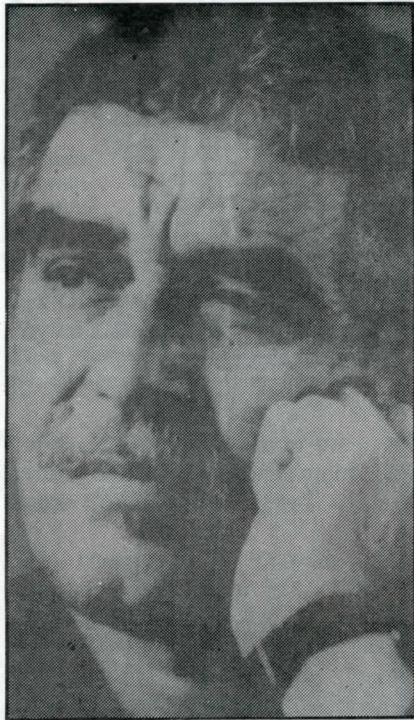


WORKERS LIFE

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The
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Vol. 3 No. 10 March 1983



Gabriel Garcia Marquez
The Solitude of Latin America



AVERTING WAR IN EUROPE

Who's behind the Amendment?

Mozart triumphs at R.D.S.

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Des O'Hagan (Editor)
Paddy Gillan, Gerry Flynn

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KARL MARX (1818—1883) was essentially a political philosopher. At the core of his thinking was one all consuming idea, the liberation of mankind, in one word, freedom.

Once the masses were released onto the cobbled streets of Europe through the victory of the French revolution and the old order, of kings and queens, swept away, historical progress could no longer be restrained even within the bounds of the latest revolution.

The march of the Parisian proletariat in 1848, and the waves of new revolutionary fervour which swept Europe were a recognition that liberty for some meant slavery for the many.

Karl Marx articulated that understanding. It was no accident that the future revolutionary handbook the *Communist Manifesto* first appeared in German in that wonderful year, 1848.

The call to the workers of the world to unite is echoed in peace marches from Moscow to Washington; in the international solidarity given to the people of Vietnam and presently to the suffering people of El Salvador. It is heard in defence of the Palestinians against genocide and in opposition to sectarian hatred and murder whether in Iran or Northern Ireland. It is the strength behind the African National Congress in their efforts to defeat apartheid and it is the rallying cry for the South West African People's Organisation facing the same racist South African regime.

Naturally such a political statement was and still is revolutionary. It challenged those who want liberty and equality for some and who understand fraternity to mean a brotherhood of wealth and privilege. It raised the banner of human understanding and human ability to achieve world wide peace and progress against those who would subject the masses to a life lived in fear, ignorance, superstition and poverty.

And for the first time ever it subjected political, social and economic institutions to a revolutionary critical examination from the point of view of those who provide the material base on which these institutions exist — the working class.

It may be considered then somewhat surprising that the Irish working class is in the main either ignorant of or hostile to Marxism. Surprising in that the sense of history so vital to Marxist thought is so alive in Ireland and that the idea of freedom appears to have played a major role in the politics of the country.

On the other hand one can easily see that freedom meant freedom for a native ruling class and that history was in the service of that class until confronted by James Connolly on the stage of Irish politics. Unfortunately since that time the peaks of socialist understanding have been few in comparison with the troughs of nationalism and religious hatred.

However it is not unduly optimistic to claim that the essentials of Marxist thought are slowly seeping into Irish working class consciousness. The sectarian terror in Northern Ireland, the corrupt politics of the major Tory parties, North and South, vicious unemployment, extensive attacks on the meagre quality of workers' lives, these are real elements in the radicalization of consciousness.

At the same time superstition and accompanying dogmatism are on the wane. In that sense also the freedom for which Marx laboured is making gains. It will undoubtedly be sometime yet before a full realisation of the true meaning of freedom becomes the motor force in working class Irish politics.

Then another epitaph can be written to the work of an extraordinary human being who helped change the nature of the world.

Wrong place

'GASPS and looks of astonishment' were the order of the day in Longwood, County Meath, recently when Colm Hilliard T.D. arrived to address a Fine Gael meeting. Mr Hilliard is a member of *Fianna Fáil*.

According to a local Fine Gael member 'He was there a couple of minutes before he recognised he was in the wrong place. We thought he was going to join the Fine Gael party.'

Undaunted, Mr Hilliard graciously accepted an offer to address the meeting, and then went on to address the local Fianna Fáil members at another venue. Haughey supporters at that meeting said that he should have stayed where he was.

'Pointless checks'

DANISH Euro-MP Kai Nyborg had this to say recently: "We don't want to sack all the customs officials in Europe but we do think they would be better employed on the external borders and not those inside the Community where a lot of pointless checks could be got rid of."

As we go to press we understand that a large number of like-minded people in the Dundalk, Newry, Castleblaney area have invited Mr Nyborg to lecture on this topic in the near future. The venue has not been disclosed. We also hear that Mr Nyborg has been proposed as the "Irish Border Counties Man of the Year".

Claim disproved

RECENT NEWS from the United States would seem to disprove Ronald Reagan's claim that 'many of the jobless don't want to work'.

A Milwaukee-based firm, A.O. Smith, advertised in January for applications to fill 250 new positions. Despite Smith's warning that all applications would be treated on merit and not on a 'first come, first served' basis, hundreds camped out all night in freezing temperatures to file their applications early. By the time the deadline for filing applications was reached, 25,000 of Milwaukee's workless had applied for the 250 vacancies!

The employers, of course, are not complaining, for obvious reasons. Nearby A.O. Smith's is the huge Ladish engineering works which laid off 2,500 men last year, and which was able to report that its net profits for

THAT'S LIFE

1982 had risen by 50%...

Lightning rod

DANIEL ELLSBERG, who released the Pentagon Papers during the Vietnam War, has called for nationwide opposition in the United States to the MX missile. 'I see the MX as a first-strike weapon regardless of its basing mode,' he said. 'It has one mission; to destroy a Soviet missile in its hardened silo before it is launched.'

'It can be used at all only if it is used as a first-strike missile. It's really a lightning rod for a nuclear attack on our country.'

Ellsberg believes the MX testing programme can be stopped 'the way the Vietnam War was stopped — by cutting off the funds.' To that end, he said, protesters must be prepared to use actions similar to those taken in anti-Vietnam War protests: lobbying, lawful demonstrations and "non-violent civil disobedience".

The test programme, Ellsberg said, must 'go over our dead bodies'.

Consolation prize

DR GARRET FitzGerald's selection of Mrs B. Rodgers (SDLP) as one of the Taoiseach's panel for the Senate has caused some raised eyebrows in the Craigavon area. They remember Mrs Rodgers' being defeated in a local government by-election in 1978 by Tom French. The election was due to the death of WP Vice-President Malachy McGurran.

For the record and those interested in statistics, voting in a 40% poll was Blanton (Alliance) 230; French (Workers' Party) 1,759; Rodgers (SDLP) 1,456. French was declared elected on the first count.

Export boom

ISRAEL's arms sales abroad now bring in \$1.5 billion a year. They are expanding to the point of outstripping receipts from traditional Israeli exports like

oranges and hand-hewn diamonds.

The biggest and fastest-growing market for Israel's implements of war is Latin America, whose right-wing regimes absorb more than half of Israel's weapons exports. Argentina is Israel's second-largest customer, (after South Africa), and is seeking to replace warplanes and missiles lost during the Falklands war.

Israel's best homemade war-plane and tank both use American-made engines. Both require American permission for re-export. And thus far, the Reagan administration has accommodated Israel's desire to boost its military exports to Latin America and elsewhere.

Israel trains Zaire's presidential guard and other security units and hopes to sell weapons to that country. It is reported that representatives of Israel's Tadiran Electronics firm had visited Peking recently trying to sell tank range finders, night-sensitive equipment and other hardware.

Israeli government officials declare that Israel sells weapons mostly to regimes who share its determination and that of the Reagan administration — to fight the 'spread of communism'.

Top Israelis such as the Minister for Economic Affairs have campaigned to have Israel act as the US military proxy in 'politically sensitive areas' such as Latin America, South Africa and Taiwan, where the US wishes to aid right-wing regimes, but prefers not to do so openly.

Mother Ireland

A PAMPHLET seeking funds to back the abortion amendment has gone out to over 100,000 Americans within the past month and has met with tremendous success, according to an executive director of Human Life International, the group responsible for it.

Jim McGuinness, associate

director of the Washington-based group, claims that returns from the mailings have been much higher than the norm, and that irrespective of the fate of the amendment, his group's efforts to 'counteract Planned Parenthood in Ireland' would continue with the funds raised.

The group's pamphlet entitled *Death Returns to Ireland*, states that 'Ireland's falling to the death industry would cripple the worldwide mission efforts of the Catholic Church'.

Amendment

DR. JOHN McMANUS, Workers' Party spokesperson on health has taken us to task over last month's article, Voting with the Angels? which dealt with the "anti-abortion referendum".

His complaint is that the article failed to point out that The Workers' Party, the only substantial Left party in the country with representation in the Dáil, has been firmly opposed to the referendum from the word go. A fair enough criticism, but in defence of the article we would point out that quite significant coverage was given to the statement by WP President Tomás MacGiolla, TD when it seemed as if the referendum would take place this month.

However, now with the question of the referendum's wording back in the melting pot, *Workers Life* will be taking a look at the position of the various parties and sections of parties to see where they stand in relation to the angels. In the meantime, see pages 6-9 of this issue.

Straight talk

ARE YOU sick to death with the destructive activities of the Militant Tendency in the British Labour Party? Do you wince every time someone mentions Bermondsey and Thatchell? Do certain trends in the *Tribune* newspaper make you want to be sick? There are no prizes for the right answer to these questions, just a word of comfort.

There is another side to the Labour Party coin. If you already know about *Straight Left*, then we apologise for bringing stale news.

Our correspondent came across the February issue of this tough, out spoken and responsible socialist publication. We don't know what percentage of the BLP it represents

Straight Face . . .



but it certainly makes a refreshing change from the rubbish purporting to come from British "socialists" like Ken Livingstone and his mates. *Straight Left* is available from 27a Old Gloucester Street, London WC1N 3XX. Price 20p sterling, but add something reasonable for post.

character of the struggle facing the Irish and Italian socialist and workers' parties, particularly with regard to the destructive forces of terrorism. "Terrorism, whether in the form of the Red Brigades or the Provisional IRA, is the enemy of the progressive forces in both our countries. Both in the short

and long terms they only serve the interests of capitalism and imperialism. One can only conclude that their financial backers have this aim clearly in mind," he said. **Little children** OUT OF the mouths of babes. We have the following story on

the solemn word of an eight year old who was there. Teacher: Now children, you all know that God made Adam from clay... Little girl: No, teacher. God made Adam from clay and ants. Teacher: No, that's not right, little girl. (She must remain anonymous). Little girl: But it is teacher. That's how we got Adam and the Ants.

Spring fever

WE HAVE learned from one of our usual reliable sources that Tanaiste and Labour Party boss Dick Spring is doing his nut with the Dublin North East section of his party. Apparently he has a gang of local dissidents on his hands due to Labour's abject acceptance of the Budget which they claim totally negates the policy adopted at their last annual conference in Limerick. Spring, our informant claims, flew into a violent rage when he read the attacks on the Coalition in the North East branch's local newsheet. What must make him even madder is the fact that the paper is printed by Repsol Ltd., who are printers and publishers for The Workers' Party. As in the best detective stories — the plot thickens!

Observer

THE WORKERS's Party General Secretary Sean Garland attended the 16th Congress of the Italian Communist Party as an observer at the invitation of the PCI's Central Executive. Speaking in Milan Mr Garland said that the twin problems of European peace and massive unemployment demanded the concerted action of all the democratic and socialist forces on the continent. Mr Garland went on to emphasise the common

WORKERS LIFE FORUM

CAN WE AFFORD THE CUTS?

SPEAKERS
Rosheen Callender
Ellen Hazelkorn
Ciaran Mulvey
Henry Patterson

Clarence Hotel
 Wellington Quay
 Dublin 2

Thursday 21 April
8 pm

Thrifty

DID YOU hear about the unemployed school-leaver who managed to save £100 in one week? How did he do it? Simple: he didn't apply for ten jobs in the public service.

Split

SERIOUS rifts have appeared in the Belfast Shankill Road section of the DUP. Outspoken, hard working councillor Joe Coggle was the first to go, he has since been followed by Billy Gault, then by Belfast's Deputy Lord Mayor Ted Ashby — all were in the Shankill Branch. Nominally the issue was over an ecumenical service for the RUC in Belfast Cathedral. But other sources say the Assembly Election was the real cause. Over and above the heads of DUP rank and file, one George Seawright, an immigrant Scot, was given the Assembly nomination. Apart from an understandable personal annoyance Coggle and company had only to wait until this gentleman opened his mouth for all their worst fears to be realised. For example, DUP's Johnny McQuaid, Westminster MP, is considered to be a political genius compared with Seawright. Exit Coggle, Gault and Ashby at the first opportunity.

WHO'S BEHIND THE AMENDMENT?

TWO GROUPS have been to the fore in the campaign to have the Constitution amended. The campaign is being run by PLAC (the Pro-Life Amendment Campaign), and is vocally supported by SPUC (The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children). Who are the people in these pressure groups and why have they been so successful? It was no mean achievement to have Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael cave in to their demands almost instantly, to split the Labour Party and to stifle popular debate on radio and television. All this for a constitutional amendment for which there was no popular demand whatsoever, and which has the aim of banning something that is already illegal under Irish law.

Founded in Britain in 1967, SPUC obtained a legal charter in Ireland in September 1981, having held its first public meeting in September 1980. From the start, it has had the support of the Roman Catholic Church. Meetings are advertised in churches, collections have been taken up at Masses, and members have been invited to speak from pulpits. The SPUC school film and slide show are notorious by now, and there have been bitter complaints from teachers about the effects on their pupils. SPUC provides the shock troops of the campaign.

PLAC was founded in late 1980 by a small group of people, with Dr. Julia Vaughan, a gynaecologist and former nun, as the leading spokesperson. She and her medical col-

DEIRDRE O'CONNELL looks at the initiators of the so-called 'pro-life' amendment.



