



# SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

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## PARTITION, UNEMPLOYMENT, WOMENS RIGHTS....

The FORUM for a NEW IRELAND has accomplished nothing for unity, after almost a years work in the last month it has become nothing more than a platform for stooges of the British Government and fellow travellers of the Northern loyalists. Not surprisingly people like Sir Charles Carter, head of the Northern Ireland Economic Council and John Biggs-Davison of the British Monday Club have brought the message to Dublin that British rule ain't so bad and anyway unity won't work.

'Look, along with our good friends in Dublin we are taking a real step towards a United Ireland'. It was hoped that this would block the rise of Sinn Fein.

But, as SOCIALIST REPUBLIC argued at the time, the Forum had a much more dangerous goal - not advancing towards a United Ireland but instead building up the barriers to Irish unity and starting to popularise the idea that far from breaking the connection with England, the future for Ireland as a whole is in closer relationship with Britain and its imperialist allies.

The Forum was established to ease the pressure on the S.D.L.P. at the time of the elections to the Northern Stormont Assembly. It was to allow the S.D.L.P. to say to nationalist voters -

For all the splutterings of Charles Haughey and his expressed reluctance to accept that a United Ireland won't work the Dublin politicians are

delighted with the evidence of the tuppence halfpenny academics and politicians who take on the role as apologists for the Northern Loyalists. Haughey, Fitzgerald, Spring et al have no interest in seriously pushing forward towards a United Ireland.

One reason for this is that the Dublin politicians know the truth - a United Ireland in which

the capitalist class North and South held power under licence of the British ruling class won't work. Removing the border but leaving the same class that has made bankrupt economies in both the 6 and 26 counties would change nothing.

But if that class was removed from power - if power was in the hands of the working people, if

Ireland was to have real national independence then that would be a different story. Haughey and Fitzgerald know this too and that is why along with the Forum and talk about the problems of a new Ireland we still have the old policies that both Stormont and Leinster House have always relied on - repression, attacks on democratic rights, on trade unions, on the womens

movement.

Working people have every interest in building a New Ireland - united and independent. We will have to organise ourselves to fight for it.

**UNITED OPPOSITION TO THE FORUM IN DUBLIN CASTLE SHOULD BE PART OF THAT FIGHT.**



The Forum was established to save John Hume's skin and prove that he was for a united Ireland. All we can say is that he has been working damn hard with his pal Paisley to prop up partition with American capital. The fact that his visit undermined U:S: trade unionists fighting discrimination in the North just didn't bother Mr. Hume.

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Peoples Democracy was born 15 years ago this month. On the centre pages we print two articles: the first by Michael Farrell looks at the setting-up of the organisation while the second by John McNulty traces PD's political development, from the militant wing of the civil rights movement to the Irish Section of the Fourth International.

# EDITORIAL

## 'STOP THE SHOW TRIALS'

SOCIALIST REPUBLIC fully supports the 'Stop the Show Trials' campaign launched at the Dungannon Conference. The 'paid informer' is one of the most dangerous attacks made by British imperialism on the nationalist movement in the last 15 years. It seeks to throw the resistance to British rule into chaos by sowing suspicion, mistrust and demoralisation throughout the movement. It has already scored some success.

The 'money for perjury' tactic has the full backing of the British Cabinet. Northern Ireland Secretary, Jim Prior, has made it clear that the British Tories are expecting to reap bumper dividends. The 'show trials' that have been organised along with tactics like the 'shoot to kill' policy are designed to intimidate and terrorise the anti-unionist people of the six-counties into retreating from the support they have given to the nationalist movement.

The British will not abandon this tactic without a mighty struggle. Already they have been promised the full support of the Coalition government in the 26-counties. The 'Stop the Show Trials' campaign will have to win the support of all those who have no interest in propping up 'British Justice'.

The campaign must rest its hopes on the mass action of the working people of Ireland. They have no sympathy for 'the informer'. To bring the working people of Ireland into the campaign demands that it is organised in an open and democratic way. The task for the anti-imperialist movement is to fashion new doors through which working people can come into the struggle not rebuild old barriers to exclude them.

The Dungannon Conference failed in this task. The Campaign must find a way!

Over three hundred delegates packed St. Patrick's Hall in Dungannon on Sunday, October 1st to combat the rise of the 'paid informer'. This was the first major gathering of the anti-imperialist movement since the end of the hunger strike and represented a step forward in the building of a united movement against Britain's latest offensive in the North.

The conference agreed to set up a campaign under the banner 'STOP THE SHOW TRIALS' and to try and bring into the campaign all those forces opposed to the 'paid Perjury' which passes for 'justice' in the Diplock courts. One of the central demands of the new campaign will be for the release of all those imprisoned on the evidence of the hired perjurers.

### CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

In discussing the strategy for building the campaign the Conference grasped some of the lessons of the hunger strike. The Conference rejected attempts to limit the campaign to pressure group activities such as publicity and lobbying, in favour of a mass action perspective. Nor was there much support for the ritual sloganising of the sectarians around calls for a general strike. There was a general acceptance that a lot of effort, a lot of explanation of the issues involved and a good deal of organisation was required to build a real campaign which could attract the range of forces necessary to halt the show trials.

Unfortunately none of the resolutions which would give concrete expression to this general perspective were discussed, being referred instead to the committee elected at the end of the conference. These resolutions pointed to the need for information to be distributed for the building of local area committees, of the campaign being taken into the trade unions and workplaces and the need to mobilise international support.

That there was no time to discuss these resolutions, really the vital nuts and bolts of any campaign, resulted from the need to give time to debating some central differences among campaign supporters - on questions of critical importance to the success of the campaign against the show trials.

Most important was the debate on the structure of the new campaign. While there was a large measure of agreement that what we needed was a broad, united campaign of mass action the conference refused to adopt a structure for the campaign which would have allowed this. A resolution from Bernadette McAliskey which Peoples Democracy supported, to allow the affiliation of political, trade union and other groups with representation on the committee was defeated. The Conference here took its lead from Sinn Fein which must raise questions about the seriousness of Sinn Fein's commitment to united action. The fact that the Sinn Fein position was only carried on a recount vote by the narrow margin of 6 votes emphasises the importance of this issue for the future of the campaign.

