

IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALIST PARTY

an

comhábacht



THE STARRY PLOUGH NO 5 IRELAND 30p BRITAIN 40p.

The Workers' Party

Peace Work
Демократи



On The Road

Nowhere!

STARRY PLOUGH EDITORIAL



May the 1st is International Workers' Day. On this day, millions of workers all over the world will march to proclaim their internationalism. We in the I.R.S.P. are fervently committed to internationalism, to fighting the chauvinistic aspects of nationalism within the revolutionary struggle in Ireland and to breaking down the barriers to international working class unity.

On May 1st 1886, The American Federation of Labour called for nationwide strikes to demand the reduction of the working day to eight hours. On May the 3rd, strikers and sympathisers fought with scabs outside McCormick Harvester Works in Chicago. Police fired into a crowd of strikers running from the scene, wounding many of them and killing four.

Following these killings, a meeting was called on May 4th in Haymarket Square. It was a quiet meeting and as storm clouds gathered and the hour grew late, the crowd of about 3,000 dwindled to a few hundred. A detachment of 180 policemen arrived and ordered the crowd to disperse. A bomb exploded in the middle of the cops wounding 66, of whom seven later died.

Although there was no evidence as to who planted or threw the bomb, eight anarchist leaders were arrested. Only one of these was actually at Haymarket Square that day. At the subsequent trial, they were convicted solely because of their political beliefs as there was not one shred of evidence against them.

One year after the trial, Albert Parsons a printer, August Spies an upholsterer, Adolph Fischer and George Engel were hanged after every appeal had been turned down. Louis Lingg, a 21 year old youth, had previously taken his own life whilst in jail by exploding a dynamite tube in his mouth.

These hangings aroused people all over the world and in 1890 the Second International designated May 1st as a day when workers internationally should march and protest.

May Day therefore had its origins in militant working class struggle and bloody class conflict. Today in Ireland May Day is a rather tame affair. Dominated as it is by the trade union bureaucrats, The Workers Party and C.P.I. types, we have to listen to garbage such as the Better Life For All Campaign or The W.P. variation, Peace, Jobs and Progress. It is intolerable that the only message that will be heard from the platforms on May Day will be support for imperialism in Ireland and class collaboration.

A number of years ago, when the Trade Union Campaign Against Repression was active, it was decided to have a presence on the May Day march in Belfast. On seeing the banner, the bureaucrats immediately called in the R.U.C. and had them physically remove the T.U.C.A.R. people from the march, a job the R.U.C. carried out with glee. This was a clear example of the so called representatives of the working class using the coercive arm of the state against workers.

There is a real need to build for a genuine revolutionary May Day. This is a day which should be special to all those who call themselves communists or socialists. The I.R.S.P. is committed to strive to build this special day and wrest it from the opportunists and collaborators.

Finally we take this opportunity to extend revolutionary greetings to our working class comrades the world over. To the anti-imperialist liberation movements in many countries, to the political prisoners in countless jails throughout the world and especially to those prisoners on hunger strike in Germany. Strength comrades, ours is the future.



Protestant Ascendancy In Decline

Comrades,

I would like to concur with the sentiments expressed by P. Doyle in 'An Camheachtar' no.4, regarding Harland and Wolf and Short Brothers. However, I would like to go further in voicing my contempt at the pandering of the Workers' Party and CPI to the loyalist work force in their scabbling attempts to out do one another in articulating their horror at the prospect of job losses in these industries.

James Larkin said "It is my aim in life to make men and women discontent". A noble precept, based on the certain knowledge that in order to effect great social and economic change in our society leading to a revolutionary situation, it is first necessary to galvanise the working class by bringing home the message, capitalism exploits workers, it splits and divides our community on a have and have not line.

It has been the constant failure of every revolutionary group in Ireland since Tone to bring that message to the protestant work force. In Ireland as a whole, until the founding of the Irish Free State, and in the North in particular from the 1800's on, protestants were led to believe by the British that they were a sort of chosen people.

The protestant ascendancy was engineered by the British to ensure that the protestant workforce had the pick of the jobs and a complete domination of heavy industry in the North. Britain was thereby ensured of a statelet with no working class unity. For the working class in the North was effectively split on the grounds of sectarianism, bigotry, jealousy and not those of class.

Britain has been content to pump hundreds of millions of pounds into the flagging industries of the North to maintain this enforced status quo. Soothing and nursing the protestant loyalists, engaging and embittering catholics. Thus successive British governments have made certain that there has never been a cohesive revolutionary movement in Ireland capable of challenging Britain's rule in the North along anti-imperialist and class lines.

However this stance, by innumerable cabinets now seems to be changing. Over the last number of years and particularly over the term of the Thatcher government, Britain seems to have lost interest in maintaining the ascendancy in the North, with the effect, to put it bluntly, that the loyalist workers are now "getting it in the neck". These loyalists have built Britain's ships, her aeroplanes, they have fought in her wars and for their number, borne the brunt of battles all over the world for queen and country, content in the knowledge that their jobs and places at the top of the pecking order at home was assured. Those days are over, the ascendancy is in decline if not finished.

It is now the duty of socialists, marxists, and republicans alike to enforce the philosophy of Larkin. The protestant work force is in tatters. Their so-called Trade Unions scream like headless

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chickens, but their orange card is no longer there to be played. In short they are ripe, to be made discontent.

There can be no revolution in Ireland unless large segments of the protestant working class can be won over to the ideals of Marxism-Leninism. This will not be achieved by the opportunistic interventionism of the so-called Workers' Party, nor by the reformist pandering to the sectarian state by Joe Bowers and the C.P.I. who fail to, or just will not see, the revolutionary situation so fast developing in the North today.

We as communists have a responsibility to make sure ground is made here. We must not abdicate that responsibility. You will note that I put forward no hypothesis as to how this ground may be made. But, I believe if the I.R.S.P. are to become the vanguard party that will, once and for all, lead the Irish working class to ultimate victory, then, they must find a way.

B. McLaughlin.

Two Wrongs Don't Make A Right

Dear Editor,

P. Doyle of Dublin makes some very sweeping statements in his/her letter on the Loyalists' right to work. First of all he/she is serious about socialism, he/she should recognise the right of everyone to work, regardless of creed or political conviction. True, the big industries have a bad record as regards sectarianism and links with British imperialism but since when did two wrongs make a right?

For socialists to call for workers to be thrown on the scrapheap is a total contradiction. It is tantamount to the "green field" strategy of Pol Pot and company. Certainly workers' allegiance should be to their class, and generations of pro-imperialist conditioning has to be broken. But are unemployment and hardship the methods advocated by real socialists?

Starvation and deprivation are the tactics of a besieging force. Surely this will only serve to reinforce (with justification) the well known "siege mentality" of loyalist workers.

Yours etc.

William Stewart
Belfast.

Genuine Marxism



Dear Comrades,

Some points on 'The Starry Plough' no. 4. Firstly, the reply to Robert Lake's article (cf. no 3) is both wrong where he was

contused, and wrong where he was mistaken.

Socialism means the abolition of capitalism, thus the disappearance of commodity production and the law of value, of wage labour and the control of the means of production by non-workers. Between socialism - the lower phase of communism - and capitalism lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. This transition phase is the dictatorship of the proletariat, under which a struggle takes place for the replacement of capitalist relations of production with those of communism. The higher phase of communism comes about when the productive forces have developed sufficiently to allow the implementation "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." This is ABC Marxism, as presented in Lenin's 'State and Revolution'.

Francis Glenn's article, however, is based on the revisionism of Yurukoglu, chief ideologue of the Communist Party of Turkey and the British "Leninist Tendency". In common with these elements, he argues that "The Soviet Union is the first instance of the rule of the working class - the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is the centre of world socialism." But according to Lenin, "Socialism means the absence of classes...and classes still remain and will remain in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship will become unnecessary when classes disappear."

Clearly, The Leninist view of socialism is erroneous. They themselves - and Glenn clearly implicates himself in this view - hold that socialism is compatible with the existence of wage labour, commodity production, and the law of value, all of which obviously reign in the USSR. The most they can mean by this without abandoning Marxism is that the Soviet Union is a transitional society between capitalism and socialism, where the dictatorship of the proletariat exists.

Yet, does even the dictatorship of the proletariat actually exist in Russia? I would argue it does not. The bureaucracy de facto controls the means of production; labour power is a commodity, in a system of generalised commodity production; and thus the bureaucracy is a ruling class, a bourgeois class in a state capitalist society. Yurukoglu himself recognises the possibility of such a system arising in a future Russia, in 'Socialism and Democracy' p.33, but some peculiar blindness prevents him and his acolytes from seeing it in contemporary reality.

Secondly, Robert Lake's centre page article "Marxism and the Broad Front" is an interesting piece. The confusion imported from "The Leninist" is again evident. The artificial and quintessentially Trotskyist division between the saintly pure Leninist 'united front against imperialism' of 1922 and the Stalinist betrayal of 1925-7 does not accord with historical reality.

In 1922 Radek, speaking at the IV Congress of the Third International addressed himself to the Chinese communists thus:

"Comrades, you must understand that in China today neither socialism nor a soviet republic is on the agenda". That this was the official view of the Comintern is clear from similar pronouncements on Turkey, Persia, and India. This line stemmed from the belief that the struggle of national liberation movements would so dislocate imperialism as to aid a resurgence of revolutionary struggle in the west.

However, in this approach we can also see the germs of

'socialism in one country', the backward states surrounding Russia, being seen as buffers against capitalist armed intervention against the young soviet republic. Thus support was given to bourgeois nationalism so as to make it amenable to friendly relations with the Bolshevik government.

In 1926, with the definitive victory of 'socialism in one country', the national interests of the Russian bureaucratic state were put above the interests of Chinese workers, leading to the latter's massacre in 1927. The failure of the Chinese revolutionary workers in 1925-7 was due in no small part to the Comintern's insistence that the CCP work with the Kuo-Min-Tang, enabling the latter to declamate the proletarian movement. As I have shown, this had been Comintern policy since 1922. However, in those early years, it could be regarded as a mistake which could be struggled against within the International. By 1927, it was clear the Chinese workers had been betrayed.

Finally, in view of the importance of building a revolutionary proletarian movement in Ireland, let me say that both eccentric Stalinism and crypto-Trotskyism must be rejected in favour of a genuine Marxism not afraid to learn from the mistakes of the past.

**Peter Clancy,
London**

Peter Clancy appears to be confused in his terminology and conceptions of socialism and communism. Socialism is the transitional stage between capitalism and communism. It contains elements of both under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Soviet Union has elements of capitalism and communism, the transitional stage has very obviously not ended, but it does not have classes. It is a socialist state, QED. Nowhere in my article will you find approval of the ossified bureaucracy.

As regards Cde Lake's article, no-one approves of the mistakes made as regards the C.C.P. and K.M.T. "Saintly purity" is not to be found in concrete reality. The mistakes of the past are there to be learnt from and a mistake of the recent past has been the concerted effort by shallow "ism-fetichists" to pigeon-hole any attempt to develop a genuine revolutionary party following the teachings of Marx and Lenin.

Francis Glenn

Broad Solidarity

Dear Comrades,

As a supporter of the I.R.S.P. in Scotland it was with great concern that I read Francis Glenn's highly critical article about 'Time to Go'. In an abstract sense I agree with a lot of what comrade Glenn says, however it is necessary to deal with realities. For far too long there has been a terrible silence on Ireland with the issue receiving little debate in the labour and trade union movement, with the ideas of the bourgeoisie going unchallenged. It is beyond the scope of this letter to deal with why this has been the case, but a deep rooted chauvinism in the working class movement due to the experience of British imperialism is one important factor.

Given the silence, 'Time to Go' must be viewed as a healthy development, indeed some would say well over due. To describe it as pro-imperialist as comrade Glenn does is ultra-leftist nonsense. The comrade correctly outlines the

reformist politics of elements in the leadership of 'Time to Go', but surely it makes it all the more important to challenge their assumptions from an anti-imperialist perspective. Given that the whole point of the campaign is to debate how withdrawal is to happen, it is imperative that communists engage in debate. This can only be effectively done by joining the numerous 'Time to Go' groups which have been set up around Britain.

By implication, comrade Glenn is dismissive of the efforts of constituent groups like the LCI since the Labour party is a bourgeois workers party. Okay, no serious communist believes that the Labour party will achieve socialism in Britain, but the reality is that it is the mass party of the working class and many of its ideas hold strong currency in the working class itself. It would therefore be ridiculous to ignore it as comrade Glenn implies. To write off Labour party activity on Ireland not only lets the Neil Kinnocks off the hook, but also ignores the sincere efforts of many hundreds of leftists in the party who hold progressive positions on Ireland and other issues.