Julia Vaughan

leagues are members of the Irish Catholic Doctors' Guild. The Responsible Society and the Council of Social Concern, two other conservative groups, were asked to join. All these organisations have close links with the Knights of Columbanus. Members of the Council of Social Concern include the Irish Family League, Mná na hEireann, Parent Concern and similar right-wing groups whose names are often to be seen on letters to the papers. These

letters always consist of attacks on 'secularisation' in the form of contraception, divorce, sex education in schools, etc. In fact, any suggestion of a secular Irish society is enough to set them off. These people see themselves as crusaders for the retention of 'our Irish Catholic way of life', i.e. they stand for a uniquely repressive, reactionary, and punitive society. Even in a religious context they are reactionaries, some of them at least being devotees of the Tridentine Mass, Garabandal and assorted pretenders to the Papacy.

Sophisticated

The forerunners of PLAC are more sophisticated types (consultants, academics, lawyers) and no doubt are embarrassed from time to time by some of their supporters. However, the crude intimidatory tactics of the support groups have been useful to them, not least in putting the fear of God into the politicians. Money is no problem. Supporters in the US recently donated £250,000, thus enabling PLAC to plan a huge advertising campaign.

The selection of the title Pro-Life Amendment Campaign was a clever move. Any opposition could then be labelled 'anti-life'. The fact is that the people in PLAC and SPUC see 'life' in an extraordinarily narrow

way, seeming to apply the term only to the foetus. The quality of life of the born does not concern them at all, although for tactical reasons they talk about showing concern for the unmarried mother. Their total blindness to the deprivation rampant in our society, and to the realities of life for many people, among them single parent families, is at times staggering. But then if you are a consultant gynaecologist or obstetrician the realities of life are not too pressing, and you and your family certainly do not suffer from deprivation. That peculiarly arrogant high medical tone is evident in many of their utterances.

Martyyn Turner/Irish Times

Theologians often take the same line. In an essay in *Abortion Now* (LEARN, 1983), Denis O'Callaghan, Professor of Moral Theology at Maynooth, deals with the ante-natal tests now normally done in other countries on pregnant women at high risk of having Down's Syndrome babies. He says: 'A hospital which follows moral pro-life policy should decline to perform the test. In this way one avoids the dilemma which a positive diagnosis of the syndrome would occasion.' Whose is the dilemma? It is not one in which Professors of Moral Theology find themselves. This shows us how a medical procedure followed in every other country is omitted here because of the viewpoint of one religion. Of course, the same applies to the morning-after pill, used elsewhere as standard post-rape treatment. In Ireland, unless the rape victim has a sympathetic GP, this treatment will not be made available to her.

Commitment

PLAC's decision to go straight to the top rather than initiating a broad campaign aimed at public opinion proved to be correct. PLAC was launched at a press conference at the end of April 1981. Within a few days a deputation was meeting party leaders. By 15 May, Charles Haughey, Garret FitzGerald and Frank Cluskey had given public support to the idea of an amendment. Both Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael gave a commitment to hold a referendum when the General Election was called in May 1981. During the election campaign SPUC



Charles Haughey tried to make amendment an election issue

circulated candidates with questionnaires on their attitude to abortion and the proposed referendum.

In August 1981, while reaffirming his commitment to the abortion amendment, FitzGerald launched his 'constitutional crusade' with fine talk of overall constitutional reform and a pluralist society. The February 1982 election campaign offered the pro-amendment campaigners a fresh opportunity for questioning candidates, a form of blackmail used to good effect. On 23 March, Haughey, then Taoiseach, announced that a referendum would be held in 1982. The fact that the referendum was not held during the Fianna Fáil term of office can be ascribed to the difficulties experienced by the Attorney General's Office in writing the text of the amendment.

When the November election was called, Haughey kicked off the Fianna Fáil campaign by trying to make the referendum the major issue. Only Fianna Fáil, he asserted, could be trusted to put the amendment to the people. In fact, opinion polls showed that for most people it was a non-issue, the electors being far more concerned with the health cuts and unemployment. However, SPUC propaganda was a large factor in the defeats of Jim Kemmy and Michael D. Higgins.

Opposition

If PLAC had begun their campaign by trying to influence public opinion rather than putting the pressure directly on the political parties, it now seems likely that the whole affair would have fizzled out. A sizeable opposition has emerged and some people in public life have refused to be blackmailed into silence. Groups of lawyers, doctors, teachers, trade unionists and barristers have come out strongly against the referendum. The ICTU statement (dealt with at length by Rosheen Callender in the February issue of *Workers Life*) was a major blow to PLAC. The opposition of all the Churches, except the Roman Catholic Church, has embarrassed the Government and has placed the sectarian nature of the amendment beyond doubt. PLAC has been reduced to importing fundamentalist Protestant churchmen from Northern Ireland to support their cause. The Roman Catholic Church has kept a low profile as far as official statements go,

Your right to life is explicitly protected by the Irish Constitution.

Unless, of course, you're an unborn baby.

That is what the Amendment is about. Before the end of March, the people of Ireland will have the opportunity to vote for the inclusion in the Constitution of specific protection for human life before birth. The passing of the Amendment will ensure that the present legal ban on abortion will remain as long as the people wish it. That's the heart of the matter.

A programme of information is now being undertaken throughout the country to ensure the widest possible public understanding of this issue of Human Rights.

The programme needs money, particularly for printing and advertising.

If you would like to help with these costs, please send your donation to:

PRO-LIFE AMENDMENT CAMPAIGN

21 Merrion Square, Dublin 2. Tel: 01-762278.

Information on the Amendment issue can be obtained by writing to or phoning the above address.

PLAC will spend £250,000 on advertising campaign

POLITICAL LIFE

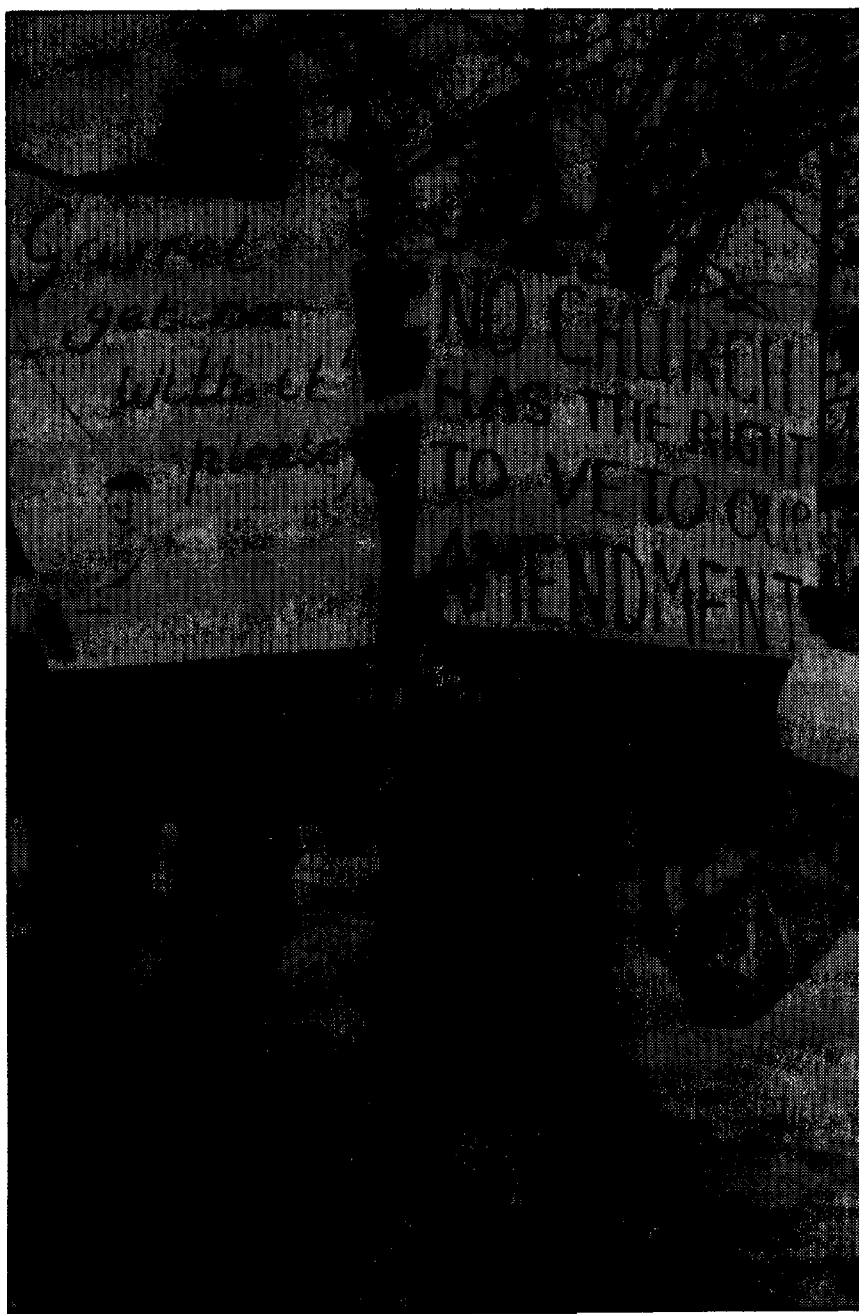
although Cardinal O Fiaich attacked the ICTU statement. Perhaps the Hierarchy recognised the danger of opening up the inevitable debate. As a result of that debate many people have thought and read about the issue for the first time, and no longer see it in simple black-and-white terms. Many people totally opposed to abortion have not been convinced of the need for a constitutional amendment.

At the time of writing there are signs that some of the smarter politicians are regretting their hasty commitment to 'life' as defined by PLAC. The Workers' Party has opposed the amendment from the start. The Labour Party is allowing a free vote. Some Fine Gael deputies have publicly questioned the wisdom of proceeding with the Bill. One is entitled to ask why they waited until now to speak out. Is it because they have realized that PLAC is not as all-powerful as it once appeared and that people are no longer prepared to be dictated to by medical or ecclesiastical hierarchies? Do they fear that it might all look a shade medieval to the rest of Europe?

When questioned, PLAC spokespersons have admitted that the passing of this amendment will not prevent women travelling to England to have abortions. Yet they say that the constitutional amendment is all that they are aiming at. Certainly the Pro-Life Amendment Campaign will be wound up after the referendum. But, if the amendment is passed, it seems unlikely that the people involved will do nothing further to promote their aims. Another group will be formed with another name, but with the same personnel. This group will try to have the IUD, the low-dosage pill, and the morning-after pill banned as abortifacient. There may also be moves to stop women travelling to England to have abortions.

Prosecutions

This may seem far-fetched, but then so did the idea of the amendment when first proposed. Conferring citizenship on the fertilised ovum and the foetus is a totally new departure and many lawyers are very worried about the consequences. To quote a document drawn up



SPUC picket outside Dáil makes clear the sectarian nature of the amendment.

by the Lawyers Against the Amendment Group: '...the proposed amendment is not merely a general expression of opposition to abortion but is a potent legal document with very considerable legal consequences. If it is passed, it will be available for use by any person or group and not merely by the State. Equally it will be available for use against any person or group and even against the State itself.'

One of PLAC's legal activists, William Binchy, has written of prosecutions against women who

have already had abortions in England, and all those who assisted them in any way. In a letter to the *Irish Times* on 19 April, 1982, Dr Mary Lucey, Hon. Sec. of SPUC, said: 'Changing the Constitution will not prevent girls going to other countries to have abortions. True, but with the unquestioned support of constitutional law, many helpless babies may be saved in Ireland and enabling legislation with that in view can be enacted.' Enforcement of any such legislation or of injunctions based on the amendment

would involve extensive infringements of privacy, and an atmosphere of social control that would be repugnant to the majority of people in this country, regardless of

their feelings on abortion.

A victory for PLAC and SPUC would be a triumph for reaction and authoritarianism. The proposed

amendment should be opposed actively by everyone who cares about the future of progressive politics in this country.

'We can't have it both ways'

Protestants in Ireland are utterly opposed to abortion on demand as a means of birth control or simply to terminate an unwanted pregnancy. But no Protestant Church or Protestant organisation has campaigned for the inclusion of an anti-abortion amendment to the Constitution. Why? Because:

1. Protestants feel that the law governing abortion is really a matter for the Dáil. Abortion is already illegal under the present legislation. Protestants feel that the Constitution should steer clear of controversial moral questions. It should have wide acceptance, being the expression of a common unity and avoiding divisive issues. Such issues should be a matter for legislation after debate and decision by the Dáil and not a matter for the constitution.

2. The amendment, if passed, will do nothing to deal with the social problems underlying abortion. Nor will it prevent those who wish to have abortions from travelling to England, unless we have medical examination at the ports of all women of childbearing age.

3. In a time of severe economic recession the country can ill-afford to spend nearly one million pounds on a referendum. If such money is available it would be better spent in alleviating distress and helping to improve the quality of life of the deprived and underprivileged sections of our community. (For e.g. housebound disabled people still do not even have a postal vote in the Republic, yet we appear to be obsessed with the "rights of the unborn.") We should get our priorities right.

4. The proposed wording of the amendment is ambiguous. It has been framed in such a way as to appear non-sectarian. But if the amendment succeeds and the "life of the mother" is interpreted by the courts as merely physical life, then abortion for, say rape or incest or deformity of the foetus would be unconstitutional and a criminal offence. Thus the generally-held Protestant ethical view which

In a statement issued last month, The Very Rev VICTOR GRIFFIN, Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, outlined Protestant objections to the proposed Constitutional amendment.

would allow abortion as a last resort in certain unfortunate exceptional cases, as the lesser of two evils, would be outlawed by the Constitution.

If the term "life" is meant to be taken in a wider sense to cover the health and well being of the mother why is this not made clear in the proposed wording of the amendment? Is it because such wording, allowing for abortion in certain circumstances other than where the life of the mother is at risk would be unacceptable to the Roman Catholic Church? Since there is no objection to the proposed wording by even the most conservative Roman Catholics associated with the so-called "Pro-life" campaign it would appear that they see the proposed form of words as ruling out all abortion as unconstitutional with the sole exception of that which is permitted by the Roman Catholic Church — which indeed they refuse to call abortion.