# STOP THE SHOW TRIALS!

John McNulty

One immediate result of this decision was the announcement by the IRSP that while it would continue to support the campaign it was refusing nomination to the committee. A second result was the composition of the committee elected which by no stretch of the imagination could be considered to be broad-based. Clearly when it came to the election Sinn Fein in great part voted as a bloc.

Hard as it may be for Sinn Fein to accept, the success of this struggle lies in our ability to draw new forces into the campaign and into its leadership. Sinn Fein and the campaign as a whole needs to reconsider this decision.

This is made even more necessary by the attacks on the new campaign coming from Father Faul and the SDLP. Faul didn't even wait for the Dungannon Conference to launch allegations about Sinn Fein taking over the Relatives for Justice organisation and setting up a 'Provo front'. The campaign is in real danger of falling into the trap set by right-wing clerics and the SDLP. Only the broadest and most democratic of campaigns can overcome this.

The Dungannon Conference drew support mainly from the six counties. This is acceptable for an initial conference but there should be no delay in driving the campaign into the South. If we learned anything from the hunger strike it was surely that we needed the active support of working people throughout the country if the attacks of British imperialism are to be resisted.



# STEVE BUNDRED INTERVIEW

## P.D SEMINAR

Peoples Democracy organised a seminar in Dublin on the 18th and 19th of September on the theme "Socialists, Republicans and the New Ireland". Among the speakers were Matt Merrigan, Southern Region Secretary of the ATGWU, Joe Duffy, President of USI,

Bernadette MacAliskey, Michael Farrell and Greater London Councillor Steve Bundred who spoke at the seminar on the solidarity movement in Britain. While he was here he gave the following interview to Socialist Republic.

SR: Have you noticed a change in the Irish solidarity movement in Britain over the last couple of years?

SB: Yes. Before the hunger strike the solidarity movement was to a considerable extent confined to small fringe far left groups. There was one group in the Labour Party who did some good work but their impact was minimal. The groups outside the Labour Party were

bogged down by their attitude to the armed struggle. The hunger strike marked a new stage and gave new impetus to thinking on Ireland inside the Labour Party and within British politics as a whole. The hunger strike marked a decisive period. It gave a new lease of life to the Labour Committee on Ireland. The events which have happened since the Sinn Fein Assembly election

success, Ken Livingstone's visit, Gerry Adams success in West Belfast and his visit to London - all these events have a cumulative effect.

Now there is much more work being done, particularly in the Trade Unions. Trade Union work has been difficult because of the Loyalist membership of some of the Unions. However there have been fringe meetings on Ireland at major Trade Union conferences this year. Although a large number of constituency parties have a troops out position, no major Trade Union has that position. Work needs to be done. The most pressing problem for the working class is unemployment.

SR: How important is the question of Ireland for the Labour left, for those around Ken Livingstone and Tony Benn?

SB: Changing the position of the British Labour Party is a central demand. But the party is moving to the right and we will be on the defensive, so I don't see any immediate prospects of a shift.

SR: What will happen at the Labour Party conference. Would Gerry Adams presence to speak at a fringe meeting be important?

SB: Gerry Adams electoral success and all these things have a cumulative effect. At the public meeting at which Gerry Adams spoke in London, earlier this year, there were 500 people unable to get in. I hope there will be further meetings and contacts between British people and people in the six counties. The London meeting marked a decisive advance. However at this stage whether Gerry Adams speaks at the Labour Party conference

is not of great importance.

SR: What sort of discussion will there be on Ireland at the conference?

SB: There are many motions on the agenda on Ireland. Whether they will be voted on remains to be seen. Tony Benn is a delegate from Kensington Labour Party. That constituency party has a troops out motion. Tony Benn met Gerry Adams and was very impressed with him. It will be very important if he speaks out on Ireland as he is seen to be the leader of the British left. He would be seen publicly in a very emotive forum - it would be his first speech to the Labour Party since losing his seat - to come out for troops out of Ireland. Tony Benn has changed his view on Ireland since the hunger strike, Sinn

Fein's election success and his two meetings with Gerry Adams. He has said publicly that he regrets his former views in favour of the British Labour Party organising in the six counties. If he speaks it will give encouragement to those already working on Ireland and will encourage those who are starting to question British policy on Ireland.

SR: How much attention is paid by the British left to events in the 26 counties?

SB: Not a lot. Events would be viewed with profound dismay. The Amendment result would be viewed with alarm. It will be seen as an unwillingness on the part of 26 county people to break with the clerical nature of the state. The Labour left would be very critical of Sinn Fein's position on the Amendment.



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# LIMERICK FIGHT WATER CHARGES

A campaign against the new water charges is getting underway in Limerick, led by the Southill Residents' and Tenants' Association. The Association has condemned the City Managers threat to bring in a £50 Water rate as 'nothing short of double taxation'.

The decision to allow local authorities to levy extra charges was taken by Dick Spring leader of the 'Labour Party' ministers in the coalition. Spring claims this is simply 'more local democracy'.

Of course, the cost of this 'local democracy' varies from place to place depending on the shortfall in the annual allocation from central funds to the particular local authority. How Spring can square this talk of local democracy with his decision to give City and Town Managers the power to introduce charges without recourse to locally elected councillors defies reason.

Joe Harrington P.R.O. of the Southill Tenants Association spoke to Socialist Republic:

'Latest figures show that £1 billion in uncollected taxes remains in the hands of the wealthy, this need not be the case. To go along with this proposed charge would be to help perpetuate a grossly unfair tax system. Any money raised by the new levy will not go to improving services but to paying off bank interest. We are convinced that the levy would not remain at £50 for long. Once the principle has been established it would like all other taxes, be increased each year. We will be calling a public meeting in Southill at which our Committee will be recommending non-payment of the charges.

The stand taken by the Tenants Association is in stark contrast to the manoeuvres of the Limerick City Councillors. While they all have formally opposed the charge, some have qualified their objections by suggesting that the new charge might be more acceptable if it did

not apply to those on welfare. Most have proposed other forms of local tax - Disc parking, Motor tax or a charge for the BBC TV signal being deflected from Keeper Hill. None seriously challenge the cut-backs in Local Authority financing.

For the unions this is also a vital question. After years of campaigning for a fair tax system the PAYE worker is paying an even slightly higher proportion of all taxes paid. Trade unionists must refuse to co-operate with moves to bring in this charge. The LGPSU already has such a policy but it must be put to better effect.