The LCI and others have achieved significant gains in the CLP's and have tried to get Ireland prioritised, and by getting speakers from Ireland have helped to increase peoples' awareness of the Irish question. Indeed Sinn Fein acknowledge the constructive work done by the LSI and other groups like the Connolly Association. Given that the majority of people in Britain support withdrawal from Ireland for whatever reason, communists should be prepared to work with all those forces who accept a British withdrawal and self-determination for the Irish people. This is acknowledged by comrade Taggart in another article in which he correctly states that "we in the IRSP are in total agreement with the sentiments of mobilising as broad a base as possible in support of the struggle for self-determination, and by this logic we would be against restricting the appeal of a withdrawal campaign". The alternative is to go down the ultra-leftist road of building so called principled solidarity movements with all the "correct" slogans.

It beats me how comrade Glenn can seriously believe that trotskyite/ultra leftist groups can build a principled campaign of any sort. From my experience these groups put their own factional interest above those of the issues they claim to serve, which in a nutshell is sectarianism. Moreover, they engage in a form of activity which relieves political frustration, but does little else. Groups like the RCP make a crude challenge to the rest of the British left, either you support unconditionally the Irish war or you are in the imperialist camp. This leads therefore to a contemptuous dismissal of the sincere efforts of groups like the LCI and of the Connolly Association. While comrade Glenn opposes the sectarianism of the RCP etc, it is naive of him to think that groups drawn largely from the city of London milieu, with little or no organic links with the working class, can achieve the active participation of the working class. I would suggest that this is an exercise of building castles in the air.

Also comrade Glenn believes that 'Hands Off Ireland' should call for support for the struggle, presumably he means the armed struggle. Not only is he restricting the base of a potential withdrawal movement but he is asking British communists to do something they should not. Lenin stated that communists in the oppressor country should support the struggle of those in the oppressed

colony, since the national liberation struggle has a democratic content which Lenin recognised as being revolutionary. In giving solidarity to the national liberation struggle, communists should not support a specific tactic or group as comrade Glenn implies, with the exception of the communist organisation in that colony.

To conclude, I believe that the I.R.S.P. should give critical support for 'Time to Go' and call on all communists and anti-imperialists in Britain to intervene and challenge the arguments of the reformist elements in the campaign. What is also needed is the creation of a mass movement calling for a British withdrawal and self-determination for the Irish people. If little else, comrade Glenn is to be congratulated for raising what is a thorny issue.

Sean Breen

John Mitchell: Qualities Of Leadership?

In the High Court, Dublin, on Monday 13th February, John Mitchell ended his fight for reinstatement as General Secretary of the Irish Distributive and Administrative Trades Union (IDATU). In return for a substantial cash settlement (undisclosed), he withdrew his application for an injunction to prevent the union from filling his post. He further agreed to resign from the union and not to attend any of its meetings. he

any of its meetings. He also undertook to seek the withdrawal of motions calling for his reinstatement by his supporters in the union.

This move came as a shock to Mitchell's supporters inside and outside the union. It followed a week which saw his campaign suffer crucial setbacks. Resolutions in support of the call for his reinstatement were lost at the Cork and Limerick branch annual general meetings. In Dublin, where his support was strongest, the right-wing refused to allow a vote on the issue. To all intents and purposes the prospect of getting his job back by overturning the National Executive's decision at the Annual Delegate Conference at Easter had vanished. But there was still the strategy of maintaining the anti-Executive momentum through challenging for union positions in upcoming elections.

Mitchell justified his decision to throw in the towel on the grounds that: since he was not going to get his job back, he was entitled to get as much compensation as he could and since the union had approached him for a settlement this was the most advantageous time to do a deal. Nor did he want to have his supporters face inevitable humiliation at the Easter conference. He did not believe in fighting lost causes.

Reaction to the decision ranged from feelings of disappointment to charges of outright betrayal. Criticisms from the IDATU activists centred mainly on the failure to consult or even give prior



information about his move. They were aggrieved and hurt by what they saw as his arbitrary and PERSONAL solution to an issue which involved them. This involvement, in fact, has left many of them vulnerable to intimidation from both employers and the union hierarchy. IRSP comrades participated in the campaign and we consider it important that a political assessment of John Mitchell's actions be made.

We say that he was wrong to end the dispute with the IDATU national executive as he did. He sold his right to union membership and, with it, the possibility to fight against the right wing dominating the union on other fronts. We do not say that it is wrong to settle for financial compensation for unfair dismissal or loss of earnings - this is a legitimate course for any trade unionist or worker in dispute with an employer. However, John Mitchell was not just an ordinary employee suffering dismissal. His sacking was a political issue.

This campaign was supported by trade unionists and socialists, not because they were in his fan club, but because they identified with his record of opposition to the rotten conspiracy of traitors and compromisers which constitute the leadership of the Irish trade union movement. The campaign was in defence of what Mitchell represented - not just of him as an individual. In this sense, the campaign was not his personal property and his decision to abort it was a sell-out.

Those who rallied to his cause did so for the purpose of advancing the fight for militant trade unionism and for bringing the labour movement to the forefront of the struggle for national liberation and socialism. Mitchell was not wrong to settle for cash - he was wrong to do so before the fight had run its full course. True, there was virtually no hope of getting his job back in the immediate future but surely the attitude of a socialist and especially one purporting to be a revolutionary, should have been to create as much political damage as possible to the enemy.

In this instance, a trial would have been an excellent opportunity to expose the machinations of the union right wing, to present openly their political bias and their disregard for their members' interests. One of the obstacles which the campaign had most difficulty in

surmounting was the lack of access to the membership. Where it was possible it was done against a background of witch-hunting and misinformation from the hierarchy and the media.

By prematurely ending his legal action, John Mitchell denied his supporters in the IDATU a most favourable means for getting the truth about the issues across to the general body of members. This would have provided a basis for continuing the fight against the right wing stranglehold on the union structure.

We reject out of hand the insinuations going around that John Mitchell cynically set out to use the supporters of his campaign as a means of extracting the best financial settlement for himself. On the contrary, we salute his stand against the National Executive. He refused to bow to its demands thereby bringing about his dismissal. How many trade union officials are there who would have taken such a stance? We point to his unstinting personal efforts and endeavours throughout the campaign, up to the end. We recognise also that it was always an uphill battle. There was no support from such "socialist" organisations as the Labour Party, the Workers Party, the Communist Party. All of these outfits have considerable influence in the trade unions. They used this AGAINST John Mitchell. Nor did Sinn Fein come to his aid - apart from the contributions of a few members on a personal basis.

In these conditions (isolation, the prospect of a protracted struggle with the inevitable hardships for himself and his family, etc.) John Mitchell's action is perfectly understandable. It is not however politically excusable.

Revolutionary socialist leadership cannot be built in the working class on the basis of opting out when the going gets tough. This only leads to cynicism on the part of the workers, trade unionists, etc, and makes more difficult the task of creating the necessary leadership. Leadership is not just about having the correct strategies and tactics. These count for nothing if they are not allied with the fighting qualities heroically demonstrated daily by Irish workers.

We repeat: John Mitchell's action is inexcusable. Whether it can be forgiven and forgotten by socialist and republican militants depends on his recognition of his political mistakes and on his future contribution to the class struggle. For our part, we hope he is big enough to admit his errors and to make amends and will place his talents at the disposal of the socialist revolution.

Dermot McBride

Broad Front - Who Qualifies?



In the last issue we presented an article on Marxism and the Broad Front. Our purpose was to open up debate on what was a main plank of I.R.S.P. policy in the past; and to clarify our position in the light of our present political analysis. The initiation of this discussion coincided with the adoption by Sinn Fein of "the need for an all-Ireland anti-imperialist movement." What are the aims of such a movement as seen by the leadership of the Republican Movement - and what constitutes its probable and desirable components?

Various the aims have been described as "to restore the right to the Irish nation to national self-determination" (Martin McGuinness); "the struggle against partition and foreign domination" (AP/RN Jan. 26th); "the creation of an Irish democracy", "for British withdrawal and national self-determination... the only means by which the Irish people as a whole can establish economic democracy". (G. Adams).

The new allies of republicans will be "everyone who thinks as we do on the national question" (Martin McGuinness); "Broadest possible range of political forces throughout Ireland" (Tom Hartley). "All oppressed sections of the Irish people" and "the combined forces of Irish democracy." (Gerry Adams).

It can be seen by these few quotes that the conception of the Broad Front is somewhat vague, non-specific, confused and a little contradictory. One point is very clear. All are agreed on the need to mobilise wider support and new forces for the struggle against imperialism.

Let us look, however, at some of the 'allies' Sinn Fein has recruited in its Broad Front activities. Several ventures have been undertaken with, for example, the Communist Party of Ireland. These include sharing a platform at the public meeting to commemorate the 70th anniversary of Dail Eireann; it also involves joint participation in a number of committees on issues like extradition. The latest enterprise is a campaign initiated at a private meeting in the Clarence Hotel, Dublin (by

invitation only) to promote a series of conferences and political dialogue on themes such as national self-determination, denial of national and democratic rights and the effects of a partitioned country; what the last twenty years has meant to Irish people. Of course many other political tendencies were involved as well as notable individuals such as Kevin Boland.

If we just examine the record of the C.P.I. over the last 20 years we will get a very instructive insight into the criteria which Sinn Fein uses in deciding on those who qualify as potential allies of the anti-imperialist movement.

We ask: is this the same Communist Party of Ireland which was the Doctor Frankenstein to the Sticky-Workers Party monster? Which supported the Workers Party candidate against Bobby Sands in the Fermanagh/South Tyrone by-election? Whose trade union members voted against supporting the Hunger Strikers' five demands? Perhaps that was long ago. Has the leopard changed its spots?

In the February edition of the "Irish Socialist", the C.P.I. gives us its assessment (and expectations) of Sinn Fein's Broad Front. Welcoming the "examination of the principle of a Broad Front strategy" the editorial comments "the ideas of this resolution can obviously be compared with the famous resolution on the National Liberation Front strategy at the 1970 Ard Fheis, which saw the split into Provisional and Official factions. Fortunately, last month's event avoided any such disastrous development". Is it not a mite worrying that those who viewed the formation of the Provisionals and the rejection of the reformist path as a disaster in 1970 now applaud those same revolutionaries? It certainly does not mean that the C.P.I. has changed its views on the armed struggle which has been heroically pursued by republicans since 1969.

In the same article the C.P.I. qualifies its welcome for the Ard Fheis decision with the words "even if there are still contradictions between what the provisionals say and their military activists do". It says further "it may be morally justifiable to kill a British soldier who is the instrument of imperialist oppression. But it is politically unjustifiable since the continuation of this futile campaign confuses and divides our own people. The armed struggle has no impact on Britain's grip on the north and just obscures the realities of discrimination and the denial of democracy". This is a direct repudiation of

Adam's statement that the British government "understand only the argument of force" and that the armed struggle "sets the political agenda".

In its northern paper "Unity", the C.P.I. says the I.R.A. "has descended to the level of a Lebanon-style sectarian militia, fighting its localised, petty and vicious war against neighbours of a different religion". This has been the standard script from the Northern Ireland Office for the last 20 years.

What kind of liberation ideology can republicans learn from such a movement? The answer is "Surrender and rely on public opinion, the conscience of our oppressors".

In place of the armed struggle, the C.P.I. urges "The Provisionals could learn a lot from the Palestinian people, who have gained far more politically from the intifada - in which the dead bodies have all been Palestinians - than in all the morally justifiable armed actions that proceeded it". So, according to the Communist Party not only should republicans cease armed actions, they should take on the Brits and the RUC in an unarmed suicidal quest for pacifist martyrdom. And this 'advice' from people who desecrated the sacrifice of Bobby Sands and his comrades.

Just what exactly can the liberation movement hope to gain from an alliance with such a party? A party which is entrenched in the trade union bureaucracy, which helps to stifle the interest of southern workers on the national question, and which panders to the loyalist bigots who dominate the six county unions. A party which is in reality opposed to the struggle for a socialist Ireland or even a united Ireland. In the south it pays lip service to this aim while its northern wing placates its loyalist trade unionist supporters with a policy of "democracy in Northern Ireland" and says "Let us talk about devolution" (Unity, 11th February).

Sinn Fein says that building the anti-imperialist front is the urgent task of all republicans, socialists, nationalists and democrats. While we do not agree with this broad definition (all nationalists and democrats?) we fail to see how the policies of the C.P.I. meet any of these categories.

When Gerry Adams asks "How can such a movement be built?" and he admits "I don't know. At least not yet" (Letter to Irish Times, March 23rd). It can be taken that he is speaking on behalf of the whole Sinn Fein leadership.

