



SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

Paper of PEOPLES' DEMOCRACY

PRICE: 20p. 10p, Unemployed and Strikers.

OUTSIDE IRELAND 25p.

Vol. 6. No. 4 JULY 1983.

The vote for Sinn Fein in the North is the main spark of hope within a British General election which otherwise marked a major victory for the British Tories and a major setback for the working class in both Britain and Ireland. It's clear from the opening of the new parliament and the British Queen's speech outlining the programme of the Govt. that a new offensive is to begin now.

But the Tories and their Unionist allies have won a battle, not the war. The real struggle comes now, when they try to crush the resistance of the Irish people and their own minorities and working-class opposition.

That struggle won't be fought in Westminster, and it won't centre around the way the vote went in an election now past. It will be fought on the streets, in the factories and trade union structures, and it will depend on the combativity, political awareness, and level of organisation of ordinary working class militants.

If Sinn Fein recognise and respond to this central fact then the spark of hope that their victory represents can be converted into a new blaze of mass resistance against British rule in both parts of Ireland.

It's not enough to point to votes cast, to point to the next election, to offer an advice service or to pretend that military action by itself offers any prospect of victory. Only a programme of action that unites the mass of the people in a fight against Britain's military repression and economic oppression, against the Stormont assembly, and for an anti-imperialist alternative to the council for a new Ireland will build our confidence and organisation for the battles ahead.

The return of James Prior to the North as Secretary of State can only be a holding operation and is partly due to the Sinn Fein vote. Faced with one pocket of mass resistance, Margaret Thatcher decided to put the question of Ireland on the long finger and look for easier victories elsewhere. However the crisis in Ireland today means that it will not remain on the long finger, and unless things go badly wrong for her in Britain the temptation to move against the main outpost of rebellion will grow.

We gained time - but that's only a real gain if we use it to unite and organise.

Ireland won't remain in the background for long. It will be an issue when the hanging brigade swing into action; When the PTA is 'reformed' to make it a permanent piece of legislation and when a new police bill in Britain draws on the lessons of Ireland to attack democratic rights there.

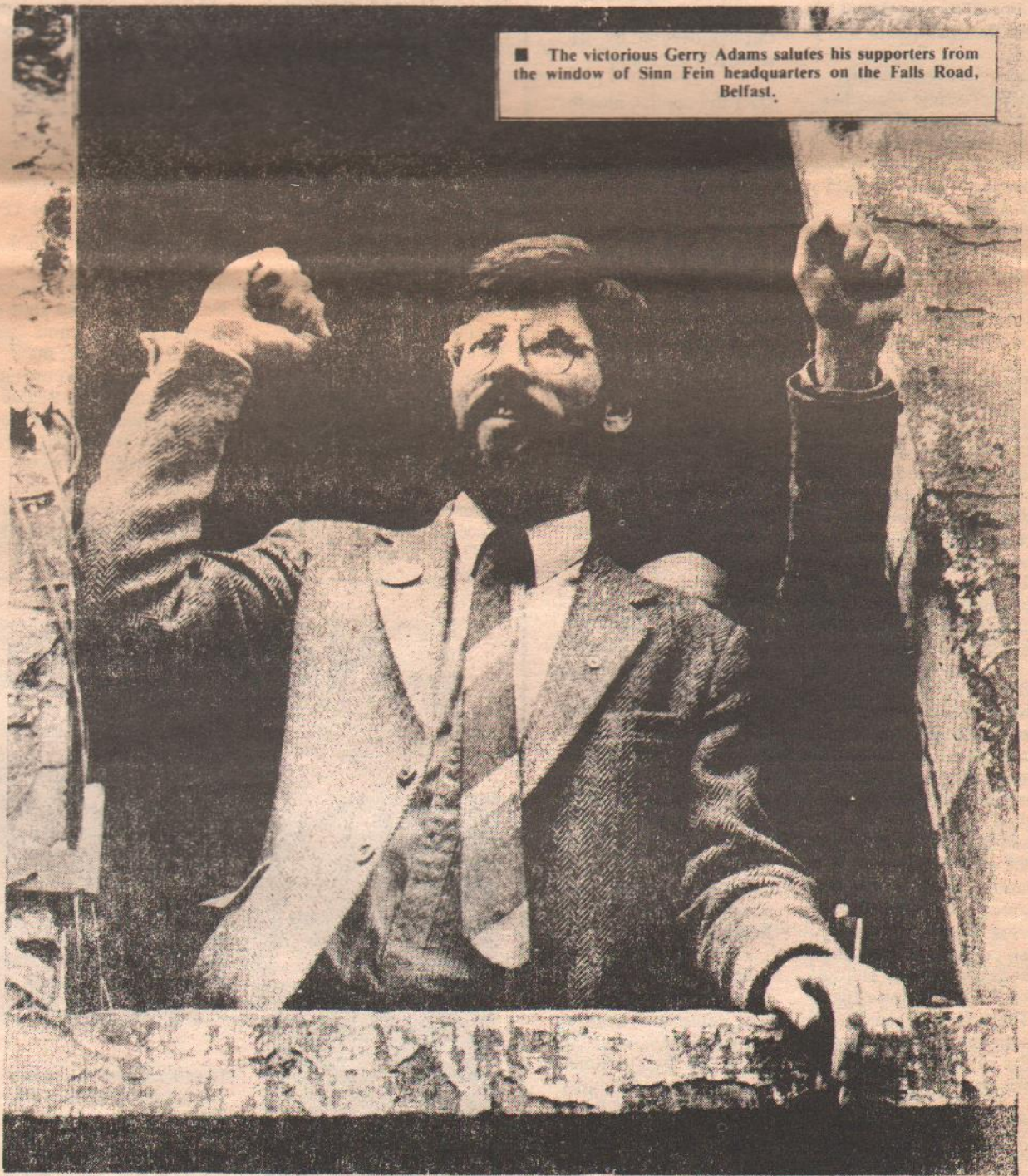
One gain of the struggle before the election was the new dialogue between Sinn Fein and sections of the British Labour party left. Gerry Adams MP has already announced his intention of going to Britain to re-open those discussions. We believe that the Sinn Fein abstention policy is wrong but without moving on that Sinn Fein could learn from the experiences of Bernadette McAliskey as an MP. Gerry Adams should speak not only to the leaders but to the militants. By going on picket lines with British workers and joining in demonstrations of the Black community he can build a real solidarity in action.

But at the end of the day solidarity from British workers depends on a real mass struggle here. The left in Sinn Fein are aware of this and in numerous public statements extending to well before the Assembly elections have pledged to build such a movement against the Assembly. Instead of fighting for this in the Westminster elections they settled for the politically meaningless slogan of "principled leadership".

