureaucrats understand the need for a 'modification' of the economy but simply do not understand the need to throw a sop to the workers. Some of these gents would have no problem in just streamrolling the changes through. Viktor Voronin of the Chekhov city soviet is an example of these conservative CPSU members. Following a successful strike last year he expressed surprise at the state's capitulation saying that "three years ago we would have called this sabotage."

The other so-called 'extreme' within the CPSU is that which wants to accelerate the process of *Glasnost*. Boris Yeltsin is the most prominent example of this trend. Yeltsin used his position as head of the Moscow Party in order to push for greater democracy and open discussion. As a result Gorbachev had him removed as Moscow head in November 1987 and from the Politbureau a few months later. Poor old Yeltsin clearly overestimated Gorbachev's yearning for reform.

Far more important, from a revolutionary viewpoint, is the grassroots dissent among ordinary Communist Party members and among the working class in general. *Glasnost* is not an unprecedented policy. Dubcek attempted something of a similar vein in Czechoslovakia in the late 1960's. Despite the absence of the struggle that surrounded Dubceks rise to power in 1968, the essence of Gorbachev policies are quite similar. Regardless of Alexander Dubceks faults, his open challenging of Novotny and the conservatives encouraged the growth of worker and student protests. Workers councils, independent of the government, were established and real social changes began. Unfortunately the Russians invaded in order to protect the 'socialist order' and Dubcek, the ever-loyal bureaucrat, assisted in the normalisation that followed. Gorbachev by allowing a limited legalisation of open dissent may yet prove unwittingly responsible for an oppositional workers movement within Russia itself.

So far, however, the movements which *Glasnost* has

brought into the open don't appear particularly conducive to building a revolutionary socialist movement. In the main, those street movements that have emerged have been nationalistic. A number of other small protest groups of interest have appeared though. In August 1987, 47 'informal', i.e. unofficial, groups met in Moscow. Most of these groups concern themselves with ecology and environmental issues, preserving historical buildings, helping old people etc. but some (16 in all) formed themselves into a Federation of Socialist Clubs at the end of the meeting. It seems that this Federation, which is led by the Moscow based Club of Social Initiatives, views itself as the left-wing of the *Glasnost* movement. An organisation to watch perhaps?

Allied to the appearances of what seems an embryonic socialist opposition is the outbreak of a number of strikes. An increasing amount of these strikes are seemingly achieving their demands so it looks definite that they are set to continue. Each strike is an indication to other Russian workers of what is possible. As the strikes continue, more and more workers will shed their fear of the bureaucracy, and hence working class confidence will increase.

LIMITED

"Why" the reader may ponder, "is the development of working class militancy important anyway? The implication would appear to be that the CPSU is incapable of democratising the Russian State?"

"Yes" is the simple answer to the latter question - the CPSU because of its role within the USSR is not capable of effecting radical change. It is capable of reform, but even reform is going to occur within certain parameters. Only when genuine socialism has been established will genuine *Glasnost* and workers democracy occur. The deposition of Yeltsin is clear evidence that *Glasnost* will only be left go so far. Another interesting incident was that which followed the publication in *Pravda* on the 13th of December 1985 of a number of letters which strongly attacked the privileges enjoyed by party officials. The CPSU reprimanded *Pravda* and Ligachev at the 27th Party Congress, slammed the press for printing such criticisms. As Zhores Medvedev has said; the bureaucrats are "above all... very concerned to maintain tight control over any changes they do make."

In essence, they will leave the criticism go so far and only so far. Fundamental changes are not on the agenda.

Robert Lake