They see the amendment as embodying Roman Catholic teaching in the Constitution and they further imply that the Roman Catholic ethical position on this matter is the only true Christian and moral viewpoint and this should be enforced on all citizens, Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic alike.

5. No society can discard the ethical ethos which has formed and fashioned it. Irish society cannot discard its Christian ethos — this is part of our public morality and is based on Christian consensus. But where Christians differ sincerely on certain matters of morality such as abortion, the State, if it claims to be democratic and non-confessional, should not enshrine a

particular denominational viewpoint, even a majority one, in its Constitution, to the outlawing of all others. This is an infringement on human liberty.

6. If an unborn child or "human being" is equated with a fertilised ovum, even before implantation in the womb (the Roman Catholic view), then certain contraceptive pills and devices such as inter-uterine devices could be declared unconstitutional as abortifacients. Herein lurks a danger to family planning clinics which prescribe these methods of contraception as the most suitable in certain circumstances. The Protestant would regard this an invasion of privacy and a denial of the rights of conscience and individual liberty.

Generally speaking the Protestant would say that a fertilised ovum is a human *life* with the potential of becoming a human *being* or person. There is a gradual development from fertilised ovum and embryo to foetus right up to the moment of birth. No consensus exists as to at what point exactly there is a "human being" or "child" present. You have a right to your opinion and I to mine, but to enshrine one particular denominational opinion in the Constitution is sectarian.

7. How will the courts interpret the amendment?

Surely they will be guided by what the electorate voted for and this will be seen in the context of the so called "pro-life" campaign which pressed for the amendment.

Since (1) the so called "pro-life" campaign people see the wording as conforming to Roman Catholic teaching,

and (2) the vast majority, 95% in the State are Roman Catholics,

and (3) the Roman Catholic bishops have voiced no objection to the wording,

it would be very difficult for the courts to give the amendment a liberal interpretation to take into account the Protestant position. For if these words are susceptible of a wider interpretation to allow for abortion say, in rape or incest, the courts would be entitled to ask why this was not made clear in the wording. The onus will be on the opposition to prove the exception and the chance of doing so will be remote indeed.

A form of words was devised which on first reading may seem non-sectarian and innocuous, but which after further study implies a sectarian point of view. The amendment is sectarian not so much in what it says but in what it omits to say, what it fails to spell out. Here is the danger for Protestants and for those who object to the rigid view of the Roman Catholic Church.

8. This proposed amendment is one more example of our sex obsessed society. The idea of sin seems to be confined to the sexual sphere. The moral writ or "right" and "wrong" runs only in the domain of sexual morality. Hence far more emphasis is placed on so-called sexual rectitude than on matters of personal honesty, national righteousness and social justice. It is a sad reflection on our society that for e.g., the career of a politician is more at risk if he is suspected of being out of line with the Roman Catholic teaching on divorce, contraception or abortion than if he is suspected of indulging in dishonest business transactions.

9. We have to ask ourselves the question — what sort of State do we want? Do we want a Roman Catholic confessional State or a pluralist society in the Republican tradition of Tone and Davis? We can't have it both ways.

10. Those who, like myself, are opposed to the proposed Constitutional amendment should *not* be labelled as being "pro-abortion". I am utterly opposed to abortion on demand, yet I shall have no hesitation in voting against the proposed amendment for the above reasons.

COMPARED to Mozart for orchestration by Limerick supporters. Compared to De Valera by Kerry men remembering the Anti-Partition League.

More like Wagner for orchestrating a nakedly nationalist opus. Much more like Daithi O'Connell to send the Brits packing and plant a Prod for good measure.

Cameras rolling. On cue. The President of 'our great national organisation on the long road to full national independence and unity' took an athletic hop, skip and jump on stage. A dignified, truly Irish political adaptation of Mick Jagger on stage at Slane Castle. The image builders miss nothing.

Assembled round the scaffolding of the television cameras were the thousands of foot-stomping, red-faced roaring men and women from the cumainn. 'Our leader, our leader — whoever he is!'

Setting the note of unity and buried differences, Charles J Haughey, son-in-law of Sean Lemass and heir of Eamon de Valera, said: *'The difficulties we have had are now behind us. We are back again on the high road as a great unified party. The events of recent weeks have caused many of us to reflect again on the history of the great party to which we all belong.'*

The key words: *unity, party, tradition, nationalism, philosophy, culture, heritage, Colonialism.* That's it — keep it vague and undefined, but keep the mob cheering for the leader.

The party of unity and tradition boasted of its record attendance. Carried away in the enthusiasm, the re-elected party President boasted that as many were locked out as were in attendance. Outside a couple of hundred late-comers debated the merits of hanging around or returning to down more pints in the Ballsbridge pubs.

Non-person

At the back of the main hall hung two poster size photographs of the great leaders of our great party. De Valera and Lemass. Gone was the leader of the great party for thirteen years — John Mary Lynch. He has joined the non-persons with Sean Doherty and Martin O'Donoghue.

Mozart triumphant at R.D.S.

Gerry Flynn

The fourth and present leader, in his wisdom, devoted the largest section of his 'Oraid an Uachtarain' to affairs in Northern Ireland. The men in the trenchcoats, the stern bowler-hatted Orangeman; the Tommy with his north of England accent; the 'Fourth Green Field'. None of them got a direct mention, and yet that is what his speech was all about. Much more clever than Danny Morrison's ambidextrous skills with an Armalite and a ballot box.

His twenty-six paragraphs on Northern Ireland prompted the party faithful to applaud no less than eighteen times. More dangerously, most of the parliamentary party joined in and a few times were so overcome with nationalist fervour as to be provoked into rising to their feet. Here stood the new united party in the 'republican' tradition.

Earlier in this address the current 'Chief' had explained: *'We have known always that the way to full national independence and unity would be a long one... We have never believed, however, that the Irish people would abandon that aim and if we seem to be inflexible about it, it is because the Irish people themselves are inflexible about it.'*

Final solution

That inflexibility, rigidity, stubbornness, and blind nationalism ran through the Presidential Address. Even the pie-in-the-sky SDLP concept of a 'council for a new Ireland' isn't green enough for the President of Fianna Fáil. It would be *'a valuable first step in*

preparation for a final constitutional settlement'. The goal is not the council. The goal is the final solution. Heil Haughey! Three short weeks before Ben Briscoe spoke of the fear of fascism, of dictatorship and street politics which provoked his demand for Charles Haughey's immediate resignation.

Haughey outlined yet again how Fianna Fáil's philosophy is a home-spun vision based on centuries of struggle by the common people. It is not one of those oft-criticised foreign ideologies (except for Roman Catholicism of course) which are alien to our heritage.

The 'National Philosophy' centres on the right to territorial integrity which is derived from history. Even an Inter Cert civics class could tell you that 'nations' don't just appear but go through a lengthy process of 'nation building' with common languages, religions, superstitions and fears. The same school kids could tell Mr Haughey that a nation is not necessarily a 'state'.

The President of Fianna Fáil knows better. He didn't hire the Artane Boys Band and the largest hall in the RDS to debate basic concepts of political science. He came to hear frenzied yobos shout 'Ar aghaidh le Charlie' in the first official language.

Time immemorial

The first wild applause for the Northern Ireland section of his speech came for these profound and considered words: *'From time immemorial the island of Ireland has belonged to the Irish people.'*

It's that simple. The Milesians, then the Fir Bolgs looked after the



The leader triumphant: portrait of Charles Haughey commissioned by Charles Haughey.

'territorial integrity'. And what they wouldn't give to be in Fianna Fáil, if they had a Fianna Fáil. The Soldiers of Destiny.

The next long applause followed: 'A peacefully united country would create a tremendous new surge of energy and confidence'. The Protestant work ethic would provide us all with jobs. Or else there would be plenty of military and police employment taming dissident unionists who don't want to integrate or emigrate. Take your pick if you're an optimist or a pessimist.

Next the direct assault on Northern Ireland to provoke three separate bursts of applause: 'Northern Ireland survives only by virtue of an artificial life-support system, which consists of a massive British military presence, a form of direct rule, colonial in character, and direct subsidies of over one billion pounds a year.' 'Life-support' is a choice term when RUC men try to evacuate pubs and offices as the electric detonating charge of the terrorist bomb flashes to murder with maximum effect.

And just for emphasis: 'The security solution in isolation, ...has only made a bad situation worse.'

What are these terrorist murders and sectarian attacks? 'All these are manifestations of a break-down of the normal standards of a politically viable state.'

Not manifestations of poverty, sectarian education, nationalist or unionist extremes. Neither are record unemployment or declining social services a manifestation of a break-down of a politically viable Republic of Ireland!

Keep the pot boiling

'It is urged in some quarters that Northern Nationalists should forget the injustice of their position. We will never ask them to do that.' More applause. Keep the pot boiling Charlie.

Now the coup de grace. 'A Northern Ireland state is an unworkable and unsustainable political entity'. The delegates are now standing. The full colour election posters of the aristocratic Haughey are raised high. Charlie Haughey — we all love you. Charlie Haughey — Man of courage, a star is born. Charlie is our wonderman. And so read the personal posters raised high.

The Parliamentary Party are on their feet. We have lift-off. All systems go. Fire the booster rocket. 'The British Government should now recognise that it is unable to govern Northern Ireland effectively'. Gerry Adams and his runners have done their job. Not only is Stormont dissolved — the fourth green field is a 'no go' area.

The Parliamentary Party begin to bend the knee. Will they dare

resume their seats? Fuelled by the foot-stomping roars; ignite the reserve tank. Brace yourself for the G-forces as we pass the speed of sound, light, time and history.

'An all-round constitutional conference must be convened on the basis that it would be a prelude to a final withdrawal of Britain from Ireland within a stipulated period of time.'

Rest and recuperate. Apart from the mention of the SDLP, no delegate need bother with too much applause. 'The rights of 900,000 Northern Unionists are, as they have always been, no more, no less, than the rights of everyone else who lives on this island.' Note the 900,000 to mesh with the latest estimated Northern census returns. The myth of the million Prods to be bombed into a united Ireland is gone. Died a statistical death.

National unity

Give us guns, not butter, Charlie. And so to the economic problems when the 'present artificially separated entities' fuse and mingle. 'Transitional assistance from the United States, Britain and the EEC would be forthcoming.' That's in spite of his earlier criticisms of British colonial presence at a cost of over one billion pounds a year.

That's the Nationalist Philosophy of our great party. 'For the Irish people do take pride in independence, political and cultural. They do want national unity.'

The trigger words — national unity. Reserved for the final sentence. 'The role of our great Fianna Fáil organisation must be... towards a fulfilment of the ideal of national unity which will represent a new beginning for all who live on this island.'

It worked. They're on their feet. The Parliamentary Party rises yet again. The hand-clapping commences. We want Charlie.

The image builders crank up 'Charlie's Song'. The needle is stuck. How apt. The song is replayed. 'Arise and follow Charlie'. For ten minutes the nationalist Prince beams and waves. The serfs and cannon fodder fall over their chairs and senior TDs who know better, clap and clap as if their jobs and lives depended on it.

FULL EMPLOYMENT AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF LEISURE

Eamonn Smullen

WE HAVE the highest levels of unemployment since the 1930s. This problem which so many workers and so many families have as an immediate and a pressing anxiety is the direct outcome of the economic policies of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and The Labour Party. It is due to no other reason.

Some of these parties, especially The Labour Party, pay lip service to the idea of creating jobs but they have no serious intention of doing anything about the matter.

The idea of full employment — not so long ago very much a part of the programme of all political parties — has been quietly dropped out of sight. Various interests have laboured to create an atmosphere where it is no longer “intellectually respectable” to talk of full employment as a possibility — as a reality which we can achieve. Some would qualify their acceptance of the “Philosophy of Leisure” by saying: “Short of Social Revolution”. The words “Social Revolution” conjure into existence all sorts of spectres which frighten many basically good people, possessed of a sense of justice — people who do not like to see so many out of work.

The new “Philosophy of Leisure” is now being peddled in certain intellectual circles and — believe it or not — it has even seeped into the trade union movement. The philosophy starts by accepting certain basic propositions which are just not true.

BASIC ARGUMENT

The basic argument behind “The Philosophy of Leisure” is “Luddite” — a claim that machines, especially the micro-chip, have put people on the

dole. It means, as it works its way through society, that no serious research needs to be done on the real cause of unemployment — blame it all on “the micro-chip” and you are forced to take seriously the “Philosophy of Leisure”.

The first time I encountered this odd view of life — it was trotted out at a seminar in Maynooth College — a place very much a part of the establishment. It was expressed by a priest called Ryan who is Professor of Sociology there. I have since discovered that the people who are most susceptible to the disease are “well-heeled” and in secure jobs. Their hands are clean, have always been clean — for them the factory hooter has never marked the early start of the late finish of a day.

A voice has lately been added to that of Professor Ryan — the voice of Ivor Brown, Professor of Psychology at Trinity College. Both men claim to be experts on the question of human motivation — one would imagine that unemployment, its cause and its effects, is “all in the mind”. This is in sickening contrast to Che Guevara when asked why he had given up being a doctor: “Because I had to tell many of the ill people who came to see me that they were really suffering from the economic system”.

Many people are over-awed by Professors — there are not so many who will say to them on an occasion like this — “don’t tell me, show me”. Few people actually test these theories against facts and figures. Let us examine the structure of unemployment in the Republic of Ireland where the “Philosophy of Leisure” has put down its strongest roots; let us see how the theory compares with the facts.

The latest official figures on unemployment are those of October 1982 and it is these figures we are forced to use.

LITTLE TO LEARN

The highest levels of unemployment exist in the building industry. It is obvious that this industry is quite unaffected by new technology — if one of Pharaoh’s building engineers or craftsmen walked on to an Irish building site there would be little or nothing new to learn. They might say that working conditions were better under the Pharaoh.

The building industry employs — its full labour force when it is fully employed — is just over 100,000 operatives. In October 1982 34,585 persons were officially listed as unemployed in this industry. It is obvious that the reason for such a level of unemployment in the industry is a failure to build the houses the people need and the factories they need to work in and the new power stations we need to change from oil-fired to coal-fired electricity generating.