It's not just on the immediate issues in the North that the question of leadership is posed. The fact that the election was based on the Westminster constituencies should not lead us to adopt a partitionist attitude ourselves nor blind us to the fact that eventual victory will be based on leadership of the Irish working class as a whole. In the South today class politics are posed even more directly than in the North. The amendment campaign posed a direct threat to women's rights and the austerity offensive is led not by the remote forces of British imperialism but by the much more immediate and weaker forces of Irish capitalism. And on both these issues Irish workers are fighting back. A recent poll showed a dramatic advance on attitudes to the amendment and there still exists mass discontent about taxation and a whole series of fightbacks against austerity. Here 'principled leadership' clearly means a programme of class action. Will Sinn Fein meet this challenge?

Anti-imperialists have gained in the elections, but the imperialists have gained in a much more dramatic way. We gained a breathing space - lets use it to spell out 'principled leadership' as a political programme that will lead a fightback against the Assembly, oppose the 'Council for a New Ireland' with an all-Ireland constituent Assembly build anti-imperialist opposition to the right-wing 'pro-life' amendment to the constitution and lead both employed and unemployed workers in all 32 counties in a fight against the economic austerity programme of Thatcher and her puppets in Dublin!

SINN FEIN VICTORY IN NORTH, BUT... SOUTHERN WORKERS HOLD THE KEY!



■ The victorious Gerry Adams salutes his supporters from the window of Sinn Fein headquarters on the Falls Road, Belfast.

IN THIS ISSUE:

PAGE 4&5.....	PAGE 2.....	Page 8	PAGE 3.....
Election analysis	Editorial on amendment referendum	Stop public sector Sellouts!	Fightback/Around the Unions.
Interview with Des Bonass			

EDITORIAL

The referendum on the constitutional amendment is now likely to be held in September. The various attempts through the high court to nullify the Dail vote for a referendum were useful propaganda moves, but they could only have delayed the date and are in no way a substitute for mass action by the campaign.

55% of Irish people polled are against the Amendment - that represents a big gain for the campaign. It has succeeded in bringing the issue to the centre of the political arena. The referendum is now a bone of contention in all three major parties.

The coalition has suffered a severe embarrassment. Like Fianna Fail, the concession to PLAC was a vote-getting exercise. But dissension in the ranks (built up by the AAC) ...as weakened their political nerve.

The delays however do not add up to a defeat for the coalition or the right wing. So far it is only a setback for the right, but one which has demoralised SPUC, PLAC and their reactionary cohorts. The AAC now has the edge and should launch an offensive against the right. We can expose their historic role in consolidating church and state and their support for denial of democratic rights.

The campaign has the potential to win a 'NO' vote and finally rout PLAC. There is a political crisis in the bourgeoisie torn between the need to discipline the working class and the need to modernise the state.

There is growing opposition among the population and especially inside the workers movement.

But a mass action strategy is needed to take full advantage and build the campaign. the campaign leadership is no united behind such a strategy. And "good ideas" for action tend to be left to the activists, action groups, the feminists and some of the left. Mobilising the already-won support in unions is not understood to be central for the whole campaign. There are no projects or activities planned to get the workers unto the streets.

PD has called for some initiatives which could make this possible; an international tribunal, trade union representation on the campaign leadership, an open

conference on the theme of 'Separation of Church and State - Defend Womens rights. These either recieved tacit support from the leadership and have yet to be implemented, or were considered too ambitious by a campaign not fully confident in its leadership.

In the meantime, street activity is being organised by local action groups, but this remains localised with no national plan behind it. There is a big danger that the breathing space won will be squandered.

It must be clearly understood by the campaign that unless it mobilises the social and political strength of the workers movement, the right may still snatch a victory from a potential defeat.

The history of the last decade and the issues of contraception and now divorce are striking examples of 'pressure group' campaigns being out-manoevred by the right and the state.

Over the coming months the fight to pull out the 'NO' vote should be organised around three main tasks;

Getting the workers movement on to the streets behind the campaign.

Building for national demonstrations/rallies throughout the whole 32 counties.

Drawing in all levels of support around an open national conference. This can launch the campaign drive towards referendum day.

Propaganda around the main political issues at the heart of this struggle, separation of Church and State and defence of womens rights, must be aimed directly at the right, SPUC, PLAC, et al and also at the all-Ireland forum. Fitzgerald, Hume Haughey and Spring, should not be allowed to debate a 'New Ireland' when repression is consolidated in the Ireland of today.

Finally, Peoples Democracy firmly believes that Republican abstention from the AAC strengthens the 'two-nationist' opponents of Irish unity who participate in the AAC. If Republicans do not fight for women in Ireland today, what confidence can the women's movement have that a new Ireland will mean their liberation?

**use the time,
extend
the struggle**

NICKY KELLY

SPECIAL COURTS



LESSONS OF THE CAMPAIGN

The ending of Nicky Kelly's hunger strike does not end the campaign for his release. The fight to secure his release must go on at a new level. To date the campaign has achieved important gains. **Firstly** in terms of the broad support; up to 50 action groups, with 9 Trades councils, 8 Trade unions, 11 county and urban district councils and upwards of 200 solicitors who have called for either a review of his case and/or his release. Internationally support has grown in; France, England, Scotland, Denmark, West Germany, Holland, Canada, Australia and the USA.

Secondly, the campaign has succeeded in exposing the 1973/77 Coalition's use of

repression against its political opponents. Subsequent Fainna Fail Govts. have failed to live up to their commitments, given while in opposition, to hold a public inquiry. Indeed several of the 'Heavy gang' detectives' have been promoted.

A realisation that both the Coalition and Fianna fail need to rely on the repressive apparatus of the state is slowly gaining ground. Their general impotency, the austerity drive, and outright collaboration with Britain makes it imperative for them to contain and defeat the Anti-Imperialist workers movements.

The new campaign will be a propaganda one. During

Nicky's hunger strike we had not yet achieved mass mobilisation in the communities or the workers movement. But Nicky has not been defeated. It is a stale-mate.

However in the next period mass action will be more difficult to secure. The lessons of the previous months are therefore important to sum up in order to map out a strategy for the coming period.

The overall lesson we must learn is that mobilisation of certain leaders in different sectors is insufficient to defeat a central aspect of Coalition strategy - i.e. extension of the repressive apparatus of the state.

A political defeat for the coalition requires the mobilisation of the workers movement and trade unions behind the campaign. The H. Block campaign opened up avenues, but the weakness of the anti-imperialist current in the labour movement has consistently militated against bridging the gap. This will continue to be a feature in the absence of a consistent and united effort by the main anti-imperialist organisations to prioritise this task

This is not a defeatist perspective but a sober assessment of real obstacles we must face. The breadth of support for Nicky's release is in many ways more expansive than even the H-Block campaign. But the roots have not grown downwards into the working class. This is the task the campaign must set itself.