The struggle against an unjust tax system must recommence with an active rejection of this attempted double taxation. If we do not stop things getting worse on the taxation front how can we ever hope to start making things better?

## Gardai Attack Pickets

The SPUCERS aren't alone in feeling the force of the Offences Against the State Act in the past few weeks. Striking CIE engineering operatives were batoned by gardai while on the picket at Alexandra Road depot in Dublin. The pickets were seeking to stop CIE managers from driving oil tankers out of the depot. The pickets sat down on the road and instantly the gardai started to punch and kick them. Four pickets were arrested and have been charged with causing malicious damage or assault on the gardai! The strike committee have protested the arrests and blamed CIE for creating the confrontation by its use of scab labour.

Anne Brady

## Shelbourne Lock-out!

Over 200 workers at the Shelbourne Hotel have been locked out by management since Friday 2nd September 1983. The dispute began when a barman was dismissed 'because of his attitude'. The ITGWU workers then walked out in protest.

Trust House Forte, the new owners, announced the closure of the hotel and each member was informed that there was no work available. The workers have been locked out by one of the most notorious anti-union multinationals in an attempt to break union organisation. As a union spokesperson put it - 'We have battled hard and long to organise hotel workers in Dublin we cannot allow ourselves to be undermined in 1983.'

Anne Brady

## Shop Stewards Fight Sackings

The two senior NUPE stewards at Musgrave Park Hospital, Belfast, Danny Deedes and Charlie Currie, are to fight their sacking by the Eastern Health and Social Services Board. The 2 stewards were among 20 hospital workers summarily dismissed for attending a union meeting. 18 of the workers have since been re-instated following strike action but the board is determined not to let the 2 stewards return. The September monthly meeting of the board was picketed by members of NUPE and the white collar union NIPSA. Both stewards told a picket rally that with the Tories privatisation threats all jobs, not just theirs, are at stake. The Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish congress of Trades Unions has called for a full public enquiry into industrial relations at the hospital.

JOHN MAGEE

## DUNLOP MUST WIN!

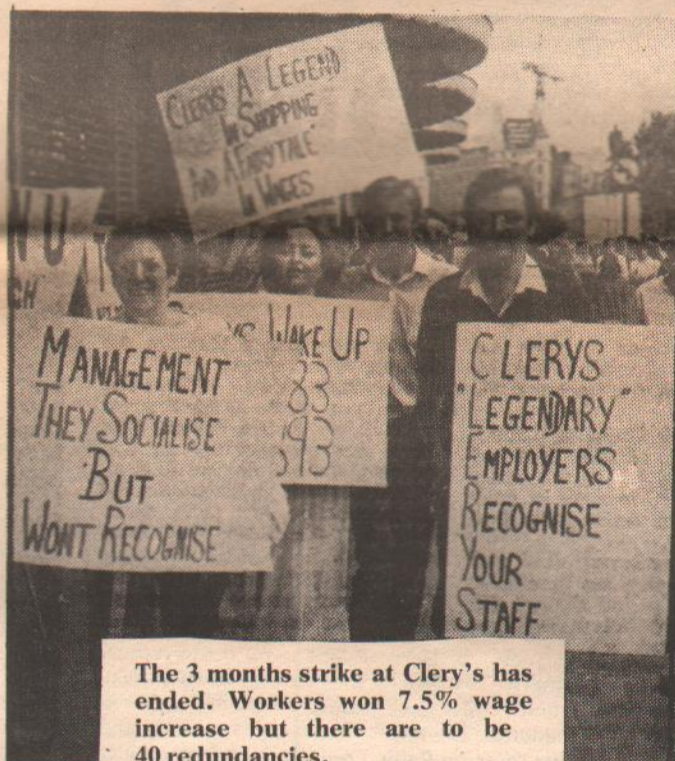
Workers at the Dunlop Tyre plant in Cork are continuing their occupation of the plant and the firms head office in Dublin in protest at the company's closure terms. Efforts by the government appointed mediator John Horgan have so far (10.10.83.) failed to shift the company and a drawn-out struggle is being forecast by the workers' union the I.T.G.W.U.

The Dunlop closure serves as a warning to the employees of all multinationals. Despite the fact that the closure would throw 680 people out of work and have 'an almost catastrophic effect on the city' where unemployment is running at 22% the Coalition has weighed in to attack the workers and try and pressure them to surrender.

Fitzgerald has blamed the Dunlop workers for the laying-off of 550 workers at the Ford motor plant in Cork and hinted that Fords would be justified in pulling out as well. The Dunlop struggle, where the workers bent over backwards to co-operate with the firm, simply highlights the contempt which multinationals have for their workforce and the refusal of the Dublin government to control these enterprises.

The Dunlop workers are getting nowhere with their demand for better redundancy pay. They should stay in occupation and fight the closure, demand that the government nationalise the plant and call for industrial action by the whole trade union movement in support.

John Magee



The 3 months strike at Clery's has ended. Workers won 7.5% wage increase but there are to be 40 redundancies.

# EDUCATION FOR SOCIALISTS

# SECTARIANISM

## Joe Craig

Saying you are opposed to sectarianism is one of the easiest and most popular things to do but the reason it is so easy is that most of those who claim to be fighting sectarianism aren't really confronting it at all.

Recent events show that sectarianism is as important an issue today as ever. We have seen a blatant example of it in the Richardsons dispute where Unionist politician Fraser Agnew has blamed a "disruptive element" for a strike against a derisory pay offer. At Moy Meats where Catholic workers refused to work while a Union Jack flew over

the factory, the trade union representing the workers ran away from the dispute and refused to support the removal of the flag. It is these same trade union leaders who claim that the trade unions are free from the sectarianism which afflicts the rest of society. Recent reports highlighted in last month's SOCIALIST REPUBLIC explode this myth.

Discrimination against Catholics is as rife in northern industry as it ever was and instead of the trade unions in Ireland challenging this, the pressure for change has come from American trade unions.

For trade union leaders and so called socialists like the Workers Party

fighting sectarianism means uniting Protestant and Catholic workers around "bread and butter issues" but really challenging sectarianism means fighting for equality between Protestant and Catholic workers. This means positive discrimination in favour of Catholics applying for jobs. This isn't sectarianism in reverse because if real equality is to be achieved it means making up for decades of past discrimination. Formal equality doesn't mean real equality, after all haven't Catholics been formally equal with Protestants for the past 60 years.