Under the heading “Agriculture” go farming, forestry, market-gardening and so on. There are 19,299 persons unemployed under this heading. This number, no doubt, contains a number of farmers drawing the dole. It is obvious from a simple examination of the figures for food imports that we are importing much of the food that we should produce ourselves. The real reason for the unemployment in this industry is the failure to produce from the land at a price competitive with imports. It would be foolish to go back to the Fianna Fáil programme of the 1930s — “buy Irish” — it was a failure then

and it is just not enough to put matters right today. We need more technology, more expertise on the land, to give us the cheap food we need for the home market and for export.

LESS MONEY

There are 10,190 unemployed under the heading “Personal Services”. This section can be broken down to this detail — in hotels, clubs, restaurants and public houses 7,591 out of work. Unemployment in these areas is obviously due to there being less money around for spending on pleasure. People cannot afford to use hotels, clubs, restaurants and pubs. The publicans themselves marched through Dublin on the day the Dáil met for the first time in 1983. They blamed increased exercise duties for their difficulties but there are other reasons.

Hairdressing and other personal services has an unemployment rate of 1,090 — obviously people cannot afford hairdressing.

The food industry has 7,558 out of work — this means less produced and less used. The creameries show the biggest job losses — 1,660.

If there was milk production for twelve months of the year rather than the present up and down supply it would do a lot to wipe out unemployment in this area. We might then be able to get into the export market for soft cheese in a big way.

TOO MANY PIGS

Bacon curing has the highest number out of work after the creameries, 1,418. It is quite obvious that too many pigs are being moved about and not nearly enough work being done on them. On a recent early



The building industry is quite unaffected by new technology

morning farming radio broadcast it was said that if some pigs could talk they would speak of not only one holiday in Northern Ireland, but several. There is a big pig racket in MCA payments.

The 1,178 who are unemployed in bread, biscuit and flour confectionary are no doubt, out of work because there is less money to spend on fancy goods. No new technology has been introduced on an extensive scale and biscuits are being imported and put into native wrappers. They claim that this is only a temporary measure.

Textiles have 5,911 out of work — woollen manufacture accounts for 1,628 of that number; linen and silk manufacture accounts for a further 1,066. In this case also no new technology has been introduced into the industry on an extensive scale. There has been a close-down of many plants.

The clothing industry has

5,851 out of work. The greater number — 2,278 — used work in tailoring factories. Look at the sales notices around Dublin and the country — there is just no money around by buy clothes. The same applies to the boot and shoe industry — 1,288 out of work.

Woodworking and furniture has 2,148 out of work. The biggest number 964 used work in sawmilling and joinery works. This unemployment is clearly created by the severe depression in the building industry. The 722 who are out of work in the furniture and upholstery are obviously victims of the general depression.

OPPORTUNITIES

Metal manufacturing and engineering has 9,675 out of work. The biggest number used work in the manufacture of scientific instruments, electrical apparatus and installations.

There are certainly opportunities for the creation of new jobs in this industry. The Telisis Report outlines some of the opportunities in this field. One of the difficulties is that we lack people who are trained to a high degree of skill — and there are cut-backs in education.

General metal founding accounts for 1,470 job losses; we obviously need foundaries and there are opportunities for job creation in this area.

Under the heading Vehicles there are 3,123 out of work. This level of unemployment is concerned with the construction and repair of motor vehicles, cycles and aircraft. We can be certain that the greater number out of work under this heading are in the motor business. This is due to a number of factors — imports, the depression of the motor industry due to the high price of petrol and cars.

In the fertiliser and chemical

industry there are 1,887 out of work. In this industry there is great scope for expansion if the farmers were to use more native fertiliser on the land and if our natural gas were to be used as the raw material for an extensive chemical industry.

Papermaking, stationary, bookbinding and printing have 2,341 out of work. This is an industry where there is an obvious scope for job creation — we imported £200 million worth of wood based products last year. The imports were mostly paper. The Clondalkin paper mill closed because it was backward technically, for example, no chemical pulp was manufactured.

The distributive trades have a large number out of work — 13,684. The highest numbers are in general grocery and provisions, 4,155. If rationalisation has caused job losses here it is because of new ways of doing

ECONOMIC LIFE

things in this industry — the supermarkets — rather than because of the extensive introduction of new technology. Clothing and furniture have lost 2,692 jobs in this area and this is due to the depression.

CUTS

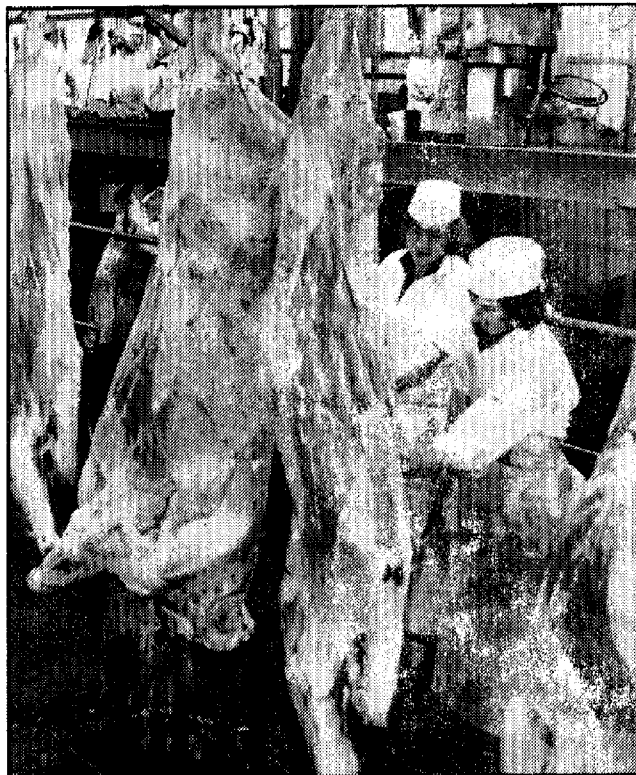
Public administration has lost 5,433 jobs. It is reasonable to ask how many of these jobs have been lost through government spending cuts which mean cuts in services. The list covers national government services and local government services. Services to the public are at a very low level in this country and it is obvious to any reasonably well-informed person that if services here were brought up to a civilized standard many new jobs would be created. New technology is not the cause of unemployment in this area.

There are 6,601 persons out of work under the heading Professions. The list under this heading includes medics and nursing. We need many more people to be employed in this area and it is the sort of work which cannot really be replaced by new technology. New technology can, of course, give this area many aids to do a better job.

ANTI-PEOPLE

The facts and figures we have given do not cover every job lost in the country and it is well to remember that we did not move from a condition of full employment to the present high level of unemployment. The facts we have given do cover about 130,000 job losses and the very latest figures for those out of work puts the figure at about 180,000. The figures and facts in this article show that it is not new technology which is putting people on the dole but — as was stated at the beginning of this article — the anti-people economic policies of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and The Labour Party.

There are many opportunities that the micro-chip — the new villain on the economic scene — can do, but there is a much greater number of operations which it cannot perform. Many jobs are also created in the manufacture of the hardware and software of the new technology. It is the worlds fastest growing, job creating industry at present. A walk around a school or even the toy counter in a shop will show many articles which were not there several years ago. All these new articles are manufactured and are based on micro-electronics.



We need more technology to give us cheap food

The rising generation will not be anti-technology minded — not like some of the old fashioned pessimists in their twenties and thirties who are now going around with one ear cocked listening to the voice of doom coming from advocates of "The Philosophy of Leisure".

Next time you go into a supermarket, or indeed most shops, look at the cash register. It is not much different in principle to the old machine which pushed up flat pieces of metal with a figure painted on. It, of course, prints out a little piece of paper as well and the amounts now come up in little lights. There are very few establishments without these machines now and we can, of course, create jobs by manufacturing them on the national territory.

FACTS OF LIFE

It is not new technology that we need to fear — we will not be competitive without it. We need to fear the people who try to convince us — and the Trade Union movement — that it is now impossible to do anything about unemployment. We need to fear and to expose the people who would have us reject the concept of full employment.

The Professors who profess to be worried about how we will spend all the leisure they say we have coming up never denounce the gangster builders, the Irish

money market and the property speculators who have put over one third of the building industry on the dole while at the same time people are unable to get houses that they can afford. They never denounce the failure to build Local Authority houses so that our young people can get married and raise families.

Rather than listen to what professors say about the need to condition the unemployed to "accept a natural that is unnatural" people should study the real facts of life. The people who listen to rubbish like "The Philosophy of Leisure" are, of course, worse than the professors — they could, if pressed on the matter at least plead an ignorance of real life.

Everyone wants more leisure and by far the greater number of people have no difficulty in discovering ways and means to use it when fortunate enough to have leisure in plenty. The big problem is in finding enough money to enjoy the leisure — to remove anxiety about where the next meal is coming from.

People who are unemployed have very real problems in buying enough food — the price of food being what it is. They have problems in buying shoes that keep out water on a wet street and in maintaining a trousers which does not let in the wind behind — we all wear trousers now.

SAVING JOBS

Advocates of the Leisure Philosophy have seized on new technology — especially the micro-chip to explain mass unemployment. Let us examine a few practical examples of what applying new technology actually means in terms of saving jobs.

The State Company, the IIRS, has been to the fore in developing new technology and saving jobs. But the governments short-sighted policy of attempting to save money on the public sector and hive off work to private enterprise has reduced the number of craft-technicians (fitters and turners) from eight to four. The management has decided to do away with practical work and to concentrate of design and consultancy only.

Here are examples of work that was done over the last few years where machines were designed and built which resulted in the saving of jobs. A manufacturing firm in Limerick wanted a completely new special purpose machine designed and built to test artificial hip-joints. The machine designed, developed and the first model built by the IIRS could test six hip-joints at a go. The results from each test were fed into a computer which decided to pass or to reject. This improved the reliability of the product and helped to increase the share of the world market for this product — an artificial hip-joint.

Bell and Howel in Coolock wanted a new overhead projector developed. The first five prototypes were designed and built by the IIRS which also trained the workforce in their manufacture. The firm wanted a modern reliable, low cost projector for production. They got it from the IIRS.

Ecco in Dundalk discovered that the cost of producing their product — electronic components — was pricing them out of the market. The problem was that they could not test their components until fully assembled and there was a 40% rate of failure. One part of the component was giving problems and what was needed was a machine which could test this part before assembly. The IIRS designed and built a highly successful electronic machine which carried out the necessary tests before assembly.

It is this sort of improved technology which saves jobs. New technology is a blessing not a curse. New advanced technology is the key to full employment

Budget attack on jobs

Eamonn Smullen

THE Republic's Budget took fistfuls of money out of working class pockets. That was one aspect. It also fails to create jobs. This budget differs from the last Coalition Government's budget — this time they do not even pretend to be in the business of creating jobs.

A "Radical Plan" to take 40,000 young people off the dole was announced after the last budget the Coalition introduced — this was the reason they gave for the 1% youth employment levy. In order to give jobs to our young people the workers paid the 1% levy but there are now 57,191 persons under the age of 25 on the live register; this time last year the figure was 41,705.

Government policy was summed up by John Kelly — the Fine Gael TD who wants Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael to come together in government in order to give the country "stable

government". He was obviously expressing what the government does not wish to say, in such blunt terms, when he announced recently that "emigration is needed now". He went on to spell out his meaning in detail by saying that industry, farming and the service sectors should mercilessly hound any and every government which absent-mindedly creates new agencies or expands others to make jobs for jobs sake, support lame ducks for political reasons or assume burdens of social support which should be carried by individuals themselves or by voluntary bodies.

Maggie Thatcher could not have put the matter more bluntly. The government by their budget and activities have shown that this is exactly the course that they intend to follow.

It is important to keep in

mind, in relation to all the figures in the budget, that inflation last year was between 17 and 18%, so unless increased spending reaches that figure it should read as a minus.

ECONOMY NEEDS

Money in massive amounts needs to be spent on building a coal-fired electricity generating capacity. Even the employers organisations are now calling for cheaper electricity in order to reduce costs to the manufacturing industry. A cut of 25% in spending on industry and energy has been made. To this must be added the rate of inflation. If the government wished to take out insurance against the likelihood of an upturn in industrial prosperity this is exactly what they would do.

If money were spent on the construction of a coal-fired

generating capacity many building workers would have a change of a job. The cut made amounts to £57 million.

CONSTRUCTION CUTS

The Building Industry was promised — by the Labour Party — that there would be an increase of £100 million in spending on the industry in the coming year. They were either very dishonest or else their Fine Gael partners pay no heed to them because instead of £100 million increase the industry got a cut of £25 million.

A cut of 9% has been made in aid towards school books. That means that the real cut is over 25%. It is a measure designed to make more difficult the education of people who do not have the blessing of a good income. Mr. John Kelly would obviously put it this way — do not assume burdens of social support which should be carried by the individual or by voluntary bodies (charity).

The money spent on teachers training colleges — an increase of 1% is in reality a cut of at least 16%.

Spending on school building — which would create hobs in the building industry as well as improve educational facilities has received a massive cut of 67% — in reality a cut of at least 84%.

ADDITIONAL CUTS

Less money will be spent on sea-fisheries; the minus 17% should read 34%. It is sometimes said that as an island off Europe we have a trading advantage. It is never said that as an island we should have a highly developed fishing industry. Little has been done to make an all round development of this industry since the time of the Congested Districts Boards.

The money spent on forestry — an area where jobs could be created — although it shows a slight increase over last year is really a cut.

A cut of 14% (31%) in the little money spent on agricultural schools and farms means that less attempts will be made, at this time of high technology, to equip the progressive elements in the farming community to compete in the modern world. A failure to produce more means a further loss of jobs in the food-processing industry. Money spent on scholarships and training in this area also shows a massive cut of 85%.

What ever can be said against Mr. John Kelly it must be admitted that he tells the truth.