As a propaganda campaign for the present, we can organise key initiatives which can mobilise in action the forces whose support we have already won. Having reached this level, the roots can spread downward and out into the working class.

Peoples Democracy remains committed to the Nicky Kelly release campaign and we will fight for:

An open National Conference drawing in all forces who support Nicky's release.

The conference must elect a leadership based on these forces and develop a strategy that prioritises work in the unions and the labour movement.

We urge all Socialist Republicans and all those concerned with democratic rights to join this campaign.

A. Speed.

New Election Victory



The election of Alex Maskey is another in a string of victories by Sinn Fein which will give imperialism a reason to pause and think about its Irish policy. Its a particularly historic victory as it is the first time in the whole history of the Northern state that Sinn Fein has won a seat in Belfast City Hall.

However from the point of view of those like PD who see electoral action as the first step in mass struggle the victory was a pyrrhic one. Sinn Fein won, but at the cost of

further disunity and political sectarianism in the anti-imperialist camp.

Jimmy Brown of the IRSP at present in Crumlin Road Gaol, was the Anti-Informer candidate. In a PR election the fact that there were 2 candidates presented no difficulty as long as the candidates called for transfers to each other.

This didn't happen. The IRSP called on Sinn Fein to withdraw and Sinn Fein ignored Brown's candidacy even going as far as to

print a reproduction of the ballot paper with Jimmy Browns name listed with the other candidates but no suggestion of a vote transfer!! They have since attacked the IRSP for standing at all.

The election of Councillor Maskey means that PD, the IRSP and Sinn Fein are all represented in Belfast City Hall. There is a perfect opportunity for united work if only Sinn Fein can put the needs of the struggle above their own determination to win absolute control over the anti-imperialist movement.

**JOIN P.d.
NOW**

NAME:

ADDRESS:

WRITE TO:
HORIZON BOOKS, AVOCA PARK, ANDERSONSTOWN, BELFAST
PLOUGH BOOKS, 3 BELEVEDERE PLACE, DUBLIN 1.

BROAD LEFT STUMBLES AT NIPSA CONFERENCE

The 1983 Annual Conference of the Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA) witnessed several major policy gains for the left. The first of these gains came at the divisional conference of the CSPOA (which organises professional staff in the Civil Service) where on a card vote it was decided to affiliate to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. This decision was a significant rejection of loyalist sectarianism in the union which up to now has kept the CSPOA out of line with the other 3 divisions which make up NIPSA.

Equally important was the decision of the main NIPSA conference to support the extension of the 1976 Abortion act to the North. This followed a lengthy debate in which the anti-reformers dredged up every horror story and demagogic trick in an effort to stampede the conference into rejecting the resolution.

While many delegates were personally opposed to abortion the large majority

were convinced that it would be wrong to use the law to enforce a personal view on others. There was wide acceptance that the denial of abortion rights was a class issue - the wealthy already having the means to obtain an abortion privately.

The left's dominance on policy issues was reflected in a host of resolutions debated from pay policy to nuclear disarmament, from opposition to British Tories anti-union laws to the incorporation of an amendment in the unions constitution outlawing discrimination on grounds of 'sexual orientation'.

Unfortunately, the left's dominance on policy did not carry through to the election of the unions officers and executive, where the right-wing secured a comfortable majority. Responsibility for the electoral defeat of the left rests with the Communist Party and 'Militant' supporters within the NIPSA 'Broad Left'

On the eve of conference the Communist Party announced

that it had withdrawn from the 'Broad Left' and went on to condemn the 'Militant' for dominating the Broad left and for its "sectarian" attitude towards supposedly "progressive" individuals within the union.

Undoubtedly 'Militant' is guilty of an organisational sectarianism in its operations within the 'Broad Left' to gain total control of leadership position but its attraction to activists is based on the work of their members in the branches of the union where they have consistently sided with the rank and file.

The major responsibility for the breakup of the Broad Left at conference however, clearly rests with the Communist Party whose own political sectarianism preferred to see the control of the union shift to the right-wing rather than allow 'Militant' supporters an important place in the union leadership.

NOW THE ANTI-AMENDMENT BUS

Dublin anti-amendment action groups recently sponsored a tour by bus through the 26-county midlands. The goal was to build support for the campaign in areas hitherto unorganised.

We asked Mary O'Connell, campaign activist in Dublin North-West action group, about the tour.

"The tour was successful. We visited Birr, Mullingar, Ballina, Roscommon, Tullamore, and Athlone. Several action groups have been set up and we held well attended public meetings. SPUC were obviously expecting us, they seemed to follow us around. But it back-fired on them. We won new supporters and strengthened the determination of the campaign."

Pat Corconan, a PD member also on the tour, told Socialist Republic:

"This means we have action groups in nearly every county in the 26 counties. Our information jolted people into realising the real reactionary nature of SPUC and the issues at stake."

UNION ROUND UP FWUI

FWUI - By a Socialist Republic Reader and Conference Delegate Ann O'Brien

'There were 2 main debates, around Nicky Kelly (then on hunger strike) and the role of the Labour Party in Coalition.

A united left effort in pushing an emergency resolution succeeded in getting the conference to call for Kelly's immediate release. A number of branches strongly criticised the Labour Party in coalition, but resolutions passed were without any real teeth.'

CPSSA

CPSSA - By a Socialist Republic Reader and CPSSA delegate Noeleen Ni Dhomhnaill

'For a union representing the lower grades in the Civil Service who are mainly young women, its ironic that the executive is male dominated. There is a lot of apathy. The membership is disaffected. 13 branches were not represented as they did not have the required quota of AGM's. Consequently a number of good resolutions were ruled out of order. So were others including one on the amendment from my branch. The leadership wants to 'ban' politics from our union. They need to be replaced. We need real democracy in the union.'

ITGWU

ITGWU - By PD's Joe Harrington, at the Conference representing his union branch.

Conference witnessed the third attempt by the Workers Party to win a general officer's post. But the Labour Right blocked and defeated them. Support came for an emergency motion on Nicky Kelly demanding his release. Motions were passed on Section 31, Tax Campaign etc. But they'll remain paper motions like years before.

There was little evidence of real struggles like Ranks, Clondalkin Paper Mills, Carrigaline Kingdom Tubes. The conference defuses militancy rather than building the strength of the rank and file.'

RANKS Division of Workers Averted



While the struggle of the Ranks workers to save their jobs never reached the level where there was a serious possibility of success, the fight did not end in the disaster it seemed certain to be heading for in its last weeks. Despite the best efforts of the company to pit worker against worker, class solidarity won out.

In the initial stages it seemed that a strong campaign was possible to save the jobs. The mobilisation in support of the jailed ranks workers should have provided a springboard for a real fight by Ranks employees for the Right to

Work. The Dail was picketed, the Limerick workers followed the example of their Dublin colleagues and occupied, the Bakers were canvassed for their support and asked not to take imported flour, various union branches and Trades Councils passed resolutions calling for the nationalisation of the Flour Milling Industry.