Does this mean we are offering nothing to Protestant workers? This

is the usual accusation from the same trade union leaders who have presided over tens of thousands of workers both Protestant and Catholic who have been made unemployed. It is these misleaders who have offered no plan to fight back against unemployment and the cuts for any workers. As Marx said in the "Communist Manifesto" socialists have no interest separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole. This is why socialists demand the ending of unemployment by the introduction of a 35 hour week with no loss in pay and a massive increase in useful public spending to give unemployed workers real jobs. Its a lie that there isn't enough

money, the banks are making enormous profits and Thatcher doesn't have any problem in finding the money when it comes to the Falklands.

Some organisations like "Militant" say we shouldn't raise "sectarian issues" like demanding a united Ireland. In reality this isn't a sectarian issue but a democratic one and it is difficult to see how people claiming to be Marxist can hope to achieve political power without standing up for democratic rights. There is nothing sectarian in demanding the unity of ALL Irish workers, north and south. We should remember that it is Britain which has created sectarianism and divides Irish workers and it is not

something inherent in the Irish working class itself. The division between Catholic and Protestant workers is maintained by the Protestant monopoly of skilled jobs and the small but politically important difference between their pay and unemployment rates. Unity can only be achieved by removing that which divides - British imperialism. This is in the interests of all Irish workers for it is Britain which is the defender of capitalism inside Ireland - the same capitalism which throws Protestant as well as Catholics out of work. Really opposing sectarianism means defending real equality between Catholic and Protestant workers and fighting for a united socialist republic.



The PEOPLES DEMOCRACY was founded 15 years ago on October 9th 1968. Today P.D. is still battling away in the struggle against imperialism and for a Workers Republic in Ireland. How did it all begin? Below Mike Farrell recalls the early development of the organisation.

1968 saw the coincidence of a world-wide upsurge of radicalism by students and working people with a new awakening by the oppressed Catholic minority in the six counties. It was the year of the May uprising in Paris, student revolt in Germany and the USA and of the Prague spring and the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia. It was also the year when the slowly germinating Civil Rights movement in the North began to take to the streets.

In June 1968 a Young Socialist Alliance was formed in Belfast by young people influenced by the semi-marxist 'New Left' ideas then in vogue. It was concerned with both local and international issues. During the summer it held protests about the war in Vietnam and bad housing in Belfast and Derry. One fateful weekend in August the YSA held a march in Belfast about the invasion of Czechoslovakia and then went to Coalisland for the first Civil Rights march in the North.



On October 5th 40 YSA supporters went to the Civil Rights march in Derry and were in the front rank when the RUC baton charged the protestors. Four days later 3,000 outraged students tried to march to the City Hall in Belfast but were stopped by the RUC and turned back. The students were frustrated and demoralised. YSA members took the initiative and proposed the establishment of a permanent Civil Rights organisation. The Peoples Democracy was born.

The P.D. was a mass democratic organisation modelled on the student-worker assemblies formed in Paris earlier that year. The structure had its drawbacks, the organisation was naive and confused at times but it had all the vigour, energy and flair of the Paris upsurge. The YSA hard-core also gave it a leaven of tough determination and the political influence of the YSA in the looser body grew rapidly.

P.D. quickly became the driving force of the Civil

Rights struggle organising or participating in countless protests, turning out a constant stream of leaflets and posters, even occupying the Northern Parliament buildings at Stormont on October 24th. This ceaseless activity which was an essential part of the Civil Rights campaign would continue for the next two years but it was in 1969 that P.D. assumed a new role which was to be one of its major contributions to the struggle over the next 15 years.



At the end of 1968 Terence O'Neill introduced a few half-hearted reforms and called for a halt to Civil Rights demonstrations. The respectable middle-class leaders of the Civil Rights movement were only too happy to comply because they were frightened by the mass movement they had unleashed. The P.D. refused to accept this squalid deal and went ahead with the Burntollet march which effectively exposed the sectarian nature of the six-county state and its so-called security forces. That put paid to the attempts to de-mobilise the mass movement.

A month later O'Neill made a clever attempt to confuse the issue and divide the Civil Rights movement by calling a General Election in which 'moderate' unionist candidates sought the support of the Catholic minority against 'hard-liners'. Once again P.D. took the initiative to foil his strategy by nominating candidates who counterposed a militant Civil Rights programme to the illusory choice between two brands of Unionism. The 8 P.D. candidates got 23,000 votes between them, an effective mandate to carry on the campaign.

By now the YSA had dissolved itself into P.D. reckoning that P.D. could soon be won over to the full Y.S.A. programme and P.D. was playing a new role, one it was to assume many times in the years ahead. At crucial moments in the struggle P.D. would intervene to raise new demands or guide the movement

in new directions which would strike ever nearer the roots of imperialist control in the North and change the movement from a reformist one into one whose demands could only be met by revolution.

P.D. was also beginning to raise issues which would become ever more important as the years went by. In April 1969 it held a cross border march to Dublin demanding Civil Rights North and South. The march was a bit disorganised and its politics confused but it was the first major attempt to link the struggle in both parts of the country. Around the same time P.D. was strenuously arguing the need to broaden the Civil Rights agitation to include social and economic questions like bad housing and unemployment.

In August 1969 the Stormont Government, unable to contain the mass upsurge, unleashed the RUC, B Specials and Paisleyite gangs to attack the Catholic ghettos of Belfast and Derry. The people responded by sealing off the areas with barricades - The No Go Areas - P.D. immediately went to work behind the barricades. In Derry P.D. members worked with Eamonn McCann and Bernadette Devlin. In Belfast they ran Radio Free Belfast and produced a daily resistance paper in co-operation with the Republican dominated Citizen's Defence Committee though in Sept. they eventually closed down the radio and withdrew from producing the paper because of Republican attempts at political censorship. The radio and the paper had done a lot to boost morale in the ghettos however and the experience gave P.D. its first real roots in West Belfast.

PEOPLES Democracy has undergone a steady political evolution since its beginnings as the radical spearhead of the Civil Rights Movement to its role today as a

Revolutionary Marxist organisation Below JOHN McANULTY notes some of the major political developments in P.D. in its 15 year history.