The I.R.S.P. does not claim to have all the answers either. We are ourselves in the process of analysing the deficiencies of past practices and perspectives. We are attempting to develop the correct method and programme to successfully conclude the revolution for national liberation and socialism. However we would question the sincerity of a supposedly broad based movement which at its initiation talks, deliberately excludes the Republican Socialist Movement which has been and is involved in the struggle for national liberation and socialism and which has lost many comrades in that struggle.

Unity based on the "Lowest common denominator" type of politics will not advance the national liberation struggle nor the struggle for socialism one inch, rather it will demoralise and confuse working class people north and south and serve to rehabilitate those forces which must be ideologically defeated and consigned to the dustbin of history. **Dermot McBride**

Downpatrick RUC Target Local Schools



Downpatrick teacher Mr. Jim Magee (right)

Over the past year, the R.U.C. community relations branch - in effect an "eyes and ears department" - have stepped up their activities in the Downpatrick area. Schools, in particular Catholic schools, have been targeted by the R.U.C. in an attempt to gain the active collaboration of both teachers and pupils. Unfortunately they have found willing allies among local school principals who have been regularly inviting the R.U.C. into the schools and have helped to coordinate day trips for pupils in their care.

These trips are organised by the R.U.C. and all transport used is owned and operated by armed R.U.C. men. In De La Salle Secondary School, fourth form boys are encouraged by their sociology teacher, Jim Magee, to take part in both day trips and camping holidays, all under the auspices of the R.U.C. It will come as no surprise that Jim Magee has strong associations with another "eyes and ears department" - The Workers Party.

In one sinister incident, late last year, the children of C4 were taken on a day trip around the Killyleagh shore-line. On arrival the R.U.C. men in charge organised the children into search parties and had them searching hedges and ditches, ostensibly in a hunt for old bottles.

Many parents are unaware of the dangers posed by allowing their children to take part in these activities. While some children have refused to take part in any activity associated with the R.U.C. many others do so, unaware of the risks and dangers involved. The same cannot be said of the local school principals and those teachers who actively assist the R.U.C. in the setting up of such trips. They have been guilty not only of open collaboration but have also been putting the children in their care in danger.

The I.R.S.P. calls on the schools to withdraw from these schemes and we also call on the parents of those children involved to refuse to allow their children to be used in this cynical manner.

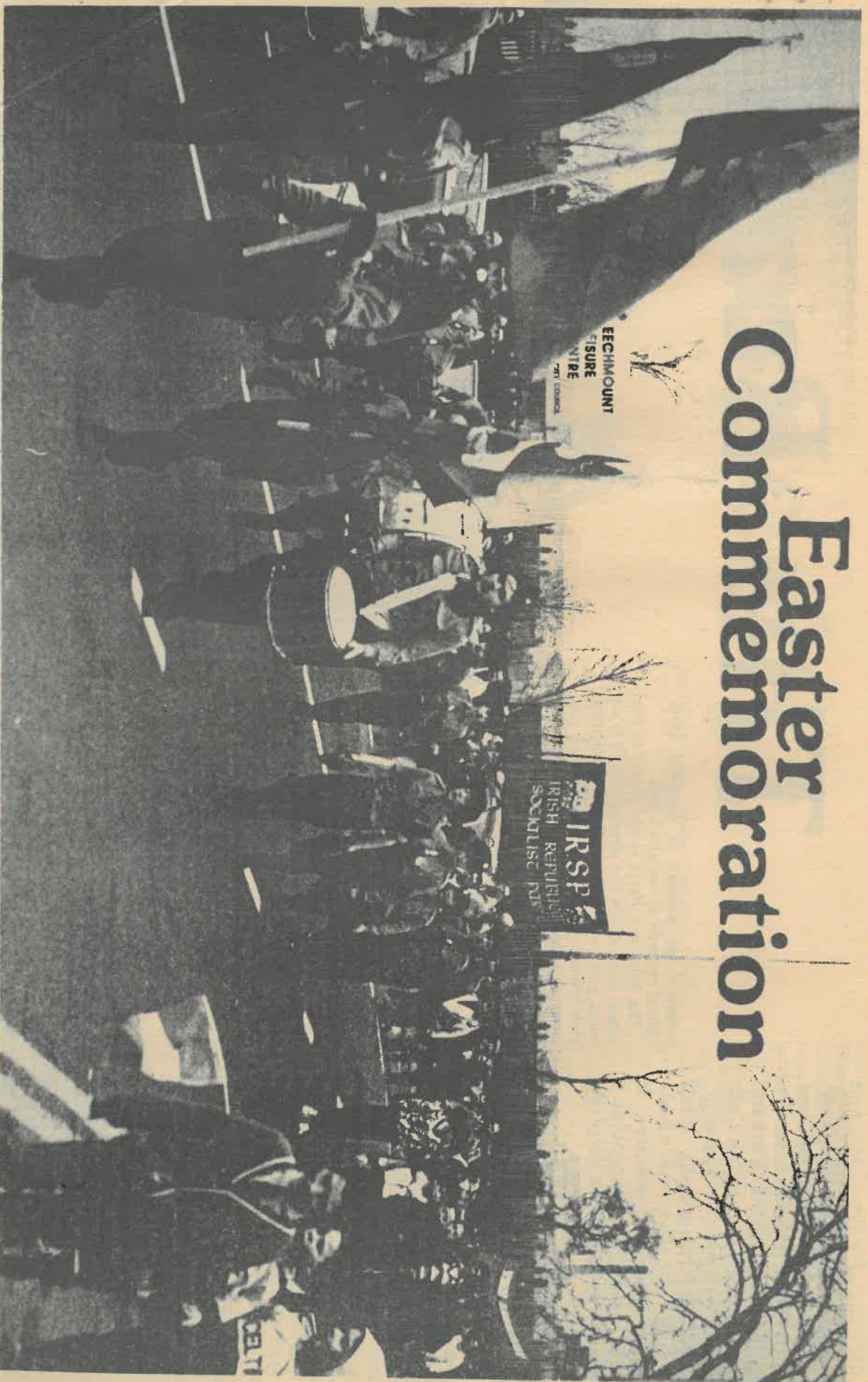
I.R.S.P. On Forthcoming Elections

At this present moment in time the Irish working class find themselves on the one hand ill-served and all too often sold out by the bureaucracy of what passes for trade-

unionism, whilst on the other hand there is no party providing a revolutionary platform which genuinely promotes and protects the aspirations of the working people. It is within this vacuum that we in the I.R.S.P. are attempting to build an alternative. Towards this end...the realisation of a revolutionary communist party, we have to examine every means by which such a party can be built. An intervention by the forthcoming local government elections in May was suggested as a means whereby we could declare for our position. After intense discussion within our structures throughout

the country and with the aid of contributions from our P.O.W.'s, the Central Committee of the I.R.S.P. has decided not to put any candidates forward in either the local government or European elections. Our main reasons are: that in order to make an intervention it has to be of a tactical and organisational advantage to a party - at this stage in our development it would be if anything the opposite. Secondly, electoralism, as it exists in the occupied 6 counties will have to be re-evaluated given the negligible gains made by the contesting and winning of seats by progressives in the recent past. Until such central issues are debated and resolved by our party membership, it stands that any such intervention in elections by the I.R.S.P. would be premature.

Easter Commemoration



Around 250 people attended the annual I.R.S.P. Easter commemoration parade from Dunville Park to the Republican Socialist Plot in Milltown Cemetery.

The parade was led off by an eight person I.R.S.P. colour party, followed by the Brendan Convery flute band from South Derry. The marchers received a tremendous reception from the people of West Belfast who had gathered to watch the days proceedings.

This year differed from other years in so far as banners were carried by various groups in attendance from Britain including Red Action, The Leninist and the Revolutionary Democratic Group, in a spirit of solidarity with the Republican Socialist Movement. At the Republican Socialist Plot, wreaths were laid on behalf of the Staff and Volunteers of the I.N.L.A., the Central Committee, I.R.S.P., The Republican Socialist Prisoners in Long Kesh, Maghaberry, Magilligan, Portlaoise and England, relatives, friends and comrades of our fallen volunteers.

The Chairperson opened the proceedings by calling on the Brendan Convery Band to play *Amhran na bhFian*, followed by the Roll of Honour and a minutes silence. In his opening remarks the chairperson reminded us of the spirit of the proclamation even though it did not reflect the politics of our movement today as the inheritors of Connolly and the Irish Citizen Army. The proclamation was then read by comrade Mary Clinton.

The main oration was then delivered by comrade Kevin McQuillan.

"The leadership of the Republican Socialist Movement extends a warm welcome to all who are assembled here today, particularly those who

have travelled long distances, some from across the water, to be here with us at this Easter commemoration.

Easter for us is a time for remembrance. Remembrance not only of the 1916 rising but also of our volunteers who have given their lives in the struggle for national liberation and socialism. It is a time to remember their courage and dedication, and to remind ourselves that there is no easy road to victory. We particularly salute the courage and strength of our dead volunteers families, who have suffered such tragic, irreplaceable loss.

Today our thoughts are also with all our imprisoned comrades both in Ireland and England, those forced to live in exile, our supporters who have endured so much and to our membership whose selfless dedication and commitment to our cause has continued unabated.

In 1916 James Connolly joined with the Irish Volunteer, and led the Irish Citizen Army into what became the Easter Rising. The Irish Citizen Army has been described as the first Red Army in the world.

It was the first instance of workers being organised specifically to defend and fight for the interests of their own class against the capitalist system. There have been those who have criticised Connolly for taking the struggle for socialism into the national struggle. Those same people said that the time wasn't right, and that the workers' organised strength and militancy was destroyed in those few bloody days in 1916.

Today we still have those who say that the time is not right for the Irish working class to fight against imperialism, that the national question is completely separate from the social question and that the national liberation struggle divides workers. We would say to those people - "for you the right time will never come".

76 years after the formation of the Irish Citizen Army, and

73 years since the Easter Rising we look to that first Red Army for inspiration in this phase of the struggle. We see, as Connolly did, the need for the Irish working class to not only take part in, but to actually lead, the fight for national liberation as an integral part of the path to socialism. And yes, the struggle does divide the working class. It divides them into those who are prepared to fight against imperialist exploitation and oppression, and those who willingly allow themselves to be exploited and oppressed, to the extent of being used as active counter-revolutionaries.

We also see the limitations of the purely nationalist struggle. The cause of labour cannot be put on the back burner. A conference of elected representatives, from the community including the church to decide on the future of the Irish people, after a British withdrawal, which Sinn Fein is advocating, offers nothing at all to the working class. Connolly foresaw a similar problem in 1916 when he urged the Irish Citizen Army to hold on to its guns in the event of victory because the fight would not be over until the social struggle had been won. We believe that to ensure total victory, we must forge something which Connolly neglected to do; we must build a strong party, of and for the working class, which will be capable of real leadership and guidance; a party which will not compromise the interests of the working people of Ireland in the way the so-called representatives of labour and Fianna Fail brand of republicanism have done up to now. It is of no benefit to engage with these treacherous representatives in vague Broad Front type talks. They have already shown their true worth by agreeing to the Free State government's blatantly anti-worker economic policies, and by consistently attacking the armed struggle.

Such people can not or will

not see the need for carrying on the war against an army of occupation. A genuine anti-imperialist front which will draw in workers both North and South is what is needed.

This August marks the 20th anniversary of the deployment of British troops in the six counties. Let no one be mistaken, the British Army were sent in for one reason and one reason only; to prop up this sectarian little statelet which was in danger of collapsing. Since then it has continued to be maintained by armed force. Today there are less civil rights than there were twenty years ago. Realising that the six county state is unreformable the British have given up all pretence of even attempting moderate reforms, instead they have settled for a policy of brutal repression, securing an agreement with the reactionary 26 county state to smash all progressive movements and ideas. They have interned us without trial, they have shot and bated us off the streets, they have wrecked our homes, brutalised our youth, murdered our children with plastic bullets, tortured us in holding centres, sentenced us before no-jury courts. They have used paid informers and introduced legislation to gag our voices.

They directly control the Loyalist murder gangs and whilst many murders have been randomly directed at innocent Catholics, most have been directed towards those who challenge the state such as Pat Finnucane, a solicitor who was prominent in securing a victory at the inquest into shoot-to-kill victims. Many U.D.R., British Army and R.U.C. have been convicted of taking part in murders and it is a well known fact that information about political activists is regularly handed over to the loyalists by the R.U.C. Yet we constantly hear calls from the SDLP, the Church and the Free State government to support the occupation forces!

claim to have our interests at heart call for support for those who have the jack boot on our neck. Their pro-British propaganda has to be fought against and constantly exposed for the hypocrisy it is. As an internationalist movement, we don't see the struggle against imperialism as confined to our own shores. Let us remember this Easter that there are many struggles and many sacrifices taking place throughout the world, the Palestinians fighting for a homeland, the people of El Salvador against a brutal American backed regime to name but a few. Let us also remember thousands of political prisoners massacred in Iran and major hunger strikes by political prisoners in Turkey and West Germany, which are still going on.