However, the initial enthusiasm died when it became obvious that the Transport Union leadership was unwilling to break EEC regulations and black imported flour. It is true that had the

union broken EEC regulations it would be open to prosecution with the possible consequence of being financially crippled. However it is not this fear that shackled the union. There were plenty of unofficial ways the union could have promoted the blacking of flour imports. The fact of the matter is that the union is dominated by political tendencies that accept the rules of capitalism and will only work within its regulations.

Once it was clear that the union was going to do little to build a campaign capable of saving jobs, the Ranks workers were forced to

think in terms of what they could salvage out of the situation. Decent redundancy payments became the main demand. Inevitably, this divided the workers. Some were willing to accept less than others. There would be more in it for the older workers etc. These are the sort of decisions that appear when the clear demand for jobs is dropped in favour of compensation.

This was the basic cause of the situation in Limerick where local Ranks workers found themselves in opposition to the Dublin workers and some of their Limerick colleagues. From the

moment the majority of Limerick workers voted to accept the redundancy agreement the struggle was lost. There was no way the situation could be turned around.

While certain political tendencies like RS (Revolutionary Struggle) argued that the occupying workers should be fully supported, it was clear that only a disastrous confrontation between workers would result. Many of the majority who accepted the final deal were understandably determined that nothing should endanger the agreement. PD argued that notwithstanding the heroism and determination of the minority, this was a situation where you cut your losses and withdraw in as dignified a fashion as possible. Knowing when to stop is as important as knowing when to fight.

When the Dublin and Limerick workers left the mill last week they were ensuring that the Ranks occupation will be remembered by the Irish working class as a partial success and not as a disaster where worker faced worker while the bosses laughed.

While the jobs at Ranks (Limerick) have been lost (the Dublin occupation continues at the time of writing) valuable lessons have been learned - lessons which will be put to good use in future struggles. In a future issue of the SR we will take a closer and more detailed look at the Ranks battle.

JO HARRINGTON

BRITISH ELECTION :

The Conservative landslide in the British General Election is more than just another round in the parliamentary game between Labour and Conservative. It marks a basic shift in the British class struggle - and one that could have a dramatic effect on Irish workers.

While the media have highlighted the battles inside the Labour Party an even more dramatic change has

taken place in the Tory party. With a few whimpers of protest, the old leadership of monopoly capital and the landed aristocracy has been replaced by the small capitalists and entrepreneurs of the Thatcherite right, better able to wage an unremitting class war and bring the British ruling class out of its difficulties. In the past four years they have managed to push down the living standards of workers. The new Govern-

ment will try to break the traditional mould of British politics and inflict a qualitative defeat on the working class. Central to the offensive is the attempt to muzzle the unions and break the Labour Party by ending the political levy.

Also planned are attacks on welfare rights and womens rights. In the background lies a massive strengthening of police powers and the 'reform' of the 'Prevention of Terrorism' Act to make its central elements permanently part of the legal structure.

The new repressive laws would effect nationalist workers in the North directly but the indirect effects of further Tory victories are even more important. Its clear for example that a Labour Government would have had to adjust its policy on Ireland to take account of the Sinn Fein electoral victories but Thatcher will only do so if she is humbled by a major defeat. One of the constraints on Thatcher taking action in Ireland has been her unwillingness to risk bringing the issue to the centre of the British class struggle. A major defeat of British workers would leave her with a much freer hand.

Unfortunately, it is much more difficult to move a Labour Party wedded to capitalism and imperialism to the left than it is to move the Tories to the right. The election demonstrated clearly that



The election did nothing to heal the rift in the Unionist camp. Tactical voting among the loyalists to win seats left the Official Unionists out in front of the DUP and with 11 seats against the DUP's three seats. The Official Unionists were also helped by the reactionary and sectarian campaign which they mounted.

This shows the fallacy of the Workers Party programme in arguing for class unity within a sectarian statelet - and they polled badly. But its major importance lies in the fact that without Unionist unity the British face one more objective difficulty in their struggle to make the Assembly a firm bulwark for partition.

The other major factor in the Northern election is the way in which the SDLP held its vote. Sinn Fein have mobilised a massive vote, and presented the SDLP with a serious challenge but they have not defeated them. However, the SDLP remain in trouble. Sinn Fein are crowding on their heels and they are faced with the collapse of their policy of negotiation with Britain. But Sinn Fein are mistaken if they believe that a step by step advance based on local issues can defeat them. The fact that Hume is attending Westminster and will in practice be operating there as

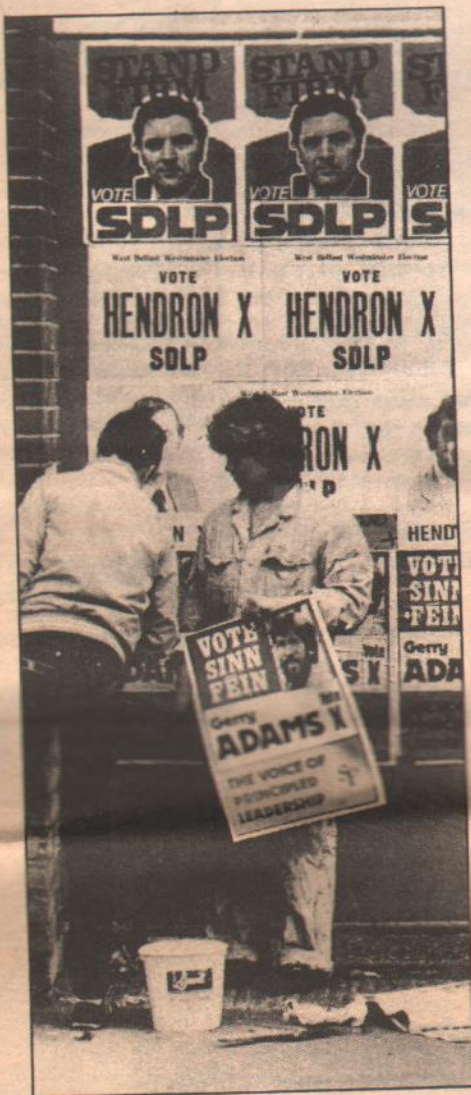
voice of the Southern capitalists means that a deal with Britain remains possible and a policy of collaboration can still be made to work. Sinn Fein have still to develop a genuine alternative policy and its lack was shown in the poll for Gerry Fitt.

the Labour right still have organisational control of the party, and they were able to use this to ditch a number of left-wing MPs by preventing their nomination or ensuring their fighting a marginal seat and also to effectively ditch the party's manifesto at the beginning of the election. The success at the polls by the SDP, even though it led to only a handful of seats, shows how badly demoralised British workers are and that there are many who, in the absence of a strong left alternative, have supported Thatcher or the old right wing labour policies of the Liberal-SDP alliance.