Peoples Democracy at the time of its formation, 15 years ago, burst on to the Irish political scene as a totally new phenomenon. It didn't fit into the traditional conceptions of the British and Unionists and they initially had great difficulty in dealing with us. It also caused some confusion among anti-imperialists when they tried to fit us into the traditional mould, and to some extent there is still uncertainty about our place and role among the anti-imperialist movement.

#### OUR ROLE

Yet Michael Farrell, in his graphic account of the formation of P.D., clearly set out the main elements of our political development. We were part of the International Youth radicalisation of the 1960s. We were firmly linked to the new growth of revolutionary socialism on an international level, following the fragmenting and weakening of the stalinist hold on the working class and through the Young Socialist Alliance P.D. is able to trace its roots back through a series of small revolutionary groups to the revolutionary socialism of James Connolly. That's the tradition we try to represent today, not in rhetorical gestures, but in a sober analysis of class society and in action to change society.

In the early organisation we defined ourselves as socialists without any clear idea of what that meant. We did know that we should identify with the working class and we quickly saw, through our work in the Civil Rights movement that a workers unity that glossed over the oppression of Nationalist workers wasn't worth having. We also saw quickly that a reform of the six county state was not possible and that revolution was necessary.



has been both our strength and our weakness. It meant that we made a lot of mistakes - for example in initially looking for workers unity within the six county state. But what we learnt, we learnt well. We rediscovered for ourselves the main principle of Connolly's socialism - that to be a socialist in Ireland you must be an anti-imperialist and that most consistent anti-imperialist fighters were always willing to unite in action with other sections



But we didn't have the benefit of a developed programme and a strong foundation in political theory. We had to learn from experience and that

of the anti-imperialist movement and with a rounded understanding of the political, social and economic aspects of imperialist domination.

With this understanding we first came into conflict with the middle class leadership of the Civil Rights movement and their reformist fellow travellers in the Official Republicans (now the Workers Party) and the Communist Party. We rejected their 'stages theory' that reform in the North would be followed at long intervals first by a United Ireland and then by Socialism. We developed our own understanding of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution - seeing that any movement strong enough to defeat imperialism and establish a United Ireland would move on to win a Workers Republic. It was this understanding that led to the fusion of P.D. and the Movement for a Socialist Republic in 1977 and to the fused organisation joining the World revolutionary movement of the Fourth International in 1981.



# Of ES RACY



## MASS STRUGGLE

Although P.D. is a small revolutionary group the fact that we have a clear political perspective has allowed us to play a real role in the development of the mass struggle. This was shown when we broke with the C.R.A. twice, with O'Neill through the Burntollet march. When the C.R.A. stood aside we organised the first mass protest against internment. Again when we broke with the C.R.A. to form parliaments of the streets around the Northern Resistance Movement, during this period we were able to begin to extend the struggle to the South, first with a cross-border march and later with a series of marches to the Curragh, exposing the Southern state's collaboration in repression.

The N.R.M. collapsed following secret discussions between Republicans and the British. (The Republicans admitted that this secrecy was a mistake several years later) When the P.D. attempted to continue the protests two leading members, Mike Farrell and Tony Canavan, were jailed and went on hunger strike. The campaign around this made it possible for P.D. to forge a new unity around the Political Hostages Release Committee (P.H.R.C.).

The P.H.R.C. ran into serious trouble when Sinn Fein withdrew, alleging that P.D. had too great an influence in it. There followed a long period of downturn and fragmentation. In 1976 we reassessed the situation and agreed internally that the British offensive against the H-Block prisoners would become a central issue. We fought hard to get a campaign and then within the campaign we fought again to get the sort of open 32-county struggle that the H-Block/Armagh movement was eventually able to form.

It was during this period that we argued for an electoral intervention. First around the 1978 British General Election and then with Bernadette McAliskey in the E.E.C. election. Even during the hunger strike itself we had to break with the campaign to stand candidates in the 1981 Local Government elections. The Republicans eventual acceptance of these arguments in the North led to a massive advance for the struggle. But the Repub-

licans failure to unite with P.D. and Bernadette in two successive General elections in the South resulted in the gains of the H-Block struggle being largely frittered away.

## THE BATTLE OF IDEAS

P.D. has never been simply an agitational organisation. The success of propaganda and of the ideological battles is marked by the way in which they are generally accepted today. How many ordinary people believe today that the Republicans are green fascists? We fought this battle with the Workers Party at a time when the Provisionals were abstaining from political debate. Do you think that there are 'two nations' in Ireland? We fought against that concept in 1970. Is there an organic link between the National struggle and Socialism? Hardly anyone thought so when P.D. was founded.



We fought to defend the anti-imperialist movement but we also fought within it to change the consciousness of militants. We argued against the illusions of the Republican right-wing in loyalism and their belief that sections of the U.D.A. and U.V.F. could adopt a progressive role - in fact the concept of federalism was recently rejected by Sinn Fein. We argued against the ambiguity of Eire Nua and for an unashamedly socialist

programme. We fought in both parts of the country to win Republicans to a role in the Womens Movement and in workers struggles.

ed power of the working class. We see the Republicans belief in militarism as often cutting across the work needed to mobilise the mass struggle.

Later we attempted to build a unity of socialists on an all-Ireland basis. In 1970 we built a Socialist Labour Alliance with 26-county socialists but this

new importance alongside the National Question. Anti-imperialists have to be able to provide leadership in all these sections.



## THE WORKING CLASS

But the history of P.D. is not a history of uninterrupted advance. In the '70s we relied too heavily on a purely political analysis and tended to ignore underlying economic changes. As a result we over-estimated the autonomy of Loyalism from Britain. Following the 1974 Loyalist strike we saw a danger of a Fascist takeover and began to stress more and more the need for military defence.

The Loyalist takeover never came, and when we began to adjust our political strategy to take account of the reality there was a serious division in our organisation and almost half the membership split away. However the long-term results of the split were healthy. We were able to go back to political first principles and re-state our programme differences with Republicanism - our belief that the major force for revolution came from the activity of the masses and that the driving force within this mass struggle could only be the organis-

At the height of the struggle in 1970, P.D., alongside a high level of activity in the Civil Rights campaign, launched a series of campaigns on economic and social issues. One campaign in particular, against higher bus fares in Belfast, attracted wide support from unionist workers and led to an R.U.C. baton charge against a mass demonstration of unionist and republican workers in Belfast city centre.