Once again, we must realise, that the road to victory will not be an easy one. It is those who can endure the most, not those who can inflict the most who will finally win. We must draw strength from the courage and dedication shown by the rebels of 1916 and by our own volunteers who we remember here today. Imperialism will not keel over and die by itself, it must be incessantly harried and finally crushed. Only a united and militant working class strengthened by support from the working class from Britain and Europe and led by a genuine communist party can achieve this. Our tasks though difficult, are clear, we must leave this place today with renewed energy and vigour and with the determination that nothing but nothing will deflect us or stop us in our necessary tasks. Victory to the national liberation struggle. Victory to the socialist revolution."

The Chairperson in closing thanked the relatives and supporters of the movement for turning out today and especially to the Brendan Convery Band for their attendance and extended sympathy on behalf of the Republican Socialist Movement on the tragic death of their member Sean Neeson.

In this issue of *An Camcheachta* we are beginning a polemic against what passes for the political parties of the "left" in Ireland. We begin with a look at the Workers' Party, based very largely on their pamphlet, *"The Road to Prosperity"* produced by the grandly titled research section of their Economics Affairs Committee. It purports to analyse and provide a solution for the economic ills of the 26 counties.

"Credentials"

As we know, the Workers' Party is held in an esteem which belies its actual support. It organises on a 32 county basis but produces a paper for "Northern Ireland" and one for the "Republic of Ireland". They claim to be from the republican tradition, yet call for a return to Stormont government in the six counties, and for nationalists to support the Brits, RUC and UDR - the "forces of law and order". They claim to be a "Workers' Party" but call for greater investment in Ireland by the transnational companies "to provide employment", ignoring the fact that they only exist to provide profits for their shareholders with the minimum of outlay-lowest possible wages (coupled with an ineffectual trade union movement).

In the six counties, they are the darlings of the media, with the support and approval of the British machine and unionist politicians. In the 26 counties, their infiltration of RTE, particularly the influential current affairs programme "Today Tonight" is well known, as is their high level involvement with the Industrial Development Authority. They are highly developed in the art of infiltration of bureaucracies at a high level, and indeed are the most conspiratorial of parties: Connor Cruise O'Brien once said he would join the Workers' Party if he was convinced they did not have an armed wing. He has not joined as yet!!!

There is an undoubted working class support in the 26 counties for the Workers' Party. However this is because there is no viable alternative at present. There is no party of the working class which can successfully challenge their unsubstantiated rhetoric. The Labour Party are politically bankrupt, as has been well demonstrated by their collaboration with Fine Gael in the infamous coalition government. The Workers' Party are as treacherous as the Labour Party when it comes to deceiving the working class. Their deception is much more subtle, and probably because of that, more dangerous. It is high time these opportunists were exposed to the heat of some real criticism.

Analysis

The introduction by Eamonn Smullen immediately sets the tone:

"The study of the Irish economy sets out to show that there is a way forward for Ireland and that there is a future for the Irish workers and their families other than emigration or unemployment. To show the way ahead, it is necessary first to trace the economic and political causes of the present depression. Following this we spell out in detail the measures that must be taken so that we can set out on the road to prosperity.

The first part of the study uncovers a really atrocious record of misgovernment. Such misgovernment is the logical result of government ideological commitment to private enterprise. In the interests of private enterprise the growth of public enterprise has been restricted and planned development of the economy as a whole made impossible.

The blame for the present economic crisis is to be found not in flaws in our national character but in the policies of our absolute commitment to the private enterprise system which has governed every political thought, word and deed of those in power since this state was established.

What we say in this study is not just opinion. We support every word with figures taken from official records. Our accusations against Fianna Fail and the Progressive Democrat off-shoot, and the Fine Gael/Labour Party Coalition are supported by facts and figures. The

evidence we present is supplied from official records of various kinds.

The Workers' Party is not afraid of the future and rejects the despair which is so much a part of present private enterprise Irish society. The development plan put forward in this document is of the utmost importance to the working class - it is a plan to lift our class out of the present levels of poverty and to remove the constant threat of poverty, unemployment and forced emigration.

In order to understand the reasoning behind the changes we advocate it is first necessary to examine the cause of the most recent economic crisis in the Republic of Ireland."

Well there you have it! Even the title must come into question: whose "prosperity" are we talking about? Can the literature or analysis of a genuine working class party be in favour of the capitalist system of exploitation? Apparently yes! The *'Road to Prosperity'* is the demonstration of this.

Lay The Blame

The criticisms of the main political parties is sweeping: all the blame for the "Depression" is laid at the door of the main political parties, and Fianna Fail in particular. The inference is that the present system is workable and the Workers' Party in power would be the cure for the present economic ills. In other words, there is a way forward for Irish capitalism and any benefits which may accrue to workers will be incidental and due to a formula differing from that of other capitalist parties only in terminology. Smullen claims that "atrocious mis-management and absolute commitment to the private enterprise system" on the part of those who have governed the 26 counties is to blame for the present depression. There is no mention of the fact that depression is a part of the cycle of capitalism itself. The introduction ends by claiming that this is "a plan to lift our class out of present levels of poverty, unemployment and forced emigration". Workers (employed or unemployed) are advised not to hold their breath.

Let us now take a quick journey through the "analysis" and "solution" to Ireland's ill. "Why the Depression" - well because of the failure to solve two basic problems:

"1. The size of the National Debt in relation to the size of our Gross National Product.

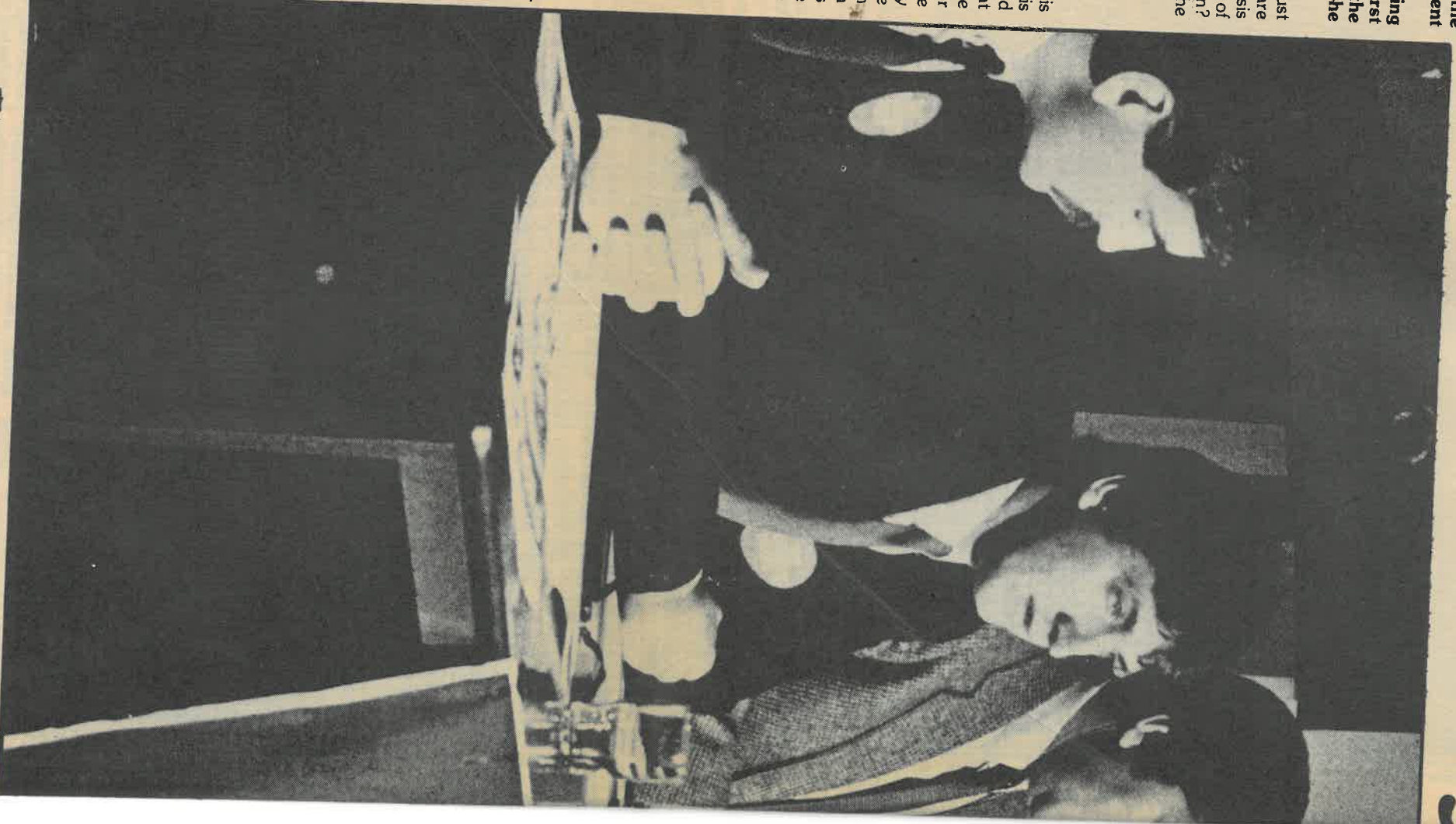
2. The large number of unemployed and the cost of maintaining this number in poverty.

The second failure grew out of the failure to solve the first problem."

So does this mean there is only one problem really? It is certainly an exercise in deep thought. Anyhow the depression is the fault of Fianna Fail, Fianna Fail and the tax cuts; Fianna Fail and foreign borrowing; Fianna Fail and their building boss supporters; Fianna Fail and the imports, (including a little homily on "The Importance of Exports"); Fianna Fail and the emigration propaganda. All of which criticisms are exactly those used by the Progressive Democrats and Fine Gael against poor old Fianna Fail, but in case the reader is tempted away from Charlie and company towards either of the other two parties, they also are put under a cloud - they did not rectify the wrongs of Fianna Fail policies, wow!!

After this section of diatribe, we move on to more positive things: "The Economy at Present", including "How to understand the Economy". This ABC lesson goes into explanations of Gross Domestic/Gross National Product; the Government's share, where the money comes from - taxation. Taxation injustice tells us what we already know. The PAYE sector (ordinary workers) pays the majority of income tax, 9.7% (of income tax) is paid by employers, self-employed and farmers (a section which includes the owners of the wealth). The National Debt is explained and why we should not rock the system by even considering repudiation (refusal to pay). Our creditors might refuse to accept our exports. However as regards the Domestic section, skulduggery might be contemplated. And of course "we" must produce our way out of the National Debt!

The Road to Prosperity A Sticky



The Plan

At which point we reach the nitty gritty "The Workers' Party Economic Plan". Apparently "there are three closely related problems which need to be solved in order to move out of the present depression:

1. The size of the Gross National Product must be increased by £4,000 million.

2. The numbers of unemployed must be wiped out by full employment.

3. Public enterprise must be greatly extended into profitable, productive activity."

It appears that the moving statues phenomenon would be not unknown to the Workers' Party. If you have enough faith and you stare long enough at the 26 county

capitalist economy small miracles might happen. The industries where the miracle may happen are gone through, listing the numbers of unemployed in each sector and claiming that their plan will ensure that number of jobs.

There are plans for the restructuring of agriculture. In the Dairy/Beef industry it is proposed to encourage short-life milk products (soft cheeses etc.). It appears that we are too geared towards long life products, of which there is a glut. Our Workers' Party theoretical analyst gives his/her valued opinion: "There is no reason that this should be so!!"

Also proposed is "horticulture in the European meaning of the term" (including tulips from Athens?) which would create an additional 42,000 jobs! The building industry will pick up as the economy picks up with a little help from the E.E.C.! The conclusion involves a table telling us how employment is better for the economy than unemployment, exports are better than imports etc, etc.

To Prosperity: Wicket!



capitalism” and “**chilly economic winds**”. Crisis and depression are integral parts of the world-wide capitalist system, not matters of bad housekeeping in Ireland and this is how the problem is presented: the national debt and all related ills are entirely due to Fianna Fail's bad housekeeping - not the system. What can be the reason for the concerted finger pointing at Fianna Fail? Well it is an unpalatable fact that the majority of the working class vote for Fianna Fail so they are obvious rivals to the technocrats of the Workers' Party in electoral terms. They are competing for the same vote. However, although dishonesty may win votes in the short term, it will never be able to acquire long term confidence.

Wilful Blindness

With all the talk and figures about government spending, why is no reference made to the massive financial burden incurred through “**Border Security**”? Perhaps this would have required some comment, such as “**we approve totally of the expenditure required to prop up British imposed partition**”. Not a statement designed to woo a wavering, working class Fianna Fail supporter. “**Border expenditure**” is best left under the carpet (where the cupboard sits, full of skeletons).