A fightback is possible. Thatcher's vote actually fell overall and only the divisions of the opposition made the massive parliamentary majority possible. Now she has to face the

problems involved in actually implementing a program rather than declaring it at a time when British political structures are unstable and polarising rapidly - its significant that Labour won an overwhelming vote from the black communities. The struggle within the Labour Party will grow more intense at a time when the battle is moving into the factories and into the streets.

In the North the main outcome of the election was the massive Sinn Fein vote. The fact that 120,000 people voted Sinn Fein in the face of a massive campaign by the British, the Unionists the Southern Government, and the Catholic Church, shows that a real combativity remains. Probably this was one factor that influenced Thatcher to leave any new policy on the North on the long finger.



LESSONS OF THE F

The inevitable doom of the new All Ireland Forum can be seen in the fact that its two dominant southern participants, Fianna Fail and Fine Gael trace their histories to the original all Ireland Fora: the first and second Dails.

These were the only attempt backed by the majority of the Irish people to build such a constituent assembly for the whole of Ireland. Significantly, unlike such a previous assembly, it did not split seriously for nearly three years, until, in the Treaty vote, a majority supported the moderate side of peace with Britain and effectively, partition.

These first Dails were composed of members of one party (apart from the unofficial Labour Deputy, Richard Corish, in the second). This was the original Sinn Fein. It had started a party representing the capitalist aims of the artisans in the underdeveloped economy of most of Ireland. The national bourgeoisie wanted simply control over the colonial administ-

ration to prune it and place themselves in its jobs. It supported the federal scheme, Home Rule, partly as a concession to the skilled workers.. These, along with a handful of capitalists outside Dublin suffered most from the lack of economic opportunity that resulted from Ireland's colonial status. Since this restricted the development of a proletariat; and limited mass support for socialism, the artisans politics turned towards capitalist protectionism: a republic in which the economic policies were those of Sinn Fein's founder, the printer, Arthur Griffith.

These perspectives were a policy for Irish Capitalism. Griffith soon broke with the Socialists in the party and denounced militant trade unionism in the name of economic development. He alienated others by trying to do a deal with a breakaway Home Rule group. By 1916, his party had only 100 members in Dublin. Then, after the Rising, many Volunteers, looking for a political organisation took the

name Sinn Fein and allowed Griffith to remain as Vice President of the new expanded organisation,

The new Sinn Fein were more radical than the old. It stood openly for the Irish Republic. But its economic programme remained vague. Griffith's proposals continued at base, along with demands for a minimum wage and denunciations of English based unions (a less conservative aspect than it would be: the most extreme working class body at this time was the Irish Transport and General workers Union). Griffith moderated his own anti working class line while he educated the new Sinn Fein.

He was in a strong position to do this because any consistent Labour intervention to achieve Irish Independence died with James Connolly. His successors paid lip service and organised isolated industrial actions against specific undemocratic moves of British Imperialism. At the same time, they

left consistent opposition to Britain to Sinn Fein and the Volunteers. Labour aimed to build its own numerical strength as the Industrial republic within the shell of the political state. To take too definite a political line on the vexed issue of Irish self-determination might cause a split and postpone the day when the Industrial republic broke that shell. In the December 1918 general election, Labour refused to run candidates in or out of alliance with Sinn Fein.

The latter won 73 out of 105 Irish seats, and established its Constituent Assembly Dail Eireann. It did so alone. The Unionists naturally attended Westminster. So did the rump of the Home Rulers. Outside, the Irish Volunteers began a military struggle against Britain.

Yet in the country of the blind the one eyed person is king. Griffith was in the Cabinet elected by the Dail. He had no opposition to interpreting its economic policies as conservatively as

possible and postponing more radical moves to the moment of victory.

Even before the 1918 election, Sinn Fein had promised the Catholic Hierarchy not to interfere with education: the first Dail never appointed such a Minister. Dail leaders worked to conciliate nationalist and Unionist capitalists. Eoin Mac Néill who helped wreck the Easter Rising, became a Minister first for Finance and then for Industries, not because he had any grasp for economics, but because so that he might use his authority as an expert on Ancient Ireland to confuse its tribal socialism with that relevant to twentieth century Ireland. The Cabinet's Courts defended property against land-hungry peasants. Only Countess Constance Markievicz as both token Labourite and as token woman in the Cabinet. Like others, she was kept quiet by the hope of what would happen when the Republic won.

This had two effects. Volunteers in the areas of land agitation were more active against the agitators than against the British. Nor was there anything to appeal to Northern Protestants, whether capitalists or workers. they feared to loose the British imperial market and their sectarian privileges in the Irish Republic. From June 1920, they fought the Republic actively, wrecking the trade unions in the process.

Labour could not oppose this. The limits of its support were reached in 1920 when a protracted strike against the carriage of munitions by train exhausted its resources. In the elections for the second Dail Sinn Fein was able to persuade it not to run.

As Labour revived it found itself attacked by the employers who tried to cut wages to make up for falling prices. Strikes and occ-

NO SUBSTITUTE FOR MASS ACTION



ery of Republicanism meant that Fitt was able to retire with honour with 10,000 votes - even if up to 50% of these votes came from loyalists.

The British face objective difficulties in moving forward in the North and they are made cautious by the Sinn Fein vote but to really reverse things and move forward we need an anti-imperialist alternative to the Assembly and the Council for a New Ireland, and we need a mass movement based on all 32 counties. Instead Sinn Fein have hidden behind the meaningless slogan 'for a principled leadership'.

The struggle in both Britain and Ireland is entering a new phase. It requires a new programme, new methods of struggle and a new unity of those fighting capitalism and imperialism. In the Labour Party in Britain and among Sinn Fein and their supporters here there will be major debates about the way forward. For Peoples Democracy there is one sure test we will apply at each stage of the debates - Does the individual concerned support and encourage the independent mass action of workers and the oppressed? No substitute for mass action can give us even the hope of eventual victory.



When Fergus O'Hare stood for PD against Gerry Fitt in the 1981 local government elections he advanced a political programme that opposed Fitt's collaboration and outlined the need for anti-imperialist workers to organise and unite in action. He was able to point to the H Block movement as the living example of the power of mass action to bring about change. Fitt was humiliated with 500 votes. In this election in West Belfast, Gerry Adams mobilised a massive republican vote, but his failure to offer a political programme to those outside the periph-

INTERVIEW WITH DES BONASS

With thousands of redundancies, massive unemployment, crippling taxes, are Trade Union Leaders building a Fightback?. SOCIALIST REPUBLIC asked des Bonass ATGWU member of the Dublin Trades Council executive ctte about his recent experiences of the PRSI campaign. He spoke of the lack of leadership to rank and file workers involved in struggles on this issue.