These experiences and later experiences in the Trade Union movement, showed that such a joint mobilisation was possible. It also showed that it could not be easily generalised to change the consciousness of workers and challenge State power.

collapsed under the pressures of internment and the confusion of many leftists about the significance of the National Question. We went through a similar experience with the Socialist Labour Party more recently and found that no real socialist unity could be built without an acceptance of the centrality of the National Question.

All these experiences reinforced our conviction that revolutionary socialists in Ireland had to be part of the anti-imperialist movement. Questions of Trade Unionism and women's rights, we tried to develop in collaborative debate with Republican militants. So we used our paper to engage Sinn Fein militants in debate and have always worked for united action of socialists and republicans.

## TODAY

Conditions today have changed. As the imperialist crisis has deepened so too the imperialist offensive has broadened and economic and social struggles have assumed a

The Peoples Democracy of 1968 played a heroic role, but that loose association of activists could not have survived the 15 years of struggle. The Peoples Democracy of today strives to build a professional organisation of revolutionary militants, and has its own unique place in Irish political life. We stand as the inheritors of Connolly's revolutionary Socialism. Though our membership of the Fourth International we also stand in an unbroken line of revolutionary class fighters stretching back through Lenin and Trotsky and the Bolsheviks to the founders of the international workers movement, Marx and Engels. We are confident in the integrity of that position and its role in the defeat of imperialism and the construction of world socialism.



**JOIN  
NOW!**

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

**6, avoca park,  
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# Women are Born-Fighters!

It was recognised at the wind up conference of the Anti-Amendment Campaign that the fight for women's rights is still in its early stages. The fact that the amendment was put at all shows that the conservatives in Ireland are preparing to see a return to the situation of women being second class citizens tied to the kitchen sinks and responsible only as mothers and wives.

There is little solace in the fact that 30% of those who voted rejected the amendment. The problem is that women are being pushed out of any central role in society all the time. At work they are generally in less well paid jobs. They are subjected to all kinds of harassment, they are often passed over for promotion in favour of less experienced men, not to mention the abuse they might receive for being 'mere women.' Those who work in the home are isolated from any kind of stimulus and consequently have little confidence in dealing with issues outside of their environment. Young women, including those who are studying, are often economically forced to live at home and so are not able to have the opportunity for developing independently of family pressures. It is all these layers of women who are going to determine how successful the fight for women's independence is.

The struggles to get the kind of healthcare and contraception women need and the options for divorce and abortion can only be won with the participation of women in all parts of society.

The anti-amendment campaign might have succeeded in stopping the rot had it built links with the women workers and the workers movement, if it had forces who are already in the forefront fighting against repression and austerity: i.e. the anti-imperialist movement, women's movement and the workers movement.

The last 10 years of women's struggles have shown that unless there are broad mass mobilisations the reforms that are gained are only cosmetic. The leadership of the AAC did not prioritise the involvement of the workers movement and consequently had a middle class profile and content which will probably fragment now that the amendment is written into the constitution.

However significant gains were made during the campaign: the broader forces active on democratic rights, growth of the feminist layer in the women's movement, extension of pro-choice forces and a bigger pro-divorce lobby, these gains must be consolidated.

The immediate fight is to mobilise the 'NO!' vote behind the Divorce campaign. This campaign can be built on a democratic and mass action orientation.

The campaign around the right to choose should continue to deepen the awareness already growing by linking up with forces on an all Ireland scale, building international links with pro-choice layers around the world and continuing with initiatives like the international tribunal.

Feminists were the backbone of the AAC, and point up the basis for rebuilding the women's movement. There is much experience from the battles that have been fought and much can be gained from discussion of a strategy in the '80's. In the coming months P.D. will be supporting the holding of a conference to do just that.

SUE ESTERSON.



## AAC WIND-UP CONFERENCE

About 130 delegates attended the post-referendum conference of the Anti-Amendment Campaign held on Saturday September 24. The delegates voted to disband the campaign but agreed to maintain a monitoring network in order to ensure that any attempts to intimidate existing services over the next two months will be resisted. There will be regional discussions during the next two months to de-

cide how and in what direction the forces behind the AAC should organise. This will be followed by a national conference to discuss and implement these decisions.

An open discussion following the conference attracted some 250 people to talk about the way forward. The discussion centred on divorce, contraception rights, and the right to choose.

Sue Esterson

## DIVORCE ACTION GROUP

The Divorce Action Group is to establish constituency groups to organise the campaign for divorce rights. This was announced at a meeting in Dublin on Wednesday, 21 September 1983, attended by about 200 people. The turn-out surprised the organisers of the meeting, who had booked a room unable to fit in such numbers.

There was a good deal of enthusiasm at the meeting on the need to get the campaign onto the streets but the platform was more cautious and proposals from PD to capitalise on the Amendment campaign by holding a major demonstration before Christmas was rejected. Instead, it was decided to restrict the campaign to a series of public meetings.

The timid approach of the Divorce Action Group will not be enough to make any real headway in the fight for divorce rights. Opinion polls have suggested that up to two thirds of voters are in favour of legal divorce but there is a real danger that the Dail will settle for a half-measure such as civil nullity. Only by taking the campaign onto the streets and into the communities can this danger be averted.

PAT CORCORAN



## RIGHT TO CHOOSE

Anne Speed

'Irish Women and Abortion' is to be the theme of a conference organised by the Right to Choose Campaign in the near future. This was decided at the Campaign's Dublin Conference held on October 1st. More than 100 activists from around the 26 counties attended the conference which heard strong criticism of those right-

wing forces in the Anti-Amendment Campaign who went out of their way to denounce abortion rights.

Unfortunately debate on future strategy revealed a good deal of confusion about the role of the Right to Choose Campaign. The conference adopted a

general resolution covering all aspects of sexual repression and women's health. For some this pointed out the need for a vigorous propaganda campaign on the right to choose but others had in mind a multi-issue campaign with the organisation of local action groups.

A PEOPLES DEMOCRACY

proposal to emphasise abortion rights and independent political action to win support in the workers and anti-imperialist movements was not accepted.

The debates at this conference highlight the need for a broad Women's Conference to discuss the way forward for Irish Women in the '80s.