There is no reference to British imperialism and its effect on the 26 County economy. In a previous study, *The Irish Industrial Revolution*, the then Sinn Fein the Workers' Party blamed the underdevelopment of the economy not on British imperialism, but on “**the laziness and greed**” of the Irish bourgeoisie. The existence of a huge competitor with the means to crush rival industries meant nothing of course. There is no mention of the level of development of the 26 countries in world terms today. It has in fact reached a level of development well below that of the higher developed imperialist countries. It cannot advance to the imperialist stage. (See An Camcheachta No. 2; supplement p.4) and this results in the working class bearing the full brunt of the capitalist depression.

Workers' Solution

While the Workers' Party recognises the hugely disproportionate level of taxes paid by the PAYE sector, what does it intend to do about it? Yes, they are going to reduce it by a whole 10%! The most heavily taxed workforce in Europe which pays 90% of the income tax bill, and which faces the highest level of VAT in Europe, will be a few pence better off, the aforementioned 10% being passed on to the employers, the self-employed and farmers and while there are farmers and self-employed who are not well off, this sector covers the owners of Irish wealth. The patronising attitude towards the worker gets a couple of other airings.

In their reference to the building industry, there is an insinuation that the workforce's attempt to gain some of the rewards of increased profits contributed to the decline of this sector “**This pay increase and the raging inflation in 1980 increased house-building costs by over 23%**”. Again, in their reference to the textile and clothing industries, reactionary thinking again rears its ugly head: “**The employer side of this industry claims that the main competition is from Britain rather than from low cost producers in the third world...Britain does not have a low wage advantage over us in this area**”. This is the language of rapacious sweatshop capitalists. It is also inaccurate. Textile production in Britain is largely based on third-world conditions, with employers cynically taking advantage of illegal immigrants in many instances, in London and in the Midlands. Anyhow, if the British textile industry does not have an advantage do we take it that the Workers' Party regards the low wage levels in Ireland as a plus?

Presumably they do, since one of the reasons why transnational companies set up shop here in the first place is the low wage bill combined with “**amenable**” unions - very often Worker Party influenced/controlled. The basic nature of these companies is not exposed. They are

not in existence to provide employment, or help governments out of their predicaments. They exist to make a profit and they are given virtually a free rein in the 26 countries to repatriate (send back to the central company) massive amounts of profit. A study by the Economic and Social Research Institute towards the end of 1987 showed that repatriated profits by foreign companies amounted to over £17,000,000 a year (approx. £30,000 a week) per employee. Perhaps in their back-room (the one with the carpet and industrialisation is needed as one of the stages for the development of the proletariat, never mind the conditions of the workers on the way to the ultimate “**strage**”) (This exercise can be compared to teaching the horse to live on water alone - just when the horse was getting used to it, it died). In the meantime, the more employment there is, the easier it will be to service the national debt - obviously there will be more PAYE tax floating about, and this is of course in the national interest, the same national interest as is referred to by Haughey, Dukes and O'Malley. Workers, would do well to remember how considerate the Workers' Party are of “**the country**”.

Clondalkin

With the threatened closure of Clondalkin Paper Mills, the Workers' Party were presented with the perfect opportunity to test their commitment to state enterprise. When they held the balance of power in the hung Dail in 1982, and with Fianna Fail “**pledged**” to nationalise the mill, the treacherous “**state-enterprisists**” refused to use their leverage on Haughey's government to make it honour the pledge or bring down the government. They justified this betrayal of the Clondalkin workers with the excuse that the country did not want another general election and they were not mandated to bring one about on this issue. (A workers party not mandated to act in workers' interests??) This, we would suggest, is a capitulation to the expediency of parliamentarianism. The fact that there is now no paper mill in Ireland does not deter the Workers' Party from making an innovative suggestion when they are discussing the Agriculture/Forestry sector: grow bamboo or New Zealand Flax for the cellulose to produce paper! The obvious answer to this is to open up new mills (foreign or state owned?).

To provide employment the Workers' Party plan needs money. (Part of the reason for the large national debt, was the huge expenditure needed to provide an infrastructure for the transnational companies). Spending is disapproved of: “**It is just not good enough to say 'spend, spend, spend'... At most this will mean only a short term prosperity and many problems**”. Instead they propose to “**build, build, build**” which is difficult without initial expenditure. Again the scientific answer is to hand: “**E.E.C. funding should be able to start the process of putting the industry back to work fairly quickly**”. The important word here is “**should**”. Hope and blind optimism do not count for much in the real world.

Conclusion

All in all, this pamphlet is of interest as much or more for what it does not say as for what it does actually say. As such it reflects the political outlook of the Workers' Party - confuse the working class into believing it is something it clearly is not. It is not socialist, not anti-imperialist, and displays a dangerous contempt for the working class in general. This “**plan**” offers nothing to the working class. It offers efficiency to the capitalist system through less expenditure on keeping the unemployed alive, (but is very vague on how the whole shebang is going to be implemented).

While the I.R.S.P. do not pretend to have an alternative “**plan**”, we do have a total abhorrence of the capitalist system. We support progressive demands which will better the lot of the worker within the system but our end goal is the destruction of capitalism. It is of the utmost importance that the ideas of such as the Workers' Party, be exposed for dangerous pro-imperialist and anti-working class claptrap, hidden behind thin rhetoric, altruisms, and statistics.

WORKERS, BEWARE THE WORKERS' PARTY!!

m.o'shea

All through this section we are constantly bombarded with the phrase, “**putting the workforce back to work**”. It is a generally accepted demand in the socialist and trade union movement to demand “**the right to work**”, posing the question of capitalism's inability to meet this basic right. However the phrase used by the Workers Party echoes the call of every reactionary monetarist. Perhaps the workforce could be “**put to work**” draining the bog of Allen, since the draining of the Pontine Marshes in Italy worked pretty well!!

Anyhow we are told “**This plan is presented to the working class at a time of national despair and at a time when our exploiters are in full cry to snatch back from the working class all the gains made slowly and painfully in times less cruel than the present time.... This plan points the road to recovery and prosperity for our class - the working class**”. The rhetorical hat goes on for the final word.

Throughout the pamphlet there are many pretentious ideas and much flashing of statistics in conjunction with some curiously unscientific “**logic**” such as the phrases “**the second failure arose from failure to solve the first**”, and “**there is no reason why this should be so**”. It shows a scarcity of clear thinking and is certainly not based on any marxist analysis of the problems. We are in favour of progressive demands within the confines of the capitalist system but ultimately we look to the destruction of that system. The Workers' Party has presented an analysis (such as it is) from a totally pro-capitalist point of view, which leads to the conclusion “**Put us in power and we will make the system put you to work**”. They do not propose to end the system of workers' exploitation, merely to attempt to make it more efficient. There is no control of the wealth they produce; there are only coy references to the “**ups and downs of**

Support The German Hunger Strike

On February 1st, 1989, the political prisoners in West Germany embarked on a hunger strike to achieve four demands, including the right to association and an end to isolation. This is their 10th hunger strike. **KARL-HEINZ DELLWO** and **CHRISTA ECKES**, as we go to print, have now spent 76 days without food. The German state have imposed a news black out on the hunger strike, and the only access to the prisoners on hunger strike is through their lawyers. The only information available about their condition is that they can still move and are conscious.

The following is an extract from a statement issued by the Red Army Fraction political prisoners on the first day of their hungerstrike, February 1st, 1989.

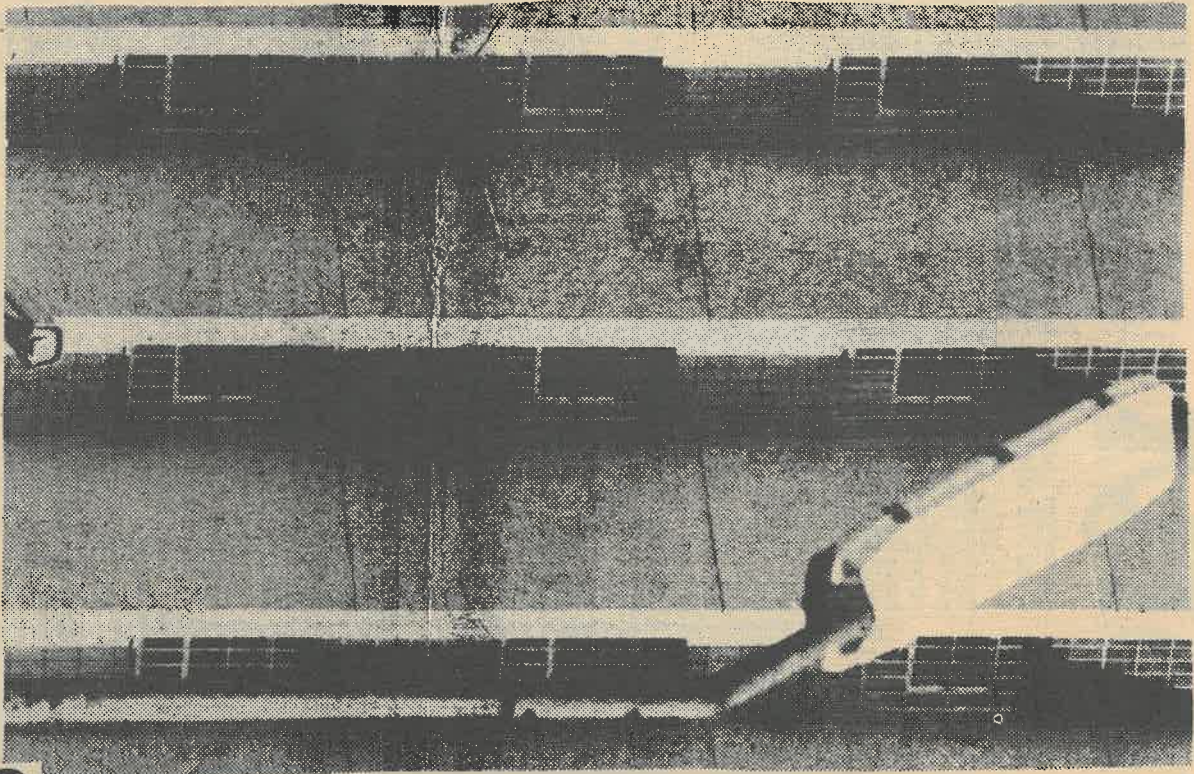
"Today we have embarked on a hungerstrike in order to achieve the right to associate with other political prisoners in groups. Everyone is aware of what isolation means. It is internationally understood and defined as torture. Here in West Germany, the state has established isolation as a rule for imprisoned revolutionaries, be it against members of the guerrilla (those who engage in armed actions) or the resistance (the wider supporting activists) or against other social or foreign prisoners.

We have been through nine other hungerstrikes, and two prisoners have died as a result of this. Many of us now suffer severe health problems. We have taken this decision in order to put an end to 18 years of torture.

The state's policy of isolation is in order to destroy the prisoners and so destroy the politics of the R.A.F. They have failed, but we are not prepared to endure this isolation any longer. It is important to understand that this hungerstrike is different from the others, as we are determined to end our isolation totally. We are not fighting for small improvements which will allow the West German government off the hook, we have done this for 18 years.

We do not see our prison struggle in isolation to what is going on outside. Over the past year, through political discussions, we believe that a new unity in the revolutionary struggle is possible. There are indications that the down turn within the left which occurred in the late 70's is beginning to swing around.

During the Hunger Strike, the state introduced a 'coma' law which stated that if an individual is in a coma, then her/his ability to decide to continue on hunger strike will be taken away from her/him. We believe that the state anticipates that after a few months, it will be touch and go for all of us around about the same time, maybe some will die, others would be forcibly treated, so they would only have to face one crisis period. In answer to this, we state that we are going to carry out a long struggle. We will start together



Stammheim

and after two weeks, only two will remain on hunger strike, after that two will join at intervals of two weeks.

Our

Demands

1. The right to association in large groups and an end to isolation.
 2. Immediate release of Angelika Goder, Claudia Wannerdorfer, Gunther Sonnenberg, and Bernd Roessner, four prisoners who are seriously ill and cannot be treated in jail.
 3. Free choice of doctors from outside the jail and medical treatment without state control.
 4. Free political information, discussion and communication between ourselves and with all social groups of our choice.
- Prisoners of the RAF Helmut Pohl.

For the past eighteen years, political prisoners of the R.A.F. and other groupings have been held in conditions that are generally recognised internationally as torture.