SR *Is the union leadership united in building a fightback?*

the refusal of the bigger unions, FWUI and ITGWU, to mobilise that did it."

DB "Some major trade union leaders have certainly climbed down. Their Dublin Council of Trade Union delegates, for the first time in years, refused to support an executive motion for industrial action on July 1st. Originally this action had been scheduled for June 17th, but was postponed to avoid a clash with the building workers strike, as they requested. You see, we organised a protest around the Finance Bill and Michael Bell's amendment (Labour TD for Louth). These amendments were defeated. The DCTU executive strongly believed at that stage it was important to keep a momentum going. But when the general DCTU delegate meeting took place, some executive members had second thoughts and spoke against action on July 1st. It was

SR *Have these leaders got an alternative plan of campaign?*

DB "Well, they may say that they do. but it is only on paper. ITGWU and FWUI delegates will deny that they are withdrawing. We'll see on August 27th when we meet again to discuss a strategy.

But this PRSI campaign isn't one they really wanted. The pressure came from the Waterford Glass workers. I think some leaders got nervous about its momentum and the political implications of a strong challenge to the Govt. After all, the ICTU publicly says no to industrial action for political ends while privately members admit that's precisely what is at stake."

savage austerity policies of the coalition. There is a lot of hypocrisy about. We all remember the April 30th day of action and speeches at the GPO about civil disobedience and general strikes. our union (ATGWU) is the only one to try and follow that through. But we cannot go it alone. The Waterford Glass workers realised that when the DCTU failed to mobilise."

SR *What do you think Trade Union militants should do now?*

DB "Well I think that all this emphasises the need for unity across the unions; around common campaigns and demands, around solidarity with particular struggles and around the challenge to present trade union leaders to lead or stand aside. That's why I'm working with others on a fightback conference for the winter of 1983."

SR *Do you think that they are hesitant to challenge Labour in Coalition?*

DB "There is no doubt but that they are nervous about breaking up the coalition. Even anti-coalitionists in the trade unions pussyfoot on this one. There is plenty of rhetoric about the 'disgrace of Labour' but little action to defend workers against the



FIRST & SECOND DAILS

operations broke out. The Dail Cabinet sent the Volunteers against several of these. During the Treaty negotiations, this unrest seems to have caused Griffith to offer to abandon his tariff schemes: in effect to accept less than the pre-war Home Rule proposal.

However, the actual Treaty succeeded in keeping the anti-imperialist forces divided. Labour's majority accepted it: the small new communist party opposed but could only tail end its bourgeois opponents radical wing. These were divided not on political grounds but on military strategy.

This opened the way for their defeat in civil war. The Third Dail was a twenty-six county assembly.

The new forum is sixty years less likely to be more successful.



Arthur Griffith and E.J. Duggan, October 1921.

INTERNATIONAL ATTACKS ON ABORTION RIGHTS

Fighting back against the right wing and the constitutional amendment in the 26 counties and against the emergence of such forces as Life and SPUC in the North has opened many eyes. It has highlighted the international links in the anti-abortion lobby. Not only that, it has now become clear that the right is conducting a common political offensive to obstruct the rights of women. In particular they plan to halt legislative changes previously choked by reactionary regimes and state repression.

Since the mid-60s some advance has been made for women in almost every European country. Even where the laws have not been changed, the campaign of women have provoked a discussion on this previously taboo subject. Quite often in practice, laws have been less strictly enforced.

But today, even where the laws are liberalised, women found themselves increasingly on the defensive. In a period of economic austerity right wing and pro-capitalist elements aim at denying women a role

outside the family. Abortion rights stand in their way. The right to Choose is the focal point for their main attack.

But 15 years of the womens liberation movement is somewhat of a formidable opponent. Especially when feminists have succeeded in bringing the issues into the unions and mobilising workers in defence of womens rights.

In Western Europe and North America there is a growing polarisation in society on this issue and a sharp political fight which has effected all political parties.

In Britain a major attempt by Tory MP Corry to limit the '67 Act was successfully routed by a mass campaign involving the TUC. However, 'back-door attacks continue; increasing bureaucratic procedures which delay decisions and terminations, hysterical propaganda about aborted foetuses and of course cuts in health provisions for abortions.

Socialist Party Government in the Spanish state has

promised legislation giving women limited abortion rights and thereby breaking the stranglehold of the Catholic Church.

In Portugal a CP sponsored bill was only defeated by 127 votes to 105. This was the first ever national debate on the abortion issue. The limited abortion laws in France (without state funding) are to be strengthened with the 70% reimbursement of abortion costs.

But the right is burrowing away at these gains. For example, in Catholic Italy laws permitting abortion have difficulty in functioning. The clauses allowing 'conscientious objectors' in several countries' laws have permitted reactionaries to undermine abortion rights. This kind of legal loophole (which is not matched by provisions for medical staff) has aided anti-abortionists in France where a battle over use of medical facilities for abortion at a major regional hospital is now raging within the medical profession.

So it is clear besides undermining existing facilities

and reversing the gains of the womens movement the anti-abortion lobby has openly launched campaigns to prevent abortion being legalised at all. What is happening in Ireland today is a classic example of this.

But there has been some heartening news with 2 recent defeats for the right in the United States. Firstly, the Supreme Court has ruled it unconstitutional for individual states to set local limits on abortion rights. When the anti-abortion lobby responded with an amendment to the constitution, the US Senate decisively rejected this by 17 votes. But the right has not given up entirely and a republican senator is preparing another bill.

The scope of these attacks on women is forcing feminists to see them as part of a right wing political offensive against the working class. The question of how women can fight back is an urgent one to answer. Defending and fight for the right to choose is now rightly seen as a political issue and not just a social issue for women. The womens movement has responded by org-

anising on a national and international level. Women are now fighting to mobilise the workers movement in our defence.

International solidarity is vital if the likes of SPUC, PLAC, LIFE and their cohorts are to be stopped. ICASC, International Campaign for Contraception Sterilisation and Abortion Rights was launched by feminists a few years back to link and build the struggles of women.

Women of the IVth International have been very involved in many different countries, Holland, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Britain and in Ireland during the contraception battle, fighters for the Right to Choose in Ireland should link up with their sisters and comrades in ICACS.



ANN CONWAY

GREENHAM COMMON

As thousands of women meet at Greenham Common in July to form an international women's

chain, Sue Esterson assesses the impact of womens actions on the nuclear debate.

The anti-missiles and anti-nuclear weapons movement is the largest international movement on any political question in the imperialist countries since the second world war. The polarisation that has developed in response to this question in the organised labour movement, in Western Europe especially, is also even greater than that on the Vietnam war

Together with austerity, the issue of the Pershing II and Cruise Missiles will dominate the political situation in Western Europe in 1983. This combination has the potential to create real political turmoil in Western European countries.