# Struggle for Lebanon

The new cease fire in the Lebanon will not solve the conflict. U.S. imperialism will not allow it to.

The article below by Phil Hearse is taken from the September 30th British weekly 'Socialist Action'.

American intervention in the Lebanon marks a new stage in the struggle between the forces of imperialist-backed reaction and the forces of Arab nationalism which has been underway in that country for 25 years. But without any doubt it is one of the most complex struggles anywhere.

In Lebanon today there are five foreign armies, the P.L.O., the Lebanese Army and dozens of different militias involved in the struggle. If the most dramatic aspect of the fight today is the escalating involvement of US imperialism, then the war is overlaid with numerous conflicts. In order to disentangle these disputes we have to look at aspects of Lebanon's history.

A convenient starting point is the revolt by the Druze people in 1958. Lebanon had been dominated by Christian interests: the constant struggle between Muslims and the Christian communities derived from this basic fact of Christian dominance. Lebanon itself is an artificial creation of imperialism; the product of the French-British carve up of Syria in 1919.

Since the middle ages the area has been a patchwork of conflicting religious communities. The Maronite Christians preserved their identity and exclusiveness by denying that they were Arabs. The Maronites weirdly claim to be descendants of the Phoenicians. Ever since the successive invasions of the Levant by the Crusaders, they looked to the West, and in the 19th and 20th centuries to Western imperialism, for protection and support.

For centuries the region around Mount Lebanon (the 'Mountain' and the mythical homeland of the Maronites), was dominated by Druze landlords and chieftans. The Maronites, mainly peasant farmers and labourers, were liberated by the French intervention in 1863 from Druze domination.

Three main communities co-exist in Lebanon today Christians, Sunni Muslims and Shi'a Muslims. The Druze sect which dominates the Chouf mountains is an exclusive order of 'initiates' - itself a split from the Shi'a branch of Islam



The massacre at Karatina, 1976. Muslim woman begs hooded Phalange militia man for mercy

Since the foundation of independent Lebanon in 1943 the **confessional** character of the state has been enshrined in the constitution. Each community with a certain number of seats in the parliament, the President a Christian, the vice-president a Sunni Muslim.

The Shi'ites, as relative late comers to the region, have shared power less despite their domination of the southern part of the country. At various times the Christians have attempted to exploit the divisions between Sunni and Shi'ites Muslims today with less success, although there are still Shi'ite Muslims in the Christian militia of Saad Haddad.

However the constitutional confessionalism of the state failed to prevent conflict between the Christian rulers and the dispossessed Druze and Muslim peoples.

The conflict between them was overlaid in the early 1970s by the arrival in Lebanon of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian fighters and refugees, evicted from Jordan after 'Black September' in 1970. Although the PLO headquarters were formally in Cairo, Lebanon was a 'front line' state from which Israel could be attacked.

In 1973 the Israelis mounted commando attacks on the PLO offices in Beirut, in which three top leaders of the PLO were killed. Muslims and Palestinians mounted huge demonstrations against the

Christian government of Sleiman Franjeh, accusing the government of complicity with the Israeli attacks. The scene was being set for civil war, which duly broke out in 1975

In the mid-1970s the Phalange party of Pierre Gemayel with its ruthless militia, became the predominant Christian force. In the 1975-6 civil war the Christian militias fought the **Lebanese National Movement**, an alliance of the Druze Progressive Socialist Party led by Kamal Jumblatt, the Palestinians, the Nasserist militias, the Lebanese Communist Party and numerous other left and nationalist forces.



Kamal Jumblatt

In this struggle, despite terrible Christian massacres of Palestinians and Muslims, the National Movement got the upper hand. Without doubt, in 1976 the Christians were on the verge of an historic

defeat. It was prevented by the intervention of the Syrian army, dressed up as the 'Arab peace-keeping force'.



Pierre Gemayel

The Syrians above all wanted a government in Lebanon under its own patronage - the Nationalist Movement and the Palestinians represented a force too much outside its control. While in 1976 the Christians saw the Syrians as allies (Franjeh has remained their ally to this day), this alliance proved temporary and fragile.

The Phalangist objective remained the establishment of a state dominated by themselves. Their opportunity came with the Israeli invasion, which propelled Bashir Gemayel leader of the Phalangist militia, to the presidency.

## DEFEND HUGO BLANCO

Peruvian revolutionist Hugo Blanco - an elected member of Peruvian parliament is once again the victim of the reactionary regime which holds power in that country.

On August 29th Blanco was suspended from parliament on the pretext that he accused General Clemente Noel, military commander of the Ayacucho region, of being an assassin. General Noel has been responsible for widespread execution of peasants and the bombing of villages. So notorious are Noel's crimes that at the beginning of this year, the prosecutor of Ayacucho province demanded that charges be brought against him.

Blanco's suspension is contrary to the rules of the Peruvian parliament itself as well as being a denial of his democratic rights. Blanco believes it is motivated by the regime's desire to crush all democratic organisations including Partido Revolucionario de los trabajadores [Revolutionary Workers Party] of which Blanco is a member. The PRT is the Peruvian Section of the Fourth International.

One of the most alarming aspects of this affair is that Blanco suspension deprives him of parliamentary immunity. A target of many assassination attempts Blanco was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment in 1963 as a leader of the Quechua Indians. He was freed in 1970 following an international defence campaign organised by the Fourth International.

Telegrams and letters of protest are necessary and urgent. They should be sent to  
1) President F. Belaunde Terry,  
Casa de Gobierno,  
Lima, Peru.  
2) Presidente,  
Camera de Deputadors,  
Lima, Peru.

Copies to Socialist Republic.



Hugo Blanco

## NICARAGUA

Daniel Ortega, Sandinista leader of the Nicaraguan revolutionary government bitterly denounced United States war moves in Central America when he addressed the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday, September 27. By arming, equipping, and bankrolling counter-revolutionaries based in Honduras the US is effectively waging war on Nicaragua. Ortega condemned US strategy as "military aggression, more economic aggression, more slander campaigns, more attempts to isolate us internationally".

The Sandinista leader explained that the defeat of the Nicaraguan revolution would mean "crushing the possibilities of change in Central America and would maintain the situation of injustice and lack of freedom".

CIARAN MAC NAMIDHE.