Association

Political prisoners are not allowed any form of association with each other. They are placed in prisons all over West Germany, and there are only three prisons with more than one political prisoner. Isolation was first brought to the public's attention during the Stammheim trial, when three medical experts stated that for the mental health of the prisoners, association was necessary. In 1986, one of these experts Professor Wilfried Rosch, reiterated that association of 15-20 prisoners allowed "an acceptable level of interaction". Severe isolation goes beyond the

made his health rapidly deteriorate. **CLAUDIA WANNERSDORFER** has developed epilepsy due to her detention in isolation which puts the body under permanent stress. During a fit there is enormous risk of physical damage particularly if there isn't immediate help on hand.

State

Repression

In the past year there has been widespread systematic use of the anti-terrorist law, section 129a which states that it is a criminal offence not only to be a member of a 'terrorist' organisation, but also if you are found to support it. This has been interpreted very broadly by the courts to include anybody who openly confronts the state at whatever level. No literature can be published on behalf of the prisoners, expressing support for the prisoners or highlighting their conditions is deemed a criminal offence. For example a public meeting held in Munich last year to discuss the possibility of a hunger strike starting in the prisons was broken up by the police and two people were subsequently charged and sentenced to ten months and one year. Another person who organised a bookstall with information about the prisoners was sentenced to 18 months.

Criminalisation

"normal unavoidable" level of prison deprivation. It is accepted that conditions of severe isolation lead to severe damage to the health of the person involved. The Minister of Interior has said that the physical well being of the prisoners is at the State's disposal

Conditions

Political prisoners are often locked up 24 hours a day in a cell which is soundproofed consequently they can hear no sounds whatsoever. If they are allowed into the yard for exercise a state of emergency is declared on the wing. No communication is permitted with any other prisoner during exercise. Their cells are frequently searched and they are strip searched sometimes several times a day. Letter writing is heavily restricted and censored and most political books are banned.

Access to the prisoners through visits is virtually impossible except if you are a close relative. Visits themselves are held behind a glass screen. To speak to each other, both prisoner and visitor have to press buttons which activate small loudspeakers at the bottom of the glass.

Health

Because of the conditions that the prisoners are forced to live under and the fact that so many have been through numerous hunger strikes, some of the prisoners are suffering severe health problems. **GUNTER SONNENBERG** was shot in the head whilst being arrested. The necessary treatment of his head injury and after care cannot be carried out in prison. **ANGELIKA GODER** has needed an operation since 1986, again her after care treatment involves physiotherapy under medical surveillance, which cannot be done in prison, **BERND ROESSNER** has taken part in six hunger strikes and the effects of this and imposed isolation has

(blanket protest), the no-wash protest and culminating in the hungerstrikes of 1980/81 which resulted in 10 Republican and Republican socialist prisoners giving their lives. In West Germany as in most other countries in Europe, the same attempt has been made, to portray any resistance against the state as criminal. Prisoners are in the forefront of the struggle against criminalisation as the state moves against them first, believing that if they can break their resistance it will demoralise the revolutionary forces on the outside. As was shown in Ireland, far from breaking the prisoners, they remained resolute and eventually won most of their demands though the price paid in terms of human life was very high.

The I.R.S.P. is calling for support for the hunger strike in Germany, not just because revolutionaries in that country supported our prisoners during their hunger strike, but because as revolutionaries we are internationalists. Any defeat for a struggle wherever it takes place, is a defeat for all. While there might be disagreements amongst revolutionaries as to whether comrades in Europe employ the right tactics, the fact remains that the prisoners in West Germany are revolutionary political prisoners, suffering under the most horrendous conditions.

Letters of protest can be sent to:
Bundeminister der Justiz,
Justizminister, Heinemannstr.
6, 5300 Bonn-2, West Germany.

For further information on the Hunger Strike, please contact the I.R.S.P. Office, 392 Falls Road, Belfast 12, 331935.

Kate Doyle



The following statement was supplied to the Republican Socialist Publicity Bureau.

On February 17th, an Active Service Unit based in Co. Down shot and seriously wounded a member of the notorious Ulster Defence

Regiment. The U.D.R. is a sectarian force which is part of the British war machine. Many U.D.R. personnel have been convicted of murdering members of the nationalist community, they freely pass on information about political activists to loyalists murder gangs with impunity. They therefore have to face the consequences of their actions".

STARRY PLOUGH SUBSCRIPTIONS

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Fight The Cuts



Hospitals Under Attack Obstetrics And Gynaecology

Widespread cuts in the national health service, in line with Thatcherite policies, being advocated by the Eastern Health and Social Services Board will have devastating effects on the most impoverished section of our society, the unemployed, the elderly, women and the young. The cuts are right across the board, but the two units affected the most are the Accident and Emergency and Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Accident And Emergency

The Board are proposing to close the Mater Accident and Emergency Unit and that of the take-in hospital in the evening at an agreed time. The staff of the three units (R.V.H., Mater, City) should be regarded as a common resource and should be deployed wherever they are needed. This means that only one Emergency Unit is going to be open through any given night, resulting in possible fatalities given the extra miles one will have to travel depending on where you live. Not only that, how are people going to know which casualty is open on a given night, precious minutes could be lost going from one hospital to another. What about in the case of a major disaster happening? One of the main trade unions organised in the hospitals, N.U.P.E. states "The board is aware of the fact that the Royal's main trauma unit is pivotal in the Hospital Disaster Plan and in the Area Disaster Plan. There can only be one designated hospital for these disasters otherwise no proper services can be provided". On the deployment of staff, N.U.P.E. comments "Does the Board envisage bussing medical, nursing and support staff between hospitals in the middle of the night? Is the Board not aware that the City Hospital cannot cope with its current take-in?"

Gynaecology

The Board is proposing to move obstetrics from the Mater to the R.V.H. In the City Hospital, the number of beds in the gynaecology department is to be reduced from 60 to 30 beds. And 'gynaec' wards 23 and 24 in the R.V.H. are to be closed and so those needing operations will be transferred to the Mater. 'Gynaec' day surgery will also be carried out in the Mater, not in the Royal.

Only the 'Gynaec' outpatients will continue in the R.V.H. What does this mean for working class women? The most important question the closing of the 'gynaec' in the Royal poses is the amount of time a woman will have to wait before she will be able to have treatment. At the moment, if a woman has to go into hospital for a 'gynaec' operation, she can wait for several months, with the cut in beds this waiting list will be even longer. The stress of having to wait for months especially if its in relation to abnormal cervical smears will be tremendous.

There also is a whole question mark over the 'ethical' implications in relation to the Mater. In the Health Services Order No. 387, it states "The character and associations of the Mater Hospital consist essentially in its being a hospital teaching and practicing medicine and providing specialist services and nursing in accordance with Roman Catholic moral and ethical principles". Does this mean that sterilisations and abortions (permitted on certain medical grounds) will not be carried out? Will contraceptive advice be freely available? These questions need to be answered as this could further reduce the services available to working class women.

The working class communities in North and West Belfast suffer some of the worst health problems in the whole of Europe. As far as the population in the Board's area,

Heroic Women

It was 89 years ago on March 8th, that 129 women garment workers were burnt alive in New York while staging a demonstration against low wages, poor working conditions and increased work load. That day ever since has been designated International Women's Day.

Last month, on Sunday March 5th, as part of the celebrations of International Women's Day, a picket was held outside Maghaberry Prison in solidarity with the women political prisoners in Ireland and throughout the world. This was attended by delegations from many parts of the country as well as Britain, and messages of support were read out from women in struggle in many parts of the world.

It was a particularly sad occasion as exactly a year ago, while we were standing outside the same prison, three Irish people were being gunned down in the streets of Gibraltar by the S.A.S. One of those people, was Mairead Farrell, herself an ex-prisoner who had attended the picket the year previous.

Mairead Farrell had spent 10 years in jail, leading the prisoners during the no-wash protest and taking part in the hungerstrike. Her brutal murder at the hands of the British, showed how



North and West Belfast has the highest birth rate and the highest rates of infant mortality, it also has the highest number of emergencies. Yet these cuts are going to hit the communities which need these services the most. The slow run down of the services at the Royal, is a clear indication that future closure will not be ruled out. Set in the heart of the nationalist community of West Belfast, it's long been a thorn in the side of unionist politicians because of where its situated and because it provides employment for many Catholics.

N.U.P.E.'s overall comments on the cuts are "They are not about the health and well-being of the City of Belfast or the Eastern Board but are political proposals designed to impact adversely on the most deprived sections of the community and to prepare the way for wholesale privatisation and/or opening out."

A campaign is currently being waged by N.U.P.E. to stop the closure of the gynaecology wards in the R.V.H. The I.R.S.P. totally supports the campaign against the cuts. Far from the health services being cut, they should be expanded and improved to provide the best free comprehensive health care for the working class as a whole.

frightened the British are at the strength and calibre of those involved in the struggle, fighting a losing battle their only recourse is to eliminate those who pose a threat to the state. Irish women have always been to the forefront of the struggle, many have given their lives or been incarcerated for many years. Many suffer immense poverty, struggling to bring up families on their own. On March 8th, we remember and salute not only the heroism of Irish women but we remember our sisters throughout the world struggling against their oppressors as they remember us. This sentiment is expressed by the women political prisoners in Chile

who in their statement on March 8th said:

"...We pay homage to all women that in the face of horror and the hurdles placed before them, they have not dismayed but have raised their voices, their fists and many others have laid down their lives for the sake of a future with dignity for our future generations. One thing we know for sure, that this fascist hell has not been and will not be able to subdue an entire nation. We reaffirm our right to be part of every struggle, today more than ever, we must not give up."

therefore do not count). It means in real terms, that the leisure facilities in the future will not be for the socially deprived. More to the point, the only political party to raise the social implication has been the I.R.S.P. who have created a stir in the Department of Leisure Services who are, as we go to press, "searching for a mole" or trying to "seal a leak" (perhaps they have been reading too many spy books!).

The I.R.S.P.'s prediction that job losses would occur was correct. On Friday 7th April, the Department of Leisure Services informed the Trade Unions that a further 48 workers would lose their jobs in a section other than catering, bringing the total to 78 jobs.

The I.R.S.P. is informing the trade unions that this trend will continue until a target of 400 jobs is lost. The I.R.S.P. calls on all the unions to mobilise in the community, build workers and users committees to oppose this plan by the Department of Leisure Services. We call on the trade unions to look at what is going on in the leisure centres at the present time. There are hi-tech, fitness rooms costing tens of thousands of pounds which the people of B.A.N. cannot afford to use while at the same time "business people" are offered free fitness and health tests subsidised by the Belfast City Councils, a subsidy for people who in many cases do not live in Belfast. None live in the socially deprived areas. Prices for the unemployed sessions have doubled, five-a-side football has doubled yet squash normally classified as a yuppie sport only had a minimum increase.

The I.R.S.P. calls for workers and users committees to control the Leisure Centres and develop strategies to oppose compulsory competitive tendering. The Trade Unions alone negotiating behind closed doors, cannot stop the leisure centres being converted into private health clubs.

R. Ascal.

Job Losses In Leisure Centres

On Wednesday 5th April the I.R.S.P. exposed plans by the Department of Leisure Services to privatise sections of the Leisure Centres. In the catering section we stated that under private contractors, 30 employees would lose their jobs and this would be the first stage in a process which would lead to over 400



Leisure Services Director Mervyn Elder.

redundancies when other sectors such as cleaning, security and pool attendants are privatised, (as will be seen later we underestimated the job losses).

Right from the start, Leisure Centres with 100% grant aid were set up in areas of special social need. The grant was to provide facilities for children, the unemployed and the elderly.

In April 1988, a report compiled by Mervyn Elder, Director of Leisure Services, recommended that with diminishing government grants, leisure services should be handed over to private enterprise and included massive increases in prices for the use of leisure facilities. This was rejected by the Belfast City Council.

But in October 1988, a consultative document was published by the Department of Economic Development for discussion on compulsory competitive tendering. This document showed the intention of the department to introduce privatisation through the back door.

In November, 1988, it was agreed with the trade unions that the only section of the Leisure Services that would go out to private contract would be the Centre Snack Bars. Formally the trade unions did not make objections to the price rises (it seems as if many of the unemployed and the elderly are not trade union members and

Assassinations British Handiwork

In recent months we have seen a massive upsurge in sectarian killings. So far this year nine nationalists have been murdered, including Pat Finnucane, a leading solicitor and John Davey, a Sinn Fein councillor.

The phenomenon of sectarian killing is far from new. Periodic programs and sectarian attacks are part and parcel of the division fostered by British imperialism. However, in this phase of the struggle, a pattern can be found in the seemingly random killings of nationalists which is far from aimless. Those who pose a threat to the state either by their position of influence or by their political activities are being "eliminated" killed in other words.