Women have been to the forefront in the mass mobilisation around Europe. Tens of thousands of women, young and old have marched against the 'War Drive' and the threat of nuclear weapons, and inside the international womens movement a current has developed which sees this issue as an important political fight for feminists. Conferences, marches, rallies and sit-ins have all been organised by anti-nuclear women. The strategy for the anti-nuclear movement has been hotly debated by women in their thousands. CND in both Ireland and Britain have womens sections built on the best traditions of feminism, of self organisation and mass action.

WOMEN LEAD FIGHTBACK AGAINST WARMONGERS

The most notorious or well known of womens anti-nuclear actions has been Greenham Common. The human chain of thousands of women, captured the imagination of the media. Through its coverage the issue was brought into millions of homes.

At first the bourgeois press tried to present the womens camp as a 'crank adventure' and not something to be taken seriously. That is until the women refused to move or be intimidated by the repressive forces of the state, the police and the army. Not only did women stand their ground, but they deepened their struggle by challenging repression through the courts and at the same time continuing mass political action on Greenham Common and at other British army bases.

Now it had become a serious political protest. Margaret Thatcher and Michael Heseltine had to sit up and take note. Heseltine even led a major propaganda offensive against CND in the lead up to the British elections. This involved wheeling out Lady Olga Maitland and her so-called 'Women for Peace'. But this arch-Tory and ruling class advocate failed to deter the womens movement from further protest.



Outside the main gates, 15 February 1983

The response of CND opened up further debates for women activists. The campaign as a whole decided not to support any party in the election, while the womens section favoured women candidates. Eventually leading campaigner Helen John called for support for the Labour

Party in support of its anti-nuclear policies.

On 2 fronts the international womens movement is leading a fightback through mass action. In defence of abortion rights and against nuclear missiles, women have encountered forces of the state and

challenged the labour movement to take a stand.

In Ireland today the launching of a campaign against the amendment has led Irish feminists to face similar experiences. Both struggles must be built not solely on direct or mass action. A strategy of

mobilising the social and political weight of the working class against the disastrous nuclear schemas of the capitalists is essential for victory and for socialism

SUPPORT THE CND HUMAN CHAIN JULY 16th - DUBLIN



SUBSCRIBE!

socialist republic

Ireland: 12 issues £4.50p
Elsewhere: 12 issues £6.50p

Name.....

Address.....

Country.....



Statement from the United Secretariat of the Fourth International No to US intervention in Central America

Ever since the revolutionary Sandinista government took power in Nicaragua on July 19, 1979, in the aftermath of the mass insurrection against the Somoza dictatorship, the US imperialists have been trying to bring pressure to bear on it and subject it to blackmail.

Most recently, using the forces of the ousted corrupt and savage dictatorship, US imperialism has mounted a counter-revolutionary intervention against the government put in power by the insurrection of the Nicaraguan people.

For several months, the Sandinista National Liberation Front has been exposing and protesting against these imperialist operations. But nonetheless the counterrevolutionaries' masters decided to give the go-ahead for an invasion.

To facilitate this, US imperialism has made use of the governments of Honduras and Costa Rica. It has used both countries as bases for training former Somoza National Guards. In connection with this, a number of American advisers have been sent in.

The pretext for the arrival of US military advisors was the Pino Grande maneuvers, which were supposed to be a rehearsal of joint operations by the Honduran and US armies to repel an invader. The objective in reality was to prepare for an invasion of Nicaragua. The US advisors and Honduran officers were given the job of training the counterrevolutionary forces in the use of the first-class weapons that these forces were given by their imperialist patrons.

On March 18, about twelve hundred operatives under the command of the National Democratic Front (FDN) penetrated into Nicaragua from Honduras and established bases in Matagalpa and Jinotega.

On May 13, all the counterrevolutionary groups — the FDN, UDN, and ARDE — concluded a pact, signing a declaration calling for the creation of a common front, the UNICA, the Nicaraguan Union.

The pro-imperialist position of such people as Eden Pastora was confirmed by this compact between the self-proclaimed democratic counterrevolutionaries and the Somoza butchers.

One of the first actions of the counterrevolutionary alliance was to kidnap a community of 1,200 Misquito Indians who refused to support them. Similarly, they went on a campaign of burning harvests, murdering teachers, doctors, and members of the people's militia.

Thus from its very inception this counterrevolutionary front has shown by its example what sort of society it wants to establish.

The assault on Nicaragua is part and parcel of a general strategy of imperialism, which calls for fighting the revolutions in El Salvador and Guatemala and for attacks against the Grenadan government and the Cuban workers state.

The imperialists are out to crush the Central American revolution militarily. To this end, they are pouring millions of dollars into the rebuilding of the counterrevolutionary armies of El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Honduras.

They are trying to isolate the revolutionary movements from each other by mounting a counteroffensive against the revolution in each of these countries. This is the framework the intervention in Nicaragua is being carried out in.

A series of battles have been fought both in the north and south of Nicaragua, in which, once again, the Nicaraguan people and their vanguard, the FSLN, have demonstrated their revolutionary strength.

The invasion the Nicaraguan masses face has been equipped, organized, and directed by the richest country on the face of the earth. It is the duty of revolutionaries throughout the world to mobilize support for them.

It is particularly important to raise the issue of solidarity with the Central American revolution and the concrete need to oppose the invasion of Nicaragua in the mass movements that are struggling against the arms race and for peace, as well as in the important trade unions.

It is essential to promote the development of a worldwide mass movement that can stay the bloody hand of imperialism. Building such a mass movement in the US and in all other imperialist countries, is the best help we can give to the Central American revolution.

The Fourth International proclaims its total solidarity for the people of Nicaragua and their vanguard. It declares its determination to redouble its efforts in the solidarity movement with the Central American revolution.

At the same time, we wish to make known our willingness to participate in initiatives that may be taken by the FSLN to organize active solidarity with the Nicaraguan people in the fight against imperialist aggression. ■

Imperialist hands off Nicaragua!
Long live the Central American Revolution!

United Secretariat
of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

"Jobs for all", was the theme of the Western Europe - wide demonstration in Stuttgart on June 4th called by the European Confederation of trade unions.

About 50,000 workers from West Germany, France, Belgium, Austria, Britain, Switzerland, Italy, Denmark, the Netherlands, Turkey and a small number from Ireland took part. This was the first Europe-wide demonstration of this scope for more than 50 years.

The demonstration was clearly a success and an excellent first step in a Europe-wide fight for the 35-hour week. The Fourth International participated in the march and distributed a leaflet with proposals on how we can start to organise to win the 35-hour week. We print below some extracts from the leaflet:

UNEMPLOYMENT CAN BE FOUGHT AND BEATEN!