Martin Turner/Irish Times

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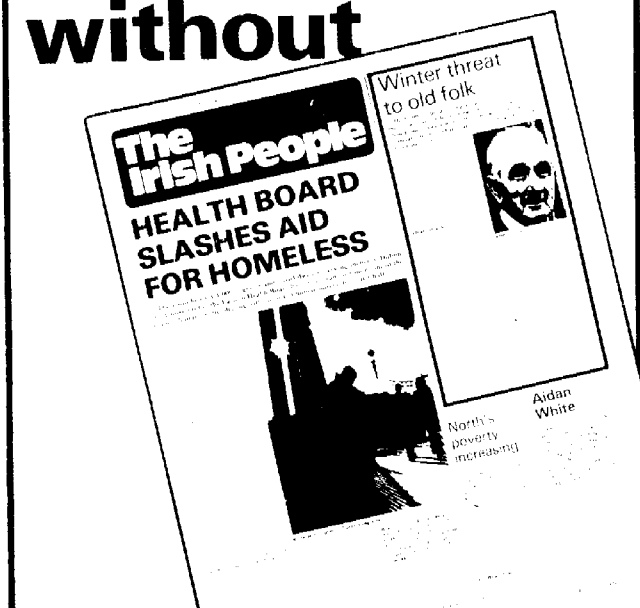
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Measuring the wages gap

THAT the world of work is still a man's world is never more apparent than on payday. In some countries men earn more than twice as much as women working in the same sector, and although the gap between men's and women's wages is not always so glaring, it exists in varying degrees everywhere.

In 1981, for example, in non-agricultural activities average earnings of women as compared to those of men ranged from 44.8 per cent in the Republic of Korea to 86.2 per cent in Australia, and in the manufacturing sector alone from 43.4 per cent in Japan to 90.1 per cent in Sweden.

These findings emerge from an analysis made by the International Labour Office's Bureau of Statistics of women's earnings compared with those of men in 1977 and 1981.

This analysis covers 15 countries for which data are available on both men's and women's wages in non-agricultural activities — three in Asia, 10 in Europe and two in Oceania — and manufacturing industries in 19 countries — three in Asia, 14 in Europe and two in Oceania. The data used refer to gross wages reported in national currency and are published in the 1982 edition of the *ILO Year Book of Labour Statistics*.

However, these figures should be used with caution when making international comparisons because concepts, definitions, sources and scope often vary from one country to another. Furthermore, men and women often have different kinds of jobs, so that wage differences between the sexes may reflect job differences as well as sex differences.

Non-agricultural activities

The ratios of earnings of women working in non-agricultural activities compared with those of men in 1977 and 1981 were lowest in



In some countries men earn twice as much as women working in the same sector

the Republic of Korea — 44.0 per cent and 44.8 per cent respectively — and highest in Australia, where they were 86.3 per cent and 86.2 per cent.

Between these two extremes, the gap between women's and men's earnings widened slightly from 1977 and 1981 in seven countries: Czechoslovakia, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For example, the earnings of women compared to those of men went from 55.8 per cent to 53.3 per cent in Japan, and from 71.9 per cent to 69.5 per cent in the United Kingdom.

Whether salaried employees or

wage-earners, women fared the same in the Netherlands, which had made data available for both groups, and showed a drop of 2.4 points in the two categories compared with the earnings of their male colleagues. In the period from 1977 to 1981, the percentage for salaried women employees was 79.8 and 77.4 and for women wage earners 79.4 and 77.0.

During this period there was some improvement in women's remuneration in six countries: Belgium, Cyprus, France, Iceland, New Zealand and Switzerland. The increase was highest in Iceland going from 80.1 per cent to 83.7 per cent. In Belgium and Switzerland increases of 70.0 per cent to 71.6 per cent and 66.6 per cent to 67.8 per cent respectively were recorded.

Manufacturing industries

Japanese women working in the manufacturing sector experienced further erosion of their earnings as compared to those of men as they dropped to 43.4 per cent in 1981, down from 46.0 per cent in 1977. This was the most marked decrease in the 19 countries included in this analysis. Women's earnings as compared to those of men also went down in Denmark, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

Women in manufacturing in Ireland fared better with their earnings improving from 61.4 per cent to 67.6 per cent during this period.

In Sweden, however, women continued to narrow the earnings gap with 90.1 per cent in 1981, up from 87.4 per cent in 1977.

In addition to Sweden, seven other European countries reported wages ratios of over 70 per cent for women workers as compared to men in 1981, and less than 70 per cent for women in Czechoslovakia, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Going beyond these figures, it should be stated that while equality of wages between men and women is a desirable goal, it is difficult to say in what measure the inequality in earnings reflects wage discrimination, and how much it arises because women predominantly occupy jobs that are lower paid.

DERMATITIS: THE MOST WIDESPREAD INDUSTRIAL DISEASE?

Mike Duncan

IN the grisly league for the title of the most widespread industrial disease, dermatitis must be a prime contender. It affects people that are (wrongly) not always thought to be at risk from their occupation like hairdressers, housewives and nurses. Few occupations in fact, can be considered to be completely free from the threat of contracting dermatitis. In Britain an average of 630,000 days are lost from work every year as a result of this disease. In 1977, 65% of industrial injury benefit paid for prescribed diseases i.e. those diseases recognised by the State to be occupational in origin was for dermatitis sufferers.

What is it?

Dermatitis simply means inflammation of the skin(-itis means inflammation) but the term covers a wide range of symptoms from a mild rash to unsightly and disabling sores covering wide areas of the body.

A moment's thought will convince you that it is hardly surprising that a disease of the skin should be so widespread, when it is that organ which is in the front line of attack for all types of substances in the environment. You may not have noticed it, but skin does a lot more than keep you in.

What causes it?

Dermatitis can result from a number of factors (see Figure 1) sometimes in combination, but by far the most common cause is exposure to industrial chemicals. Dermatitis chem-

icals will act either as irritants or sensitizers. The irritants have a direct action on the skin. In order to provoke a response, the substance must penetrate the horny outer layer of the skin which is its main defence. But this defence is unbalanced if the right combination of natural oils and water in the skin is upset. Therefore primary irritants act by degreasing the skin, by dehydrating it or by damaging the skin protein.

How effective the agent is at causing dermatitis will depend partly on its own potency, and on the susceptibility of the individual. Strong acids and alkalis will affect everyone, while milder materials may only cause dermatitis after repeated and prolonged exposure.

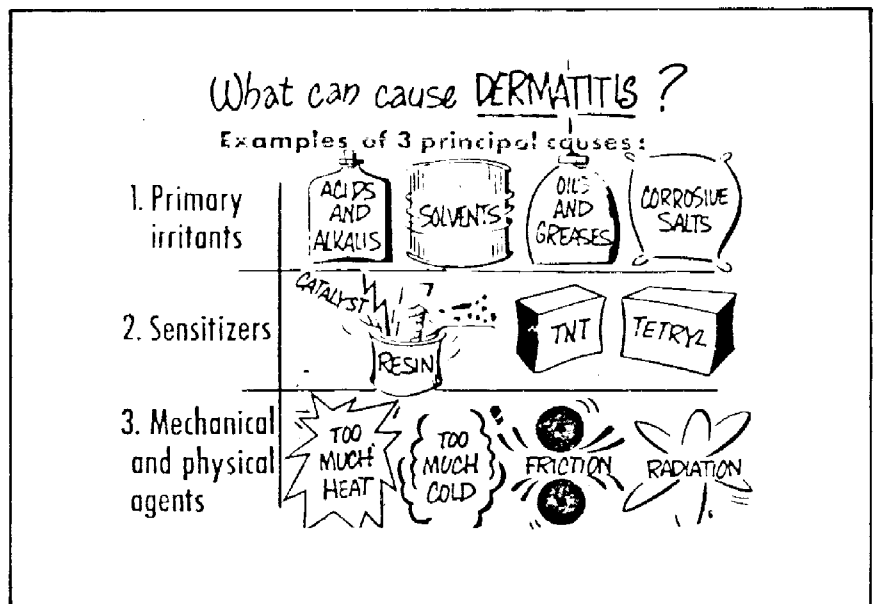
Table 1 gives a few (a very few)

examples of the vast and apparently ever-increasing range of chemicals that are primary irritants. The one consolation is that generally dermatitis caused by a direct irritant will go away when the agent is removed, and does not spread to the rest of the body. But this often means that a worker can no longer earn his or her living at their normal job. Many women who have started out to be hairdressers have had their careers cut short in this way.

Contact Dermatitis

While, on the face of it, the mechanism of irritant dermatitis is fairly simple, contact dermatitis which results from sensitising chemicals, is much more complex.

Basically what happens is that after a certain amount of exposure,



IRRITANT CHEMICALS

Acetaldehyde	Coal tar compounds	Hydrogen peroxide	Selenium compounds
Acetic acid	Cobalt compounds		Silver compounds
Acetic anhydride		Mercury compounds	Stoddard solvent
Aluminium salts	Dinitrobenzene	Methyl bromide	Sulfuric acid
Ammonia	Dinitrophenol	Methyl cellosolve	
Amyl alcohol	Dinitrotoluene	Methyl cellosolve acetate	Tetrachloroethane
Aniline		Methyl chloride	Tetrachloroethylene
	Ethyl acetate		Thallium compounds
Barium compounds	Ethyl benzene	Naphtha (coal tar)	Tin compounds
Bromine	Ethyl bromide	Naphtha (petroleum)	Toluene
1,3-butadiene	Ethyl chloride	beta-naphthylamine	Toluene diisocyanate
n-butyl acetate		Nickel compounds	Trichloroethylene
n-butyl alcohol	Formaldehyde	Nitric acid	Turpentine
	Freon	Nitroglycerine	
Cadmium compounds	Furfural		Vinyl chloride
Carbon disulfide		Perchloroethylene	
Carbon tetrachloride	Gasoline (Petrol)	Phenol	Xylcne
Chlorinated lime		Phosgene	
Chlorine	Hydrazine	Phosphine	Zinc compounds
Chloroform	Hydrocyanic acid	Phosphorus trichloride	
Chromic acid	Hydrogen chloride	Picric acid	
Chromium compounds	Hydrogen fluoride	Pyridine	

sometimes a very long exposure, the allergenic (allergy causing) substance combines with a protein in the body to produce a 'foreign' compound against which the body produces a specific allergic response. In effect the body is rejecting the 'foreign' substance. Once an individual is sensitised to a particular chemical then further contact even years afterwards with even a tiny amount will provoke the allergic response.

Sometimes this response will be provoked by substances which are only *similar* to the original material. Other people may be able to work with the same substance without any problem, and this makes it more difficult to track down the offending substance. And just to complicate the situation even further, some chemicals which are primary irritants will also act as contact sensitisers. However some chemicals or compounds such as epoxy resins, isocyanates for making polyurethanes, ethyl and methyl methacrylate, formaldehyde, nickel and coolant oils are just a few of the well known sensitisers.

How to prevent it

It can be said without fear of contradiction that in this case prevention is better than cure, since in order to cure you have to prevent contact anyway. By far the best way is to substitute a less harmful

different material for the dermatitic agent, or to enclose the process so that all contact is removed. But if that is impossible, they try to abide by the following precautions and you will at least cut down the risk —

(a) Wear gloves and other protective equipment provided and change them regularly.

(b) Make sure that even the smallest cut is adequately covered. Remember that once your skin is damaged then substances can pass through much more easily.

(c) If you use epoxy resins do not allow them to harden on the skin.

(d) Do not use abrasives or solvents to clean skin. Abrasives will damage the outer layer and solvents will degrease the skin.

(e) Wash and dry your hands and any other exposed parts thoroughly and do not work in oilsoaked clothes.

(f) Finally, if you have any skin problems go to your doctor.

Barrier creams are often recommended by, amongst other people, barrier cream companies. In some cases they have been shown to be not only useless, but to aid the transport of chemicals through the skin. The only benefit that they appear to have is that consistent and through application may stop dirt from becoming ingrained in the skin, thus removing the need to use harsh methods of removal.

Even if they were marvellous they are not a good solution since the application has to be very thorough and, by definition, the cream gets rubbed off as you work.

Apart from the pain and suffering that a bad case of dermatitis represents, it is often associated with loss of earnings. Trade unions must tackle this problem from the root cause. It is not people who cause dermatitis but substances. Too much emphasis is placed by employers and manufacturers on the personal hygiene of workers as the cause of dermatitis and not enough on finding ways to prevent it at source. If workers had to be transferred to another job with no loss of earnings, employers and manufacturers would be stimulated to find real solutions to what is a terrible problem instead of blaming the worker.

'Trade unions must tackle this problem from the root cause'

AVERTING WAR IN EUROPE

Des O'Hagan

VIENNA, February 6—9 was the location of a major peace conference which has received practically no attention from the Irish media. Organised round the theme "Proposals to avert the dangers of war in Europe", almost 250 participants and observers from 29 countries spoke in what must be reckoned as a crucial conference in the world-wide struggle to stop the outbreak of a nuclear holocaust.

Keynote speakers from both Eastern and Western countries were agreed that the present situation was extremely dangerous and that every effort must be made to mobilise the forces of peace.

Ingrid Lehmann, in a message from the Secretary General of the United Nations, pointed out that in spite of the number of significant accomplishments in the field of disarmament, "there are three tons of high explosives per human being on earth. As if this were not enough, military expenditures world-wide add up to one million dollars being spend every minute of every hour every day."

Ms Lehmann stressed the importance attached by the UN to public opinion and the effect it can have in promoting disarmament, hence the launching on June 7 last year of a World Disarmament Campaign. "The Campaign is to be carried out in all regions of the world in a balanced, factual and objective manner, and its universality should be guaranteed, as the Assembly stated, 'by the co-operation and participation of all States and by the

widest possible dissemination of information and unimpeded access for all sectors of the public to a broad range of information and opinions on questions of arms limitation and disarmament, and the dangers relating to all aspects of the arms race and war, in particular nuclear war',"

Labour's commitment

Reverend Richard McSorley SJ, Director of the Centre for Peace Study, Georgetown, Washington, also speaking at the inaugural session, outlined the desire of American citizens for a world free from the threat of war. "Last June, one million people marched for peace in New York. This was the largest demonstration of any kind ever held in the United States.