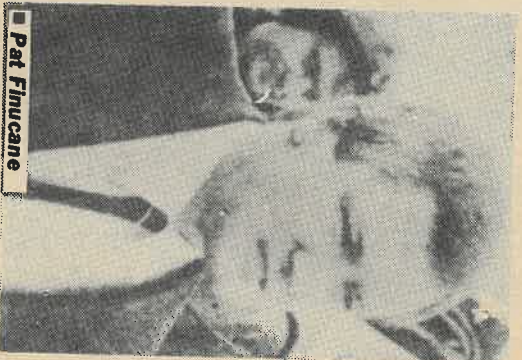
This pattern makes sense if you look at the counter insurgency tactics outlined by Brigadier Frank Kitson, in his book 'Low-intensity Operations'. The state makes use of those such as loyalist gangs to carry out assassinations which would not be directly attributable to the state, but which the state deemed necessary in order to weaken the opposition.

The murder of John Turnley, one of the founding members of the Irish Independence Party and a leading member of the H Blocks campaign in June 1980, is one of the most clear examples of counter-insurgency tactics in operation. In a statement made by Robert McConnell after being convicted of Turnley's murder in April 1982, he said: "In April 1980, I was working as a fish salesman in the Larne area. I was stopped one day near Cushendall by a van containing a number of men. I became satisfied they were all members of the SAS and had dealings with them on that and a number of subsequent occasions through their leaders: Sergeant Tom Aiken and Corporal McGow".

McConnell was asked to place a listening device in a bar in Cushendall where Gerry Adams was to meet with others. He refused payment for the job but offered to do more if the need arose. Most significantly in the light of later events, he said that at later meetings they discussed republican leaders including Mr. Turnley, Miriam Daly and Bernadette McAliskey.

Just over a fortnight later, on June 26th, 1980, Miriam Daly a leading member of the I.R.S.P. and leading H. Block campaigner was murdered in her home. She had been tied hand and foot, neighbours saw nothing and heard no shots. The telephone wire had been partly cut. In their follow-up "search", the RUC were more interested in the political material in the house, photographs, files and paperwork were taken away. After the RUC had left, empty .9mm (standard Brit issue) cartridge cases were found. Obviously the object of this search exercise was to gather intelligence, but not about the assassins.

A few months later on the 15th October, 1980, Ronnie Bunting and Noel Little, again leading I.R.S.P. members and again involved in the H Block campaign, were assassinated in the Bunting home. The killers knew the layout of the house well enough to go straight to the Buntings' bedroom. Again the follow up search took the form of taking away papers, photographs etc. There are other facts which point to direct Brit involvement. A halfhour before the attack, neighbours had been



Pat Finnucane

awakened by a heavy Brit presence in the area, which miraculously disappeared into thin air, a peace-line barrier on the Donegall Road had been left open even though it had been closed nightly for several weeks. It seems clear that in this case the SAS or another branch of the "law" actually carried out the murders as a direct retaliation for the assassination of Airey Neave by the I.N.L.A. Ronnie Bunting had received death threats while being questioned in Castlereagh Interrogation Centre the previous August, and had made a statement to that effect to the Association of Legal Justice, plus a complaint at Queen Street R.U.C. Station.

In January 1981, Bernadette McAliskey and her husband Michael were both shot and wounded but fortunately survived. Local people claimed that Brits had been dropped in by helicopter earlier that evening. Similar to the Bunting/Little murders, the would-be-killers went straight to the bedroom where the couple had normally slept up until a short time before the attack. The resulting confusion may have been enough to save them. Again this points to information being passed on from RUC Intelligence.

In the intervening years, there have been numerous attacks on leading republican and republican socialist activists with obvious British collusion. The perpetrators of the attempted murder of Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams as he was leaving the magistrates court claimed that they were to be allowed a free getaway. Obviously they were double-crossed. Many political activists have been attacked in their own homes, some fatally such as Lawrence Marley, some wounded such as Alex Maskey.

The undercover war took a new turn when Pat Finnucane, a leading solicitor was assassinated, shortly after remarks were made in the House of Commons by Douglas Hogg that many in the legal profession in Northern Ireland were Republican sympathisers.

When John Davey, Sinn Fein councillor, was shot dead in February, on his way home from a council meeting, his vehicle was found stationary with the handbrake on and the headlights switched off, suggesting that he believed he was being stopped by a UDR/RUC checkpoint.

The killing of Gerard Casey near Rasharkin, Co. Antrim again points to loyalist information being very accurate, and again calls into question the source of this intelligence.

Loyalist murder squads do not operate at random and independently, they are controlled and used by the British government. Whilst many murders appear to be purely random, the British government

needs to foster sectarianism as this serves to keep the working class divided, they also need to 'eliminate' people who they deem to be a 'thorn in the side', people who they see as posing a threat to the status quo. It is clear that low intensity operations will take an increasingly high precedence in the British armoury against the national liberation struggle.

Many UDR, RUC and British Army personnel have been convicted in the courts for passing on information in the form of files, photographs etc. of suspected political activists to loyalist murder squads. And yet we see the pathetic spectacle of the SDLP and the Workers' Party calling on these same 'forces of law and order' to protect us! In the last analysis, the nationalist communities can only depend on themselves and need to organise their own defence of their areas.

Waterford Glass Cutters Strike

Since June 1987, when the management of Waterford Glass first announced that they wanted redundancies, there has been a feeling of instability within the industry. The management had been looking for 750 redundancies. They got 1,000. They expected to save £10,000 over a year in the wage bill through this measure. The cost of the redundancies together with the cost of a major modernisation package left the industry with a debt of over £100 million. Despite this, management predicted that with sales in the region of £80 million, they could make a profit of £30 million in 1988.

Reality was to make a mockery of their calculations. While sales targets were reached, around a total of £89 million pounds worth of glass was sold, the company failed to make a profit. So what happened to their prediction of £32 million. The excuse used by management was accounting errors!! The truth was that the redundancies had devastated the factory. In the non-skilled areas 450 contract labourers were employed to get the glass through the system. This was coupled with large amounts of overtime.

But no amount of overtime could make up for the large reduction in the skilled workforce in the blowing craft section. The entire amount of glass which was being produced was also being sold, and had there been more blowers there would have been more production and therefore more sales.

It is estimated that orders to the value of £30 million were lost because of this. Had there been no redundancies, these orders could have been filled and with flexibility of the workforce, the entire production could have been accomplished with just the normal amount of contract labour. The management, who oversaw



Howard Kilroy: to become Waterford Glass chairman

this disaster was relatively new to the industry. They had been brought in after the takeover of Waterford Glass in 1984 by Globe Investments, and had reputations for introducing redundancies. Through their ignorance of the industry they thought that all they had to do was cut the workforce. They succeeded in cutting the strength of the industry would have succeeded in destroying it.

One would have imagined that the owners would have got rid of them over this but it seems that they have managed to convince the owners that it is the workers who are to blame for the present crisis and have come up with a plan to save the industry. Their plan, called the "Turn-Around Plan" is predictably nothing more than an attack on the wages and conditions of the workforce. With this plan they expect to reduce their "costs" by £8-10 million. In other words they plan to drastically reduce the income of their workforce.

One union official has described the plan as "an attempt to turn the clock back 20 years". The unrealistic approach of the management was emphasised by the fact that when the union representatives asked the management for their production plan, something which is essential in an industry like this, redfaced managers had to admit that they had not got one. Essentially a production plan was produced and this was the "Turn-Around Plan" and put to the membership at open branch meetings of the 11-64 and 11/11111 branches of the A.T.G.W.U. in Waterford and Dungarvan.

The "Turn-Around Plan" was rejected and a joint negotiating committee informed the company that "we are not prepared to discuss any plan which contains concessions from the workforce while there is no pay back to the workers and does not protect the jobs and the craft".

It was decided to cooperate with the company's 1989 production plan for a period of six months provided existing agreements on pay and conditions were not altered. The membership also supported a proposal from the joint negotiating committee that the membership should receive a share of 33% in Waterford Crystal in return for changes they (workers) may make. The management later rejected this

and instead had begun to force a confrontation situation in an effort to force changes from the workforce which would damage their wages and conditions.

The first section to stand up to the management has been the 500 strong wedge cutting craft section. Management had for some time been threatening to withdraw from them an allowance of 11% which they received for piece rated work on the new diamond wheels. The cutters had been adamant that if this happened they would take industrial action. When it became obvious that the management would withdraw the 11%, cutting section meetings were held and the cutters unanimously agreed to a two hour daily stoppage in the event of its withdrawal.

On Monday 20th March, the 11% was withdrawn and the 500 wedge cutters stopped work at 1.30 p.m. A further meeting was subsequently held at which it was unanimously agreed to escalate the action to a daily three and a half hour stoppage. On Friday 25th March the 500 wedge cutters stopped work at 12 noon.

On Tuesday 29th March the 2,000 strong workforce each received a letter through the post signed by the Managing Director Billy Power. This letter threatening the workforce with "issuing a protective notice" was nothing more than a despicable attempt to turn the rest of the workforce against the wedgecutters. In it they described the wedge cutters as having received a 5% pay increase in 1988, while the rest of the workforce were undergoing a pay freeze. They neglect to mention, however, that the average cutters production went up by over 100%.

Their letter is a deliberate attempt to turn the various sections in the factory against each other in order to introduce the main points of their "Turn Around Plan" through a policy of divide and conquer. The first step of their plan is to defeat the cutters. If they succeed in this the way will obviously be open to mount attacks on other sections' issues, not to mention the workforce in general.

The I.R.S.P. fully supports the glass workers in defence of their pay and conditions. It is clear that what happens in Waterford Glass has great relevance to the Irish working class in general, as Waterford Glass is one of the major industrial companies on the island, with one of the largest workforces. What happens to the workforce within it can become the norm nationally and a defeat within it would give confidence to the capitalist class in its present onslaught against the working class.

Jon O'Hanlon

Since the above article was written, the industrial action was suspended on the 3rd April to allow independent arbitration by a Labour Court consultation officer. The disputed 11% has been reinstated from the 4th April for a limited period while negotiations are taking place.

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.



Exclusion Revoked

On Monday, February 6th, I.R.S.P. Spokesperson Eamon Mullan was arrested at Manchester Airport as he was about to board a plane for Belfast. He had been sent to represent the Party at a march and rally protesting against the deportation of Viraj Mendis to Sri Lanka.

In his speech outside the Church of the Ascension, where Viraj Mendis had been in sanctuary, Cde Mullan criticised police for storming the church and likened the snatch to raids on nationalist homes in the six counties by the British Army and R.U.C.

While he was being detained in the C.D. Centre, a protest picket was held outside the City Magistrates Court. Cde Mullan issued a statement through his solicitor saying "Not only is my arrest another example of the anti-Irish nature of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, but in the broader context it is used as a weapon to deter Irish people from visiting Britain".

His last 'interview' with the police was taken up entirely by an attempt to persuade him to spend weekends in Manchester at Special Branch expense, have a good time and inform his "benefactors" about activities of the Manchester Martyrs Committee and the various groups and individuals which made up the Viraj Mendis Defence Committee. This kind offer was declined!

On Thursday, 9th February he was served with a three year exclusion order, renewable after that date if the powers-that-be in

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Britain say so.

Cde Mullan's deportation attracted a great deal of publicity in England, and in the process, a photograph that appeared in the local Manchester Evening News found its way into the UDA/UFF rag 'Ulster'.

On Thursday, April 16th, an appeal against the exclusion order was held at Castlereagh holding centre, heard by Mr. Carlisle QC representing Douglas Hurd.

As we go to press, Cde Mullan has been informed that the exclusion order against him has

been revoked. Of the total number

still excluded from Britain, a disproportionately high percentage are either past or present members of the I.R.S.P. The I.R.S.P. sees this as an attempt to stop people in Britain, in particular the working class, having any awareness about the reality of the situation here. The P.T.A. is a racist/naconian piece of legislation designed both to intimidate the Irish population travelling to and from Britain and an attempt to gather low level intelligence.

Kane Extradited



On April 13th, we witnessed the spectacle of yet another Irish man being whisked by helicopter from Portlaoise Prison to the border, where he was handed over to the British authorities. Paul Kane was convicted in the no-jury Diplock courts on the evidence of paid perjurer Christopher Black. He spent two years on remand and a further four years in the H Blocks, Long Kesh before he escaped.

Subsequently, all the convictions obtained under Black's evidence were quashed by the Court of Appeal. The supergrass system itself was widely condemned by all sections of the community including Fianna Fail politicians in the South who stated that it was unsafe to convict on uncorroborated evidence. Yet Paul Kane was arrested in the South

and extradition warrants were served for the 'crime' of escaping from prison.

Paul Kane was then locked up for a further one and half years in Portlaoise Prison going through the legal motions of appealing his extradition. Nobody was in any doubt that he would be extradited. The Free State government whilst it does have shades of green republicanism within its ranks, is acting in its own interests, the interests of the ruling class.

Kevin McQuillen, spokesperson for the I.R.S.P. described the extradition of Paul Kane as: "disgusting and yet only what we have come to expect of the Gombeen Tories in Dublin". McQuillen went on to describe the massive security operation mounted in the 48 hour run up to

the extradition as "oppressive and purposely provocative. The blanket saturation of streets in large areas of nationalist Belfast was aimed at stifling any form of street protest against the Kane extradition. However, it was further used as an excuse to raid, harass and abuse residents of the occupied areas".

McQuillen then went on to criticise Sinn Fein councillor Alex Maskey's remarks to nationalist youth to stop rioting and remain calm in the face of Kane's extradition as "yet another worrying attempt by Sinn Fein to walk the tight-rope between constitutional respectability and revolutionary republicanism".

In closing he said "I should not have to tell councillor Maskey that the Republican Movement is an expression of the people's resistance, not the other way around. Spontaneous reaction to British oppression should be maximised and directed, not stifled with the aim of turning it on, tap-like, when it is party politically suitable".

In Memory

The Staff and Vols. of the I.N.L.A. remember with loving pride our fallen comrades.
Vol. Barry Duffy, Armagh Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered by the I.P.L.O. March 21st, 1987.
Vol. Emmanuel Gargan, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered by the I.P.L.O. March 22nd, 1987.
Vol. Danny Loughran, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered by the Workers Party, April 6th, 1975.
Vol. Jim Power, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., killed on active service, May 7th, 1981.
Vol. Matt McLarnon, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., killed on active service, May 12th, 1981.
Vol. Brendan McNamee, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered, May 20th, 1975.
Vol. Patsy O'Hara, I.N.L.A., died on Hunger Strike, May 21st, 1981.

The Republican Socialist Prisoners of War in Long Kesh, Magilligan, Maghaberry, Portlaoise and England remember with love and pride our fallen comrades.
Vol. Barry Duffy, Armagh Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered by the I.P.L.O. March 21st, 1987.
Vol. Emmanuel Gargan, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered by the I.P.L.O. March 22nd, 1987.
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Vol. Patsy O'Hara, I.N.L.A., died on Hunger Strike, May 21st, 1981.

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

Vol. Barry Duffy, Armagh Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered by the I.P.L.O., March 21st, 1987.
Vol. Emmanuel Gargan, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered by the I.P.L.O., March 22nd, 1987.
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Vol. Brendan McNamee, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered May 20th, 1975.
Vol. Patsy O'Hara, I.N.L.A., died on Hunger Strike, May 21st, 1981.

They may kill the revolutionary but never the revolution. They will never be forgotten.

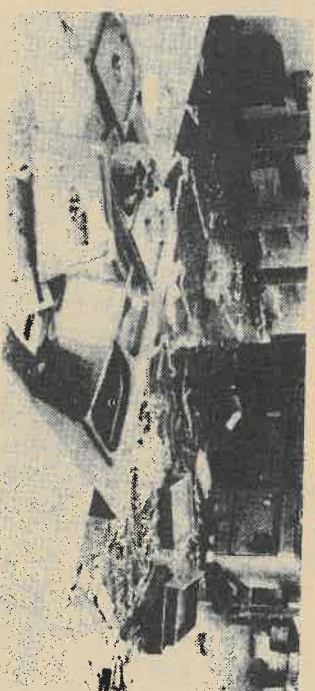
The Central Committee of the Irish Republican Socialist Party remember with love and pride our fallen comrades.

Vol. Barry Duffy, Armagh Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered by the I.P.L.O. March 21st, 1987.
Vol. Emmanuel Gargan, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered by the I.P.L.O. March 22nd, 1987.
Vol. Danny Loughran, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered by the Workers Party, April 6th, 1975.
Vol. Jim Power, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., killed on active service.

The I.R.S.P. Support Committees in London, Glasgow and Bristol remember with love and pride our fallen comrades.
Vol. Barry Duffy, Armagh Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered by the I.P.L.O. March 21st, 1987.
Vol. Emmanuel Gargan, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered by the I.P.L.O. March 22nd, 1987.
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Vol. Patsy O'Hara, I.N.L.A., died on Hunger Strike, May 21st, 1981.

"One does not negotiate the sovereignty of people. One defends it with arm in hand".
May 7th, 1981.
Vol. Matt McLarnon, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., killed on active service, May 12th, 1981.
Vol. Brendan McNamee, Belfast Brigade, I.N.L.A., murdered, May 20th, 1975.
Vol. Patsy O'Hara, I.N.L.A., died on Hunger Strike, May 21st, 1981.
We remember their resolution, their uncompromising manner - they were good socialists, good soldiers and good friends. They shall never be forgotten.

Whiterock Break-In



Belfast I.R.S.P. spokesperson Eamon Mullan condemning the break-in at the Whiterock College of Further Education on the night of the 9th April said "The socio-economic conditions of the greater Ballymurphy area are recognised as the worst in Western Europe. The wanton destruction of a facility that would enable people to have access to one of the fundamentals of liberation - that being education, is both sad and sickening. The possible postponement of future phases of the College's

expansion, coupled with the undermining of the Trade Unions with the introduction of private non-unionised cleaning subcontractors are just two of the side effects resulting from this, the second break-in in a week.

We in the I.R.S.P. call on the people of the greater Ballymurphy area to root out those destructive elements who fulfil the role of a second front of British oppression and ensure that through the exercise of people's justice there will be no such recurrence".

Glasgow Fundraiser

The Republican Socialist Prisoners Aid in Glasgow held a very successful benefit social in a pub venue in the East End of the city on April 5th.

A capacity attendance of over 60 people enjoyed an evening of Irish, Scottish and international songs performed by the Peat Diggers and Claddagh. The Peat Diggers are extremely popular in

Scotland and only recently completed a tour of the United States. The other group Claddagh are an up and coming duo who perform for Irish and other progressive causes. As an act of solidarity with the prisoners, both groups generously played free of charge.

A member of Republican Socialist Prisoners Aid briefly explained why its work was so

important and encouraged greater support from those present. A raffle of prisoners' handicrafts was held.

The evening appropriately ended with the singing of the International which was led off by Scottish communist Matt Lygate. £160 was raised and offers of support for R.S.P.A. were given. It is hoped that another social will be held in the near future.



THE STARRY PLOUGH

Cuba: 30th Anniv. Of The Revolution



Fidel Castro holds a ground-level conference. Raul Castro is at the extreme right.

This year sees the 30th anniversary of the successful revolution in Cuba, which overthrew the pro-US, Batista regime. In common with Ireland today, communism or socialism was a word not generally approved of by the Cuban people as a whole and this was largely due to decades of propaganda. However 30 years on, the revolution, despite difficulties lives on. Here we reprint some extracts of Fidel Castro's commemorative speech.

"I think that the changes that took place in our country have been extraordinary; the tasks that we tackled then are not today's tasks. We had on that occasion a triumphant revolution within a capitalist country, within an imperialist neo-colony, that whole social system was about to be demolished. The ownership of our factories, our public services, the land, our mineral resources, banking, trade, practically everything, was in the private hands of a minority of exploiters, and a significant portion of all that wealth and those industries was in the hands of foreign corporations. Our people were working for those capitalists, to make that class increasingly richer, to make those foreign corporations increasingly richer. Actually the life of our society was inconceivable without that system..."

Actually, our people didn't have much political awareness then, that has to be admitted.

Anti-communism and anti-socialism were the main slogans, like a weapon to try to preserve the capitalist regime intact and to try to keep the people divided. It was necessary to wage a big battle against those reactionary ideas, a big battle against that lack of awareness because the people wanted changes but didn't have a clear idea of what changes were needed. The

people were against injustice, against hunger, against unemployment, against the intolerable poverty afflicting most of the people, yet they didn't then quite fully understand that those problems stemmed from the capitalist system, private ownership of the means of production, a system that by nature is exploitative, a system that by nature is wholly concerned about the peoples problems and only cares for the profits of the insatiable capitalist class.

How did our people become a socialist people? It was the revolutionary law more than words, preaching or reasoning that made our people socialist

... For the first time in the history of our country, the state and the government quit being on the side of the rich and went over to the side of the poor. When the immense majority of our population saw that the government resolutely affected the interests of the rich and the bourgeoisie to support the people, all those lies, that whole anti-socialist and anti-communist campaign came tumbling down like a house of cards and in this way little by little a new political thinking, a true political awareness was created among our people...

The imperialists openly proclaim that when this revolutionary generation leaves the scene - when the generation of the people who made the war and the Revolution is no longer present - their task will be easier. The imperialists don't conceal their hope that it will be easier to deal with the new generations.

As we said recently, there is a sort of imperialist euphoria, a capitalist euphoria, in the light of the reforms and self-

criticism under way in various socialist countries...we are well aware of this, the euphoria and efforts to depict capitalist mechanisms as the only efficient ones for solving problems, achieving productivity and development. We are watching this way of thinking and these illusions on the part of imperialism. And they are irritated by Cuba's firm stand and the total confidence of our Party and Revolution in socialism, our profound and firm Marxist-Leninist and revolutionary convictions...Firmness and intransigence in the revolutionary thinking of our people is more than 100 years old so the attitude of our Party and our people shouldn't surprise the imperialists...

Patría O Muerte!

Venceremos!"

The Cuban Revolution is still very young. It has made mistakes in the past but generally showed the ability to admit to these and set about rectifying them. All this happened before "Glasnost" was ever heard about.

The internationalist record of Cuba (sullied somewhat by its involvement in Ethiopia) was shown by its courageous stand and support for Angola against the attacks of the racist South African regime. For such a small country this was a magnificent achievement and the South African withdrawal from Namibia is in no small part due to the heroism showed by the Cuban people.

Castro also shows in this speech an apprehension about the direction the Soviet Union is taking and "Perestroika" in general. We in the I.R.S.P. share this fear (see past issues of *Air Camcheachtar*) and applaud Castro's pledge that there will be no creeping capitalism introduced in Cuba.



El Salvador Election Farce

On the 19th March, Alfredo Cristiani was elected president of El Salvador. He is nominal head of the extreme rightist National Republican Alliance Party (ARENA), which has clear links with the death squads which have murdered and terrorised the Salvadoran people for many years.

The result is a blow, not only to the people of El Salvador, but also to the United States who would have much preferred to deal with the Christian Democrats, (the more acceptable face of oppression), than the more obviously right wing ARENA Party, since giving massive aid to a Christian Democrat regime would have attracted much less worldwide criticism. Given the U.S. past record as regards unfavourable regimes in Central and South America, the possibility of a coup in the near future cannot be ruled out.

For years the right wing death squads, (similar to our own Loyalist killers), have been responsible for thousands of disappearances/murders both of political activists and innocent people. In 13 years of struggle there have been over 75,000 people killed and about one million, (one fifth of the population), displaced from their homeland. These displaced persons have either went into exile in one of the neighbouring countries or swelled the population of the shanty towns. There is one example of 1,200 men, women and children returning to work their land in August 1988. Six weeks later they were attacked by the army.

Prior to the elections, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) had proposed that the elections be postponed until September 15th, El Salvador's Independence Day, and a democratic process be established which would allow full participation by the electorate without fear of reprisal. The request for a postponement and the FMLN proposal for a peaceful negotiated settlement to the civil war were both rejected. Their views on the elections were broadcast by Radio Venceremos and took the form of six main points:

1. The previous five elections have not resolved the fundamental problems of the country.

2. Our people no longer believe in elections because they consider them fraudulent, and because the elections have not been able to end the conflict and resolve the extremely serious economic crisis which deepens the social struggle.

3. There exists a total dependency of our country on the United States which has forced the traditional parties, the Christian Democrats and ARENA to seek the approval of the U.S. government instead of the Salvadoran people.

4. The tendency towards fraud and crisis among the legislative/judicial executive and military powers converts the debate on the electoral law into an unresolvable problem. This turns the next elections into the detonator of a major political crisis that will lead to a definite power vacuum.

5. The intensification of violence, which comes from the increase in repression against the people who demand solutions to their problems, places a dilemma before the armed forces; that of committing genocide and provoking an insurrection, or waiting for a power vacuum and an insurrection or waiting for a power vacuum and an insurrection caused by hunger.

6. There exists an international environment in which most regional conflicts are being resolved by means of negotiation.

The elections were marked by fierce fighting between FMLN guerrillas and government forces and took place in an atmosphere of intimidation and violence. The streets and highways were virtually bare because of a national transportation stoppage called by the FLMN. Absenteeism was over 50%, and according to official tallies, only 18% of those registered voted for Cristiani.

The outcome of the election and the failure of the American and Salvadoran governments to negotiate a political settlement can only result in greater repression, foster deeper division, and ultimately prolong the war. The immediate requirement for the people is self-determination - an end to intervention by the United States in the affairs of their country. The Salvadoran people want to decide their own future. Francis Glenn