The fight against unemployment can be won if we do not let ourselves be div-

The Pope's visit to Poland highlighted once again the hypocrisy of the Catholic hierarchy. When the Pope came to Ireland a few years back his message to the struggling people of the 6 counties was to accept the oppression of British rule. He backed the Imperialist presence and denounced the violence of those who resist.

Again when he went to Latin America earlier this year he sided with the imperialist warmongers and condemned the revolutionary fighters in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. His harshest words were reserved for those left-wing priests who openly backed the struggle of the oppressed.

However, according to the capitalist media, when the Pope was in Poland he became the champion of workers rights. His references to Solidarnosc (the independent trade union) and his defence of the 1981 Gdansk agreements are trumpeted as 'daring attacks' on the Polish 'Communist' regime and presented as evidence that the church leads the Polish working class.

The real situation is considerably more complicated. We in Ireland are well aware of Church statements which talk of "freedom", "rights", "peace" and "equality" while at the same time Church leaders are supporting repression of republicans and trying to portray them as "moral lepers".

The role of the Pope and church in Poland is not all that different. Since before the martial law coup of 1981 the church has preached "moderation" and has publicly attacked calls for strikes even

Workers from across West demonstrate for the 35-hour week



'Same problems, same fight' for European workers (DR)

erted by false arguments... There is only one immediate way of fighting unemployment - the immediate and general reduction of the working week to 35 hours, without any cut in weekly wages, without any speedup, and without any worsening of working conditions, and with new hiring to match the reduction of workhours...

The year 1984 must go down in history as the year the 35-hour week was won!

Poland - Papal Hypocrisy Shows Through

after the coup - for example in November 1982 and again before May day this year. It is this "moderating" role of the church that led the Polish bureaucrats to inform the Pope in advance of the December 1981 coup that it was going to take place. In return for the Churches silence on the coup (which the Pope has never condemned) the promise was given that there would be no repression of priests.



I told you not to let him near that Polish vodka, for chrissake!

The aim of the Catholic church in Poland is the same as everywhere else; to maintain its own position and hold on to maximum influence. And as the Vatican newspaper was unwise enough to leak, if that means stabbing Lech Walesa in the back, then Amen.

The Pope and the Catholic Church without doubt have a major influence over Polish workers. But the struggle since 1980, the determination of Solidarnosc suggest that the Polish workers will not submit meekly to Jaruzelski or Archbishop Glemp. The Pope's visit gave Solidarnosc the cover to bring its militants onto the streets and to deepen the rebuilding of their movement. In the coming months the Polish workers will be pushing through the gap opened up by the Pope's visit.

JOHN MAGEE.



POBLAUGHT SHOISIALACH

SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

Paper of PEOPLES' DEMOCRACY

STOP THE SELL-OUTS! NOW IS THE TIME TO FIGHT

The trade union leadership have totally failed to protect the living standards of their members in the current pay round. Increases have consistently fallen below the rise in the cost of living and as we go to press the union leaders seem ready to accept the insulting offer of 6% for public sector workers. These paltry increases however, don't tell the full miserable story as most of the settlements involve lengthy pay pauses and are spread over periods greater than 12 months. Even when workers have secured bigger increases these are in danger of being whittled away through PRSI and taxation.

Congress and the unions entered this pay round without any strategy to

defend the living standards or jobs of workers. Instead they have preferred to rely on negotiations, the much flouted "meaningful talks" syndrome. How in hell can you have meaningful talks with those who are determined to crush you?

Make no mistake about it! The Coalition Govt. of Fine Gael/Labour have a strategy; a strategy for driving down the living standards and taking the jobs of working people.

That's the message which John Boland, Public Service Minister and Alan Dukes Finance Minister have been doling out in the pay talks. Pay increases will have to be paid for by job losses. If that wasn't clear enough the "Irish Times" spelt it out on July 4th on the eve of the Annual

Conference of the ICTU:

"One certainty hung over these last public service pay talks; the service is for the chop."

The Irish Times went on to warn that

"subsequent cuts will be all the more severe."

The present dismal performance of the ICTU and union leaderships has been seen before; their disgraceful sell-outs in the PAYE and PRSI struggles.

Working people cannot allow them to continue; we have to force the leaders into action. We need a national plan of action against falling living standards and job loss. There must be an end to all talks with the Government and the ICTU should withdraw from all joint consultative



bodies and from the labour court. We need a campaign of industrial action to win the remaining wage claims. Now is the time to fight!

The first step must be to bring together all those workers who have shown a willingness to fight, to work out a strategy that can defeat the austerity polic-

ies of the Coalition. Trade unionist should support the fight-back conference being organised for the Autumn.

KEVIN Mc CRACKEN.

DIVORCE SPRING STYLE

The love affair between the media and Labour leader Dick Spring has broken out again. Dick had proved so successful at being 'his master's voice' in the Coalition and backing the capitalist austerity offensive that people were beginning to forget that Labour were in Coalition!

Now Dick Spring has made a statement asserting his party's formal position against the ban on divorce. He was apparently trying to outflank the Oireachtas Commission on Marital breakdown. As a result Fianna Fail threaten to leave the cttee and Fitzgerald rapped Dick over the knuckles.

All this has enabled the media to portray Spring as a political radical, but cynics have pointed out that all the major points of Labour's manifesto have been dropped as the price of coalition and that when the Labour party is committed to making workers pay for the capitalist crisis the only radical gestures that it can afford, are the ones that don't cost anything.

Divorce campaigners shouldn't hold their breath waiting for the labour party to act. They must build support from workers - not the fake radicals of the labour leadership.

Record Review 'Bad News'

A 'new Wave' rock single that's political and about Ireland sounds pretty grim. We automatically expect a bunch of dedicated lefties strumming a guitar. If we find that the record also includes clips of Belfast demonstrations and Margaret Thatcher speaking, the temptation is to walk away quickly.

Those who stay to listen are in for a surprise. Not only does the record have a real political message - the H Blocks, prisons, the 'public relations' face of

the RUC and the censorship of the British press - but it is produced with real technical virtuosity and artistic merit and at only 80p is well worth a buy!

The musical aspect of the record is excellent and it seems a pity to cavil at the politics. However, the actual experience of H block cuts across the conclusion of the track 'What you find in any prison', that all prisoners are political. And the 'H Block' tracks' suggestion that

'H Block ... Thatcher ... Benn ... H Block They're all the bloody same' is clearly nonsense. Still, if you want to hear something different then you should buy this record.

Available from :

Just Books, Winetavern St. Belfast 2
Horizon Books, Avoca Park Andersonstown, Belfast 12
Plough Books, 3 Belvedere Place, Dublin.

The records are on sale as part of a fund-raising drive by Just Books for their 'Prisoners Book Fund' Also on sale is a selection of 8 postcards @15p each