"The nuclear freeze was voted on by 32 million people in last year's election in nine states, 15 cities and many counties. 95% of the people voting supported a bilateral and immediate freeze of all nuclear weapons.

"In the Congress Senators Kennedy and Hatfield have proposed a Bill supporting the freeze that will receive much political support," he claimed. (Senator Kennedy called for the cancellation of US Pershing II and Cruise missiles if the Soviet Union reduce an equivalent number of warheads. *Congressional Record*, September 30, 1982.)

Rev. McSorley said that a turning point in the history of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States

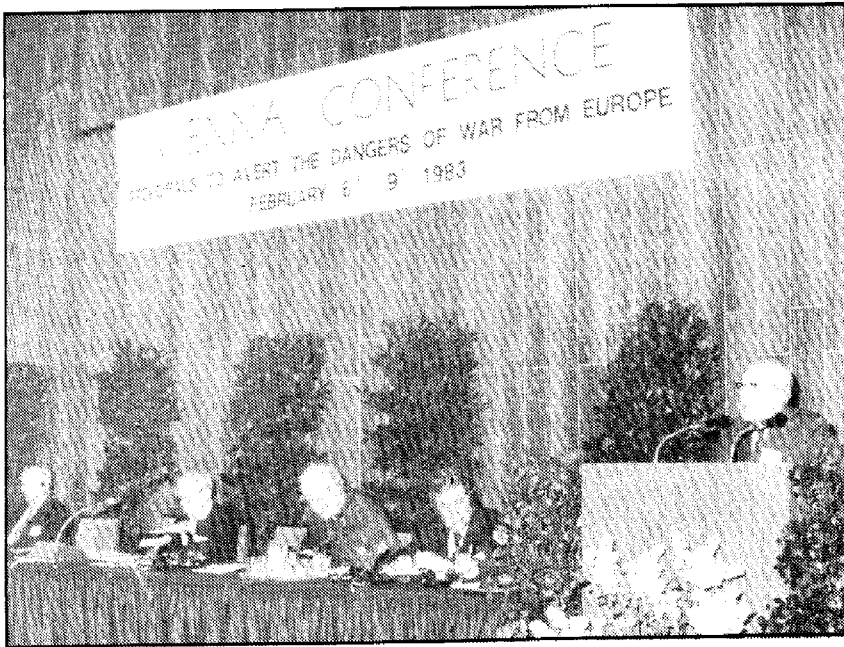
had been reached recently when 320 bishops, representing 50 million Roman Catholic people, called, in their draft pastoral letter, for: "No to nuclear weapons. No to the intent to use nuclear weapons. No to a first strike. No to strategic targeting of enemy weapons and force."

McSorley concluded, "This strong statement made by the Bishops' conference, even though it is not yet final, has brought a letter of public protest from the White House. Government officials are concerned that the pastoral letter will make it difficult for Roman Catholics to support the nuclear policy of the United States."

Mr William McKelvey, British Labour MP speaking on behalf of the leader of the Opposition, Mr Michael Foot, said that he (Foot), "has categorically stated this week that an incoming Labour Government would remove such missiles from British soil. No prevarication — no equivocation — no compromise — this is Labour's commitment.

"To be more specific, Labour will immediately, on taking power, cancel the Trident programme. We will close down all nuclear bases, British or American, on British soil or in British waters as a direct contribution to the creation of a nuclear free zone."

British Labour Party disarmament policy was, according to the speaker, based on the belief that "by unilaterally disarming, Britain will improve the chance of multi-lateral solutions at an international level".



Vienna platform (from left to right): J. Cyrankiewicz (Poland), S. McBride (Ireland), Rev. R. McSorley (USA), A. Chitikov (USSR), A. DeSmaele (Belgium).

Concluding on a very positive note, Mr McKelvey MP, pledged, "Those of us in Labour Action for Peace will redouble our efforts to ensure that our Party policies on peace and unilateral disarmament will *not* remain unfulfilled visions and dreams but will become the reality which will pave the way for lasting European and world peace".

USSR co-operation

Mr Sean MacBride (Ireland), presiding over the inaugural session, then asked Mr Alexei Chitikov, Chairman of the Council of the USSR Supreme Soviet to address the Conference. In a lengthy and carefully worded speech Mr Chitikov left no doubt as to "the acute urgency of the problem of removing military threat from Europe".

He condemned the leading circles of the main power in the West and in the North Atlantic Alliance — the USA "who departed from the policy of detente, the cradle of which was Europe".

"These circles having unleashed a qualitatively new and much more dangerous round of the arms race, pursue the aim of destroying the existing strategic balance, which was officially recognised by the US leadership in 1979 during the signing of SALT 2, to ensure for themselves a military superiority to dominate

world developments. This stand resulted in openly aggressive strategic doctrines of 'the first disarming strike' of 'limited', 'protracted' and other types of nuclear war, targeted first of all at Europe".

Mr Chitikov proceeded to outline the attitude of his government and people to this renewed upsurge in "cold-war" policies.

"The Soviet people believe that any design to unleash a nuclear war and gain victory in it is senseless.

Any nuclear conflict will unavoidably be catastrophic for civilization and the very life on Earth." At the same time, the USSR was convinced that "Any attempts to start a new 'crusade' against the world of Socialism will only lead to a dangerous aggravation of international tension which threatens the interests of *all* (I stress) *all* countries and *all* peoples".

Mr Chitikov declared the preparedness of the USSR "to cooperate with all countries who express their readiness to save European and human civilization". Equally, the USSR did "not reject any attempt to reach agreement on a just and equal basis with the US and its allies on a number of key problems, and especially in the field of curbing the arms race".

Detente for the USSR is still very much a live issue.

As the Soviet Union had undertaken a unilateral commitment not to resort to the first use of nuclear weapons, Mr Chitikov made a renewed plea to the West to undertake a mutual commitment "not to be the first to use nuclear or conventional weapons and thus, not to be the first to use any military force against each other in general".

To the extensive range of proposals which Mr Chitikov claimed the USSR had presented, with a view to eliminating all nuclear weapons, Pershings, Cruise



'Any design to unleash a nuclear war and gain victory in it is senseless'

WORKERS WORLD

and (Soviet) SS 20s, the US had responded with a "mockery, called the zero option". This would, he said, eliminate all Soviet medium range missiles and actually increase NATO nuclear power in Europe.

It was regrettable that there was no American presence of the same political standing as Mr Chitikov to hear him firmly commit the Soviet Union to the concept of nuclear free zones in different parts of the continent or to listen to his absolute rejection of the idea that "Europe is only a remote theatre of military action on operative maps".

In a passionate statement in his conclusion he summed up the feeling of his audience, "But for all of us, Europe is our common home, where we treasure every pebble, every tree, it is the home of our ancestors and our grandchildren, one of the cradles and centres of world civilization, created and developed by the tireless efforts and genius of many generations. It is a continent which in the past endured many hardships and tragedies and through these hardships, gained the right for a peaceful future."

Commissions' proposals

The Conference following the plenary session divided into three Commissions: Military and Political; Social and Economic; Ethical and Juridical. A full report of all the deliberations, conclusions and recommendations is to be published



Irish delegation at Vienna, seated fourth row from front: Des O'Hagan, Seamus Lynch, Pat Rabbitte, Séan O'Cionnaith

as soon as possible. However, we have at hand a summary of the Irish delegation's interventions and the main deliberations of the Commissions.

Sean Ó Cionnaith, Director of International Affairs, The Workers' Party, attacked the decision by President Reagan to appoint the US Ambassador to Ireland, Mr Peter Dailey "to head the massive campaign to sell US arms policy in Western Europe". He quoted Deputy Proinsias De Rossa (WP)

speaking in Dáil Éireann, January 26, 1983. "It is quite unacceptable that a man who heads a diplomatic mission to this country should at the same time be promoting military policies of a super-power, and the siting of new and deadly missiles in Europe."

Also speaking at the Military and Political Commission, Workers' Party Vice-President Seamus Lynch rejected the suggestion currently being discussed in British and Irish circles "that the problem of peace on our island and that of reunification may be solved if the Government of the Republic agree to the siting of a number of nuclear missiles bases".

Mr Lynch called for the twinning of towns and regions and said that The Workers' Party would be proposing to local councils that they should declare themselves nuclear free zones.

The Chairman of the Irish Committee for European Security and Co-operation, Des O'Hagan said that the citizens of Europe "must not only be informed of the horrific dangers which we face, but they also must be assured that the tide in favour of peace is overwhelming those who contemplate vile anti-human ideas such as limited nuclear war". To maintain the momentum for peace and a con-

"Removing the threat of a world war — a nuclear war — is the most acute and urgent task of the present day. Mankind is confronted with a choice: we must halt the arms race and proceed to disarmament or face annihilation." (First Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Disarmament, 1978.

structive disarmament programme, he called for a European Mass Media Workers' Conference to debate the responsibility of the media in promoting peace.

Irish Transport and General Workers' Union Group Secretary Pat Rabbitte, rejected "the conventional wisdom that disarmament would lead to unemployment.

"Reconversion will not worsen the employment situation but will, rather, release resources for the production of goods that are socially useful and necessary for economic development and the improvement of the quality of life for working people," he said.

Mr Rabbitte endorsed the proposal for a media conference and attacked the failure of Western media to "explain how the release of this massive potential of science and technology could be put at the disposal of the Third World in the interests of mankind".

Naturally there was considerable

overlap in the discussions within the Commissions, but far more importantly was the degree of unanimity on the need to pursue positive and concrete steps to mobilise and strengthen public opinion against the arms race and in favour of peace.

From the Ethical and Juridical Commission came a call to create "an atmosphere of mutual confidence between peoples and states in the spirit of the Helsinki Final Act; to reaffirm the process of detente and peaceful co-existence between nations".

Given the scope of its deliberations, the Social and Economic Commission provided a lengthy report which had as its main recommendations: education for peace in schools, colleges, universities and research institutes; the convening of a mass media conference on the theme "Peace News is Good News"; the establishment of a permanent structure of a secretariat type to follow up the Final Act of Helsinki.

In the economic sphere the report stresses the damage done to all economies by the arms race and noted in particular the 30 million unemployed in the OECD countries and the effects of this crisis on every aspect of life. The entire question of the reconversion of the arms industry to peaceful production was a matter which required thorough investigation and stimulation through existing international and European bodies. Equally the role of such organisations e.g. the Economic Commission for Europe, should be deepened and strengthened. At the same time UN bodies such as UNESCO must be encouraged to play a greater role in education for peace.

The Vienna Conference for proposals to avert the dangers of war in Europe must be seen as a critical initial step in the mobilisation of all political, military, social, economic, ethical and juridical forces for peace.

THE WORKERS PARTY

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS CONFERENCE

SATURDAY 12th & SUNDAY 13th MARCH 1983

LIBERTY HALL (SOCIAL HALL) DUBLIN

WORK & CULTURE

The Solitude of Latin America

Gabriel Garcia Márquez, who won the 1982 Nobel Prize in literature, delivered the following Nobel lecture in Stockholm in December. It was translated from the Spanish by Marina Castaneda.

ANTONIO Pigafetta, a Florentine navigator who went with Magellan on the first voyage around the world, wrote, upon his passage through our southern lands of America, a strictly accurate account that nonetheless resembles a venture into fantasy.

In it he recorded that he had seen hogs with navels on their haunches, clawless birds whose hens laid eggs on the backs of their mates, and others still, resembling tongueless pelicans, with beaks like spoons. He wrote of having seen a misbegotten creature with the head and ears of a mule, a camel's body, the legs of a deer and the whinny of a horse. He described how the first native encountered in Patagonia was confronted with a mirror, whereupon that impassioned giant lost his senses to the terror of his own image.

This short and fascinating book, which even then contained the seeds of our present-day novels, is by no means the most staggering account of our reality in that age.

The Chroniclers of the Indies left us countless others. El Dorado, our so avidly sought and illusory land, appeared on numerous maps for many a long year, shifting its place and form to suit the fantasy of cartographers. In his search for the fountain of eternal youth, the mythical Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca explored the north of Mexico for eight years, in a deluded expedition whose members devoured each other and only five of whom returned, of the 600 who had undertaken it.

One of the many unfathomed mysteries of that age is that of the 11,000 mules, each loaded with 100 pounds of gold, that left Cuzco one day to pay the ransom of Atahualpa and never reached their destination. Subsequently, in colonial times, hens were sold in Cartagena de Indias that had been raised on alluvial land and whose gizzards contained tiny lumps of gold.

One founder's lust for gold beset us until recently. As late as the last century, a German mission appointed to study the construction of an interoceanic railroad across the Isthmus of Panama concluded that the project was feasible on one condition: that the rails not be made of iron, which was scarce in the region, but of gold.

Our independence from Spanish domination did not

put us beyond the reach of madness. General Antonio López de Santana, three times dictator of Mexico, held a magnificent funeral for the right leg he had lost in the so-called Pastry War. General Gabriel Garcia Moreno ruled Ecuador for 16 years as an absolute monarch; at his wake, the corpse was seated on the presidential chair, decked out in full dress uniform and a protective layer of medals.

General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez, the theosophical despot of El Salvador who had 30,000 peasants slaughtered in a savage massacre, invented a pendulum to detect poison in his food, and had street lamps draped in red paper to defeat an epidemic of scarlet fever. The statue to General Francisco Morazán erected in the main square of Tegucigalpa is actually one of Marshal Ney, purchased at a Paris warehouse of second-hand sculptures.

Eleven years ago, the Chilean Pablo Neruda, one of the outstanding poets of our time, enlightened this audience with his word. Since then, the Europeans of good will — and sometimes those of bad, as well — have been struck, with ever greater force, by the unearthly tidings, of Latin America, that boundless realm of haunted men and historic women, whose unending obstinacy blurs into legend.

We have not had a moment's rest. A promethean president, entrenched in his burning palace, died fighting an entire army, alone; and two suspicious airplane accidents, yet to be explained, cut short the life of another great-hearted president and that of a democratic soldier who had revived the dignity of his people.

There have been 5 wars and 17 military coups, there emerged a diabolic dictator who is carrying out, in God's name, the first Latin American ethnocide of our time. In the meantime, 20 million Latin American children died before the age of 1 — more than have ever been born in Europe since 1970. Those missing because of repression number nearly 120,000, which is as if no one could account for all the inhabitants of Uppsala.

Numerous women arrested while pregnant have given birth in Argentine prisons, yet nobody knows the whereabouts and identity of their children, who were furtively adopted or sent to an orphanage by order of the military authorities.

Because they tried to change this state of things, nearly 200,000 men and women have died throughout the continent, and more than 100,000 have lost their lives in three small and ill-fated countries of Central

America: Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. If this had happened in the United States, the corresponding figure would be that of 1,600,000 violent deaths in four years.

One million people have fled Chile, a country with a tradition of hospitality — that is, 10 per-cent of its population. Uruguay, a tiny nation of 2.5 million inhabitants, which considered itself the continent's most civilized country, has lost to exile one out of every five citizens. Since 1979, the civil war in El Salvador has produced almost one refugee every 20 minutes. The country that could be formed of all the exiles and forced emigrants of Latin America would have a population larger than that of Norway.

I dare to think that it is this outsized reality, and not just its literary expression, that has deserved the attention of the Swedish Academy of Letters. A reality not of paper, but one that lives within us and determines each instant of our countless daily deaths, and that nourishes a source of insatiable creativity, full of sorrow and beauty, of which this roving and nostalgic Colombian is but one cipher more, singled out by fortune.

Poets and beggars, musicians and prophets, warriors and scoundrels, all creatures of that unbridled reality, we have had to ask but little of imagination, for our crucial problem has been a lack of conventional means to render our lives believable. This, my friends, is the crux of our solitude.

And if these difficulties, whose essence we share, hinder us, it is understandable that the rational talents on this side of the world, exalted in the contemplation of their own cultures, should have found themselves without a valid means to interpret us.

It is only natural that they insist on measuring us with the yardstick that they use for themselves, forgetting that the ravages of life are not the same for all, and that the quest of our own identity, is just as arduous and bloody for us as it was for them. The interpretation of our reality through patterns not our own serves only to make us ever more unknown, ever less free, ever more solitary.

Venerable Europe would perhaps be more perceptive if it tried to see us in its own past. If only it recalled that London took 300 years to build its first city wall, and 300 years more to acquire a bishop; that Rome labored in a gloom of uncertainty for 20 centuries, until an Etruscan king anchored it in history; and that the peaceful Swiss of today, who feast us with their mild cheeses and apathetic watches, bloodied Europe as soldiers of fortune as late as the 16th century.

Even at the height of the Renaissance, 12,000 lansquenets in the pay of the imperial armies sacked and devastated Rome and put 8,000 of its inhabitants to the sword.

I do not mean to embody the illusions of Tonio Kröger, whose dreams of uniting a chaste north to a passionate south were exalted here, 53 years ago, by Thomas Mann. But I do believe that those clear-sighted Europeans who struggle, here as well, for a more just and humane homeland could help us far better if they reconsidered their way of seeing us.

Solidarity with our dreams will not make us feel less

alone, as long as it is not translated into concrete acts of legitimate support for all the peoples that assume the illusion of having a life of their own in the distribution of the world.

Latin America neither wants, nor has any reason, to be a pawn without a will of its own; nor is it merely wishful thinking that its quest for independence and originality should become a Western aspiration. However, the navigational advances that have narrowed such distances between our Americas and Europe seem, conversely, to have accentuated our cultural remoteness.

Why is the originality so readily granted us in literature so mistrustfully denied us in our different attempts at social change? Why think that the social justice sought by progressive Europeans for their own countries cannot also be a goal for Latin America, with different methods for dissimilar conditions?

No: The immeasurable violence and pain of our history are the result of age-old inequities and untold bitterness, and not a conspiracy plotted 3,000 leagues from our homes. But many European leaders and thinkers have thought so, with the childishness of old-timers who have forgotten the fruitful excesses of their youth, as if it were impossible to find another destiny than to live at the mercy of the two great masters of the world. This, my friends, is the very scale of our solitude.

In spite of this, to oppression, plundering and abandonment, we respond with life. Neither floods nor plagues, nor famines nor cataclysms, nor even the eternal wars of century upon century have been able to subdue the persistent advantage of life over death.

An advantage that grows and quickens: Every year, there are 74 million more births than deaths, a sufficient number of new lives to multiply, each year, the population of New York sevenfold. Most of these births occur in the countries of least resources — including of course, those of Latin America.

Conversely, the most prosperous countries have succeeded in accumulating powers of destruction such as to annihilate, a hundred times over, not only all the human beings that have existed to this day but also the totality of all living beings that have ever drawn breath on this planet of misfortune.

On a day like today, my master William Faulkner said, "I decline to accept the end of man." I would feel unworthy of standing in this place that was his if I were not fully aware that the colossal tragedy he refused to recognize 32 years ago is now, for the first time since the beginning of humanity, nothing more than a simple scientific possibility.

Faced with this awesome reality that must have seemed a mere utopia through all of human time, we, the inventors of tales, who will believe anything, feel entitled to believe that it is not yet too late to engage in the creation of the opposite utopia. A new and sweeping utopia of life, where no one will be able to decide for others how they die, where love will prove true and happiness be possible, and where the races condemned to one hundred years of solitude will have, at last and forever, a second opportunity on earth.

ARRESTING ECONOMIC DECLINE

Paul Sweeney

THINGS may be bad here, but they are far worse in Britain. A new, radical, virulent form of conservatism, Thatcherism, which is more than just an economic philosophy, has driven unemployment up from 1.3 million in 1979 to over 3 million today. It has de-industrialised or smashed industry in a way which would make a Luddite weep with joy. However, arising from Britain's rich history of labour struggle and theory, socialists have produced radical new social and economic theories, and have abandoned the old clichés which still tend to predominate here. These are called Alternative Economic Strategies (AES's) and have been produced by groups within the labour and socialist movement such as the Conference of Socialist Economists and the TUC. All are broadly similar, and Sam Aaronovitch makes a further contribution to the debate.

AES is not just an economic strategy, but is part of a broad strategy to advance the interests of the majority of the people. It is aimed at non-socialists too, as it is seen to be essential to win broad support now for an alternative to Thatcherism. It is not a programme for the socialist reconstruction of Britain. It does, however, represent a challenge to the power of private capital, and it contributes to a strategy for socialism. It is firmly rooted in the present, and is a basis for action now. Aaronovitch feels that it is essential that trade unions, community groups, feminists, CND, and all voluntary organisations start now to pressurize for change, so that the preconditions can be set for the further implementation of the AES under a Left government.

BOOKS

THE ROAD FROM THATCHERISM by Sam Aaronovitch; Lawrence and Wishart; £2.95 sterling.

Much of the programme would be put into practice by a Left Labour government, but of course, the possibility of such a government here is unlikely in the foreseeable future, particularly with the eclipse of the Irish Labour Party by the pseudo-liberals of Fine Gael, and its possible demise as a socialist party. Therefore, the different balance of class forces plus the varying material conditions would mean that an Irish AES would have to be considerably different to the British, with more emphasis on the contradictions of current policy advocating progressive reforms, and less on what should be done in the unlikely event of a Left government. Aaronovitch believes that the balance of class forces in Britain is such that pressure can be brought to bear on a Tory government for change in many areas, and that such pressure must come from the masses, and not just socialists. If such action does not develop now, then a Left government may never come, he says.

Aaronovitch outlines how Britain got into its present mess with the Right Labour Government of 1974-79, which accepted British capitalism, paved the way for the radical conservatism of Thatcher, and how that government made nationalisation a dirty word through

public ownership by default (as has happened here recently) and state companies which were 'bureaucratic and even despotic with decision-making far removed from those who worked in them or who used them as consumers'. Indeed, opposition to the AES comes from leading members of the Labour Party such as Denis Healy and others now in the SDP, whose concept of socialism is bounded by the idea of 'equality' arising mainly from tax and welfare policies, and not from ending the dominance of capital, and who equate socialism with state intervention, nationalisation, and who fear a genuine grass roots movement.

The author argues for economic expansion with increased state investment of a democratic kind to reflate the economy. Economic democracy — far beyond the state of parliament — is needed, and he devotes a lot of space to this concept. He favours planning, but rejects central planning from above, and calls for democratic planning with the involvement of workers, enterprises, local authorities, government etc. The public sector must be expanded into key areas such as banking, insurance, infrastructure and certain key manufacturing firms should be taken over. Compulsory planning agreements could

be introduced for major industries, with trade unions and other interest groups making up a majority on their boards. He also has a strategy for dealing with the multi-nationals.

The need for import controls and foreign exchange controls are examined, and he deals with this area in a different way to Irish radical nationalists whose motivation is based more on xenophobia, particularly anglophobia, than economic analysis. He predictably rejects continued membership of the EEC, and outlines a new social strategy with emphasis on equal access and democracy.

Just as right-wing Labour opposes the AES, inevitably so does the ultra-left Militant and SWP, who regard it as reformist because it is a 'regeneration of capital, making it work more effectively', and because it embraces non-socialists. Aaronovitch deals effectively with them, saying that they are still stuck with the same concept of revolution as 1917; that they see modern capitalist society as a cauldron of discontent contained only by conspiracy between right-wing social democrats and big capitalists. Workers are only waiting to be told the truth of their exploitation (guess who by?) and they will rise up, singing the *Internationale*, with a red flag in one hand and an armalite in the other! Of course, if such a revolution is successful in one country, it's no good, because we will have to await that day (never to come?) when there are simultaneous successful revolutions in the major capitalist countries. The ultra-left fail to see revolution as a process, not a single decisive event.

There has never been such disillusionment, such lack of new



'*Betting Office, The Red Cow, Clondalkin*,' one of the photographs from Robert Ballagh's '*Dublin*', published by Ward River Press (IRE7.50 paperback).

ideas, such apathy in the face of adversity, such lack of leadership within the Irish labour movement since the 1950s. In the 1960s and 1970s, there was economic growth and social development (however limited), but now there are over 200,000 unemployed. Irish socialists would do well to bury their clichés and study the British AES's, study some new ideas, and gain inspiration from the work already done by others. Sam Aaronovitch's book is one such work which should be studied. It is clearly written and is full of ideas, many of which are applicable here, and many of which could be modified and developed.

Power to the people?

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN IRELAND by Desmond Roche, Institute of Public Administration; IRE15.00

If the key to a state's

commitment to democracy can be found in its local government, then Ireland rates rather poorly. The extension of the franchise in the years subsequent to the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, has ironically been accompanied by a trend towards centralisation of power: the enlargement of administrative areas (with county councils and borough corporations being the main and major units), on the one hand, while on the other the Minister has assured his continuing control over local authority activity. Quite rightly, many of the original functions of local authorities (such as health and social welfare) have been shifted to the national arena, but this has not led commensurately to the de-centralisation of powers which should lie within the local authority functions, aside from the provision of important infra-structural and cultural/social resources, the prime area of

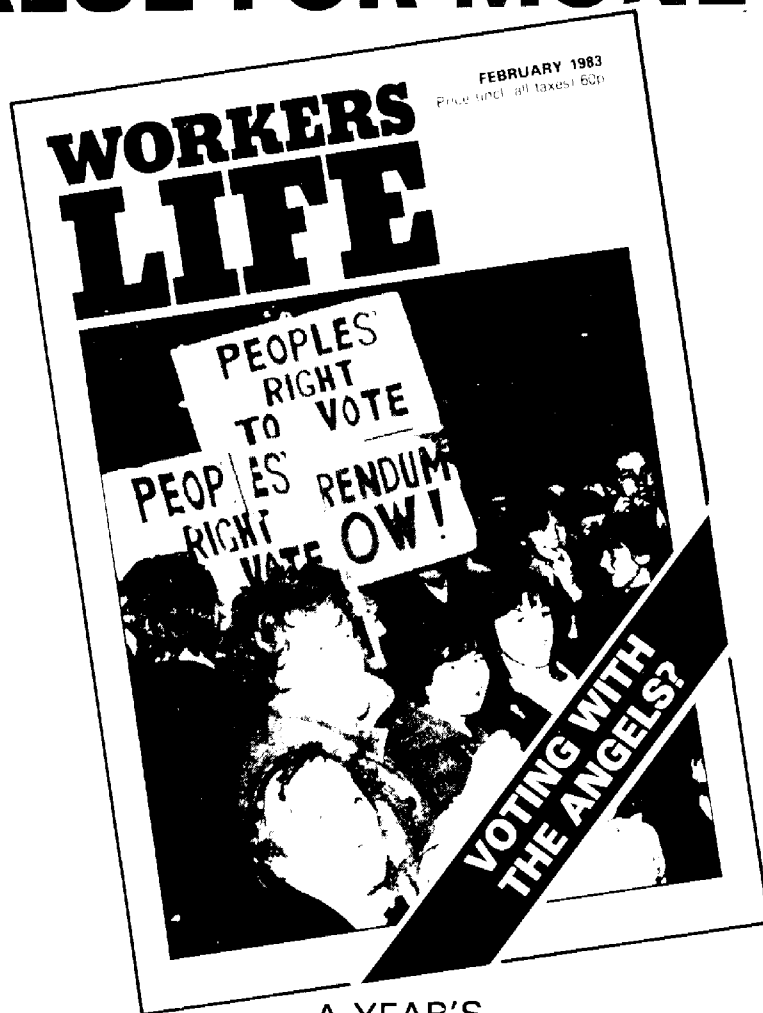
power rests only with planning and development — the power to rezone.

The abolition of domestic rates was widely welcomed in 1977, but it reduced still further local authorities' ability to control and determine their own affairs, while increasing the Minister's discretionary powers vis-a-vis local spending: he who pays the piper calls the tune. The Minister has allowed an approx. 10% increase to the local government budget each year since 1977, but with inflation running up to 22%, this has been less than adequate: Dublin Corporation found itself straight-jacketed when it sought to settle the bin-men dispute of 1979. The long-running dispute about agricultural rates — leading to the ridiculous position that money was actually refunded in 1980 — extends the above argument. A recent High Court action has found agricultural

rates to be unconstitutional, potentially bringing local government to its knees.

Unfortunately, the problems of local government receive only scant attention. Even the introduction of the managerial system in the 1930s — which cut into the authority of the elected councils — met with a sigh of relief. Then and now, the ethos of authoritarianism — articulated through Roman Catholicism's espousal and reverence for the one truth — has encouraged withdrawal from political affairs. The public relates to councillors much as it does TDs, on the basis of favours sought and received, and seem less (or even un-) concerned about broader policy issues. Democratic participation is an option only for the chosen few; in turn, the structures become more centralised, power eludes the community, and the quality of life declines.

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Desmond Roche's book, *Local Government in Ireland*, provides ample material for a serious examination of local government, filling an obvious gap since Collins' book, *Local Government*, in 1963. He traverses all the aspects of its functions, history and power. A grasp of all this is essential for a consideration of the wider — and more publicised — concern for local government reform.

Roche briefly summarises what progress has been made in this area, noting that despite mounds of paper and government reports, we are actually no further down the road. As he points out, the aim of local government reform should be threefold: to decentralise government, to 'facilitate access by citizens to information' and to 'encourage popular participation'. Reshaping the administrative units is only part of the process; so also is a reconsideration of the managerial system, now the *bête noir* of Fine Gael. Ultimately, local government reform must be about improving the quality of life — economically, socially, culturally and environmentally — for all the citizens of the state.

Towards this end, everything must be put on the table. If councillors desire more power to shape the community, they must show themselves capable of using it. Properly run and organised advice centres must replace the debasing and depoliticising aspects of clientelism, providing people with the information they require and are entitled to on a plethora of issues, from housing to social welfare to health to telephones, etc. Instead of discouraging popular participation by fomenting the myth that its 'who you know' that counts, government and its institutions need to be made open to influence and participation. Local government reform is not an argument in favour of more power to the elected few — like an elected dictatorship — but rather for the transfer of more power to a tiered-structure. Local councils could be responsible for a wide range of 'community' needs, while other functions, requiring a wider base, could be distributed among county councils and borough corporations. The debate is still continuing, but one thing is certain: without the financial where-with-all, local government will remain no more than a side-pocket of central government.

Ellen Hazelkorn

Introduction to a revolutionary

GRAMSCI'S POLITICAL THOUGHT: An introduction by Roger Simon; Lawrence and Wishart; £3.50 sterling (paperback), £7.95 (hardback).

ROGER SIMON has written an excellent introduction to the political thought of the great Marxist, Antonio Gramsci. And in doing so, he provides an illuminating critique of the practice of Marxism in Britain.

Simon suggests that Marxism in Britain — and as a consequence, the British labour movement — suffers one major defect, i.e., economism... 'as is shown by the contrast between the remarkable strength of the trade union struggles for better wages and conditions, and the relative weakness of the *political struggle* for socialism' (emphasis added).

Economism has persisted among many Marxists despite the limitations of trade union consciousness criticised by Lenin in 1902. 'Lenin argued... that the trade union struggle could only develop trade union consciousness, and that in order to develop political consciousness the workers had to take up the struggle against the oppression of the Tsarist autocracy as it affected all other social classes, strata and groups of the population, in all aspects of their lives and activities, religious, scientific and cultural.'

'Politics,' Lenin emphasised, 'must take precedence over economics. To argue otherwise is to forget the ABC of Marxism.'

The application of 'the ABC of Marxism' to the culture and

history of his native Italy formed the greater part of Gramsci's work. His most outstanding contribution was his development of a Marxist political theory and his great achievement, in Roger Simon's view, was to elaborate the 'conception of hegemony which had been pioneered by Lenin.'

The Great October Revolution was a result of Lenin's application of Marxism to 'the current situation'. Lenin was not hidebound by dogmatic interpretations of Marx. The prevailing 'Marxist' orthodoxy of his day ordained that a communist revolution was possible only in an advanced capitalist country. That myth, along with many others was exploded in October 1917.

It was not, of course, a *spontaneous* explosion. Lenin wasn't simply passing the time when he wrote *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* or the hundreds of other books, pamphlets, and articles which trace the path to the Russian Revolution. Nor was he indulging in an exotic form of group therapy when he formulated the theory of the revolutionary party in the shape of the Bolsheviks. Lenin applied himself to the study of Marx, and applied Marxism to his study of Russia and Russian society. Not for nothing did he remark that 'without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary party.'

That remark, although often quoted, has in reality fallen among deaf ears among many orthodox communists. Too often, Lenin is an object of homage rather than a subject of study.

This was not the case with Gramsci. According to his comrade, Palmiro Togliatti, 'the emergence and development of

Leninism on the world scene was the decisive factor in the whole of Gramsci's evolution as a thinker and as a political man of action.'

The continued 'development of Leninism' is essential to the advance of socialism. As Lenin himself said: 'fundamental revolutionary principles must be adapted to the specific conditions in the various countries.' This is the task to which Gramsci applied himself in a unique and creative way.

Roger Simon, in turn, has accomplished his task with an ease which is reflected in, and adds greatly to, the clarity and readability of his book.

Paddy Gillan

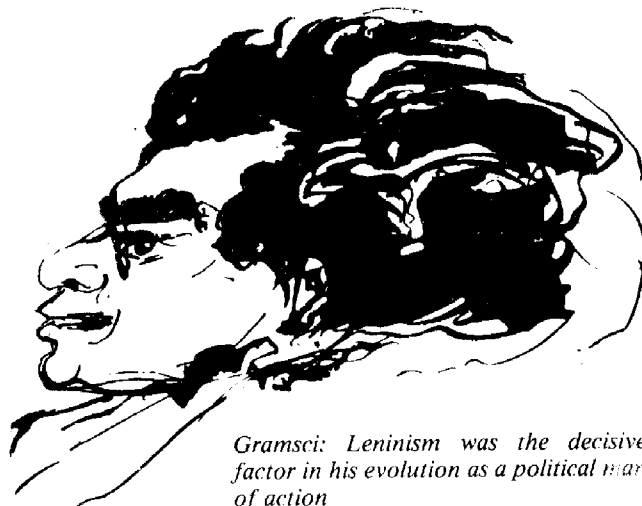
A woman's place

FEMINISM, CULTURE AND POLITICS edited by Rosalind Brunt and Caroline Rowan; Lawrence and Wishart; £3.95 sterling.

'A hate for women can be quite natural and quite valid' Johnny Speight BBC TV.

Women who have participated in any of the campaigns for women's equality or women's rights often experience frustration and despair even when their immediate objectives have been achieved. As one or two obstacles are knocked over, several more seem to spring up. Equay pay legislation in the UK for example, far from bringing in an era of parity between women's and men's wages, has been followed by a widening gap between men's and women's wages. This experience is common to women everywhere; in the USSR, where equal pay and opportunities have been legally enforced for a few generations, women are less well-paid and advance less far and less rapidly in their careers than men. Women have the primary responsibility for childcare and housework and are scarcely visible at the higher levels of political representation.

With economic or legal change in the status of women seeming futile or impossible to achieve, many feminists have turned their attention to different objectives, and have experimented with different forms of organisation in an attempt to reach the roots of women's oppression from which all inequalities stem. The essays



Gramsci: Leninism was the decisive factor in his evolution as a political man of action

WORK AND CULTURE

in this book are concerned with 'feminist cultural politics' which include a range of activities from the creation of works of art and literature, to the picketing of sex shops. They stress the importance of challenging and overturning stereotyped and offensive images of women and creating new ways of depicting and writing about women. Equally important is the attempt to change ways of working and living in order to overcome the invisible networks of oppression which keep women 'in their place'.

Most of the essays here are well worth reading, but the one by Florence Keyworth on the 'politics of ageing' is especially impressive. This is an incisive account of the cruel nature of the sexism directed at old women in our society. Contempt and rejection are the twin attitudes which make ageing a bitter experience for women; poverty and hardship increase the bitterness. Old women are even poorer than old men, because they have, for the most part, spent their lives in unpaid work in the home or in low-paid jobs outside it. An extra dimension to this essay is the fact that this writer has spent almost all of her adult life in the Communist Party of Great Britain. A member of this Party since 1942, she writes: 'Communism has yet to make its appeal to the core of women's consciousness. The centre of its stage is occupied by man.'

The low status accorded to women's equality by the Party, and the expectation that women would concern themselves with family-centred issues led many Communist Party women to avoid any involvement with women's struggles or women's work; instead, they elected themselves 'honourary men'. This situation was not challenged until the 1970's. Women in the CPGB are discussed in another essay here by Tricia Davies. The cultural obstacles to women's equality both inside and outside the Party can be summed up in a quote about a prominent Communist: 'She used to say to me "never let it be said that she does a great job for the working-class movement but she doesn't wash her windows". These are working-class values, you see.'

Michèle Barrett's essay is an interesting contribution to discussions about feminism and art. She challenges the notion that there is an easy relationship between feminism and artistic production, or feminist politics and artistic criticism. Not everything that is called feminist

art, is either feminist or art; progressive politics do not guarantee creativity. Of the other essays, the ones which stand out most are those by Mary McIntosh and Rosalind Coward. These are both discussions of aspects of 'everyday life' and the part they play in maintaining oppression. Mary McIntosh discusses the family as an agency which enables men to oppress women, and suggests that ways must be found to challenge the family without attacking the emotions and relationships which are important to individual men and women. Rosalind Coward asks whether the theory of psychoanalysis can offer any explanations for women's continued inequality of status. Neither of these essays is long enough to resolve or even discuss satisfactorily the questions raised, (the effect of their being written versions of talks given at the Communist University of London).

Overall, in fact, it is the questions raised rather than the answers given which make this an important book. Certainly there are criticisms which could be made. There is no discussion, for example of the relative importance of the various aspects of cultural politics discussed here; new ways of caring for children and the elderly are discussed side by side with sex-advice manuals as if they were equally important. Nonetheless, most of the essays here are worth reading by all those interested in feminism and socialism.

Carmel Roulston

Laying bare the Irish soul

CAL by Bernard MacLaverty; Blackstaff Press; £6.95 sterling

'IT WAS still raining heavily on an empty street. At least it meant there would be no aggro tonight. Rain kept the Protestants at home,' thinks the hero of Bernard MacLaverty's new novel, *Cal*, before he goes out to meet some people he knows in the Provos to tell them that he wants out.

Bernard MacLaverty's new book is a masterful psychological drama about Cathal McCrystal who falls in love with a woman whose husband he helped

murder. The book quietly unfolds, and one sees the world of Cal through his own mind. His thoughts reflect those of many young people in Northern Ireland who have been caught up in the spiral of emotion and violence.

Cal falls in love with Marcella Morton, a librarian, and decides to get as close to her as possible to make up for what he has done. He manages to get a job on the farm where she lives. He eventually lives there after his own home has been burned out by Protestant extremists. This leaves him close enough to her to develop a relationship which blossoms when her parents-in-law leave for a week.

Throughout their brief affair, Cal wants to tell her of his involvement in her husband's murder but fails to do so. The police catch him in the end, however, so he is saved this terrible task.

While staying at the lodge house on the farm, Cal reflects on suffering in Irish politics:

'To suffer for something that didn't exist, that was like Ireland. People were dying every day, men and women were being crippled and being turned into vegetables in the name of Ireland. An Ireland which never was and never would be. It was the people of Ulster who were heroic, caught between the jaws of two opposing ideals trying to grind each other out of existence.'

Passages of the book are written at the pace of a crime thriller, and provide much of the

book's excitement. Other passages have a detached surrealistic feel such as the dream sequences and the murder of Marcella's police reservist husband. The attention to everyday detail throughout provide a very realistic touch to the book.

There are some very ironical twists in the book which work very well. Marcella lends Cal a copy of *Crime and Punishment* from the library, for example, to encourage his reading. This is subsequently burned in the house when it is attacked. She also lends him some of her husband's clothes when Cal tells her that these were also burned in the fire.

The book works well on the day-to-day realities of living in Northern Ireland, especially the fear of random sectarian butchery. It also portrays the cowboy style of paramilitaries in which young people are given the power to murder and maim and it shows the degeneration which sets in when politics is reduced to mere sloganising mixed with romantic notions of a past well and truly dead.

Cal is Bernard MacLaverty's fourth book to be published. He is one of the new generation of Irish writers like William Trevor and Desmond Hogan who try to lay bare the Irish soul so that it can be seen for all its good qualities and its terrible darknesses.

Con O'Neill

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ARE THE PUBS STILL OPEN?

FILMS

RECENTLY, Dublin's Curzon Cinema has been attracting considerable audiences to a new sub-titled film 'Diva' (1981), by French Director Jean Jacques Beineix. Hailed as one of the better films of recent years, it received reviews ranging from "magnificent" to "highly recommended" from the land of the film critics.

The story of a postboy who doesn't bother to ring even once — and almost gets more than his fingers burned as a result — the film has it all — violence, blackmail, comedy, prostitution, police corruption, and of course the odd flesh flash. In fact just about every crowd-pulling ingredient known to the cinema.

Or rather to American cinema — and therein lies the crunch. Populist rather than critical acclaim has, over the years, become the prime motivation of the American film industry. Thus our cinema screens are filled by escapism and pure entertainment, with little artistic merit.

In this respect, 'Diva' could be viewed as a product of the American cinema. It certainly has little in common with the vast majority of French, Italian and other continental productions, which tend to explore a theme or particular topic in depth. 'Diva' may be entertaining for its action and slickness, but you leave the cinema wondering are the pubs still open for a drink, rather than any particular point made by the film.

Mind you, were it not for the slightly dizzying affect of reading the sub-titles, some lack of slickness might also be more easily noticed. Like when the postboy in being car-chased through the city on his motorbike by police thugs — yet they fail to pass another car, presumably obeying

the speed limits. Or later during a sub-way scene, when even though driving his motorbike at full speed along an ambulator, the postboy fails to shake off a pursuer chasing him on foot.

The actual plot suffers the

occasional hiccup also. The development of the relationship between the Diva and the young postman is barely convincing, while Beineix tends to build up dramatic scenes only to opt for

soap opera solutions. As when the unconscious post boy is saved from death by the hero who appears to beam in from a 'Star Wars' set to spray the villain with chloroform.