POBLAUGHT SHOISIALACH

# SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

Paper of PEOPLES' DEMOCRACY

## FIGHT PRIVATISATION AND THE CUTS!

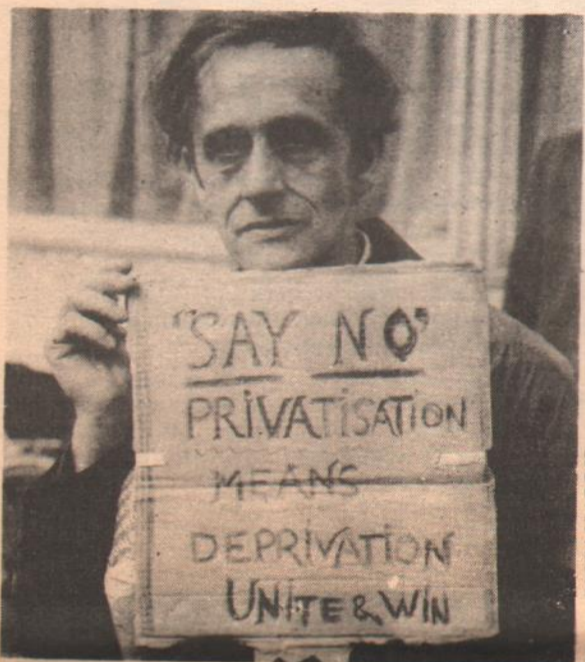


Photo: JOHN HARRIS

The public sector faces unprecedented attacks North and South. In the North the Tories are forging ahead with plans for the wholesale privatisation of the health, education and housing services. In the 26-counties the Coalition threatens to cut £500 million of public spending with next January's budget.

These savage policies will throw tens of thousands of workers throughout Ireland onto the unemployment scrapheap. But it won't just be public sector workers who will be squeezed. In both parts of the country the public sector dominates the country and as it is slashed the

effects reverberate on the working class as a whole.

This is borne out by the options presently under consideration by the Coalition: scrapping food subsidies, doubling rents closing down semi-state industries. These brutal measures will drive down the living standards of all working people.

### REPRESSION

But it is not just our living standards which are under attack. What we are facing is a massive crisis of the capitalist system and the politicians are as bankrupt at finding solutions to the crisis as the system That forces the capitalist class, which is a small

minority within society to increasingly rely on repression in order to make the vast majority accept poverty. The capitalist class starts out by attacking the fighters against British rule in Ireland, minorities such as travelling people, gays and migrant workers. As it succeeds with these attacks, the offensive is broadened to attack the rights of women, the unemployed and the trade unions themselves.

Unfortunately the trade union leaders have in the main been long on rhetoric and short on action. Activists in the unions must now build pressure to force the leadership into action.

But we can't afford to hang about waiting for the leadership to move. We need to start now to build real solidarity action for all groups of workers who fight closures and redundancies, strike for a living wage or union rights. Those workers who through the big struggles of the past year have provided leadership and example to all working people should convene a conference to begin building a united fightback. Support all workers struggles! For a united, national fightback!

### CONGRATULATIONS!

Peoples Democracy salutes the 38 republican prisoners involved in the 'meals on wheels' escape from Long Kesh. Long may the 19 enjoy their freedom. Everyone opposed to British rule in Ireland greeted news of their escape with applause but we suffered some belly-aches laughing at the antics of the Brits and RUC with their pathetic 24-hour road-blocks One Brit searching his 1,000th black-taxi on the Falls Road was heard to confess that he didn't even know what the ex-prisoners looked like.

The break-out from Britains 'Alcatraz' is of course in the tradition of Irish prisoners of war, and knocks for 19, Airey Neave's escape from Colditz. The 'meals on wheels' has earned its place in history alongside the 'Provie Birdie' and the great escape from Newry Courthouse in 1974, to where the republican prisoners had been brought to stand trial for attempting to escape. Brian Hughes.



Photomontage: CATH TATE

Thatcher vandalises public services.

## CPSSU

The 26-county Government are anxious to follow the lead of Thatcher in Britain and decisively cut back on the living standards of Irish workers. Fitzgerald and his Labour Party cronies want to defeat the working class but they hesitate to take the risk of a direct confrontation and instead have gone in for a sort of economic guerilla war. Recently John Boland, minister for the Public Service, contributed his own bit of industrial sabotage with an attack on the Civil and Public Services Staff Union (CPSSU). This attack could have serious consequences for Trade Unionists throughout Ireland. Two CPSSU members discuss below the response of their union.

Our union took action in support of a pay claim for clerical assistants by blocking further computerisation of the Civil Service due to be introduced after April this year. In August Boland sent a letter to each member, saying that the union 'has not followed the normal and agreed procedure for resolving such claims' and that the industrial action is 'hitting the... under privileged sections of the community'. (In fact no member of the public was deprived of any Social Welfare payments) In retaliation he announced that he was stopping the automatic deduction of union dues from members wages. This meant that unless the union can gear up quickly to collect the dues itself it could become bankrupt and collapse.

Reaction to this move has been mixed. There's a great deal of confusion. Some members are not paying and a few have withdrawn from the union. On the other hand it has led

to a higher level of participation by rank and file members. Branches also have more power since they now control the purse strings and are in a better position to influence the leadership.

This is badly needed. There is a real lack of coherent leadership. They let the initial action drag on without attempting to mobilise or extend it. Now they are having a ballot on a new offer without making any recommendation! The offer doesn't even include any money for Clerical assistants, the majority of union members. They are being asked to vote on whether or not to go to arbitration!

The leaderships autocratic behaviour has left them wide open to Boland's attack and they don't know how to fight back because they have consistently ignored the real issues. What is needed now is a really tight organisation at branch level to collect the dues and to organise members around these issues.

The main issue is that the lower grades of CPSSU are to bear the brunt of Fitzgerald's proposed £500 million cuts. Further computerisation will lead to massive job losses and have a savage effect on the prospects of youth unemployment. It will inevitably mean a further cut in services to the poorest sections of our society. Also this attack by Boland means that the whole principle of a union's right to organise and to take industrial action is under attack.

We oppose this so-called pay deal. It should be voted down and members should use the new life at branch level to insist on a real fight against the cuts and a campaign with all other sections of the union movement to prevent this offensive against Trade Union rights getting off the ground!

Noeleen Ni Dhomail

Pat Corcoran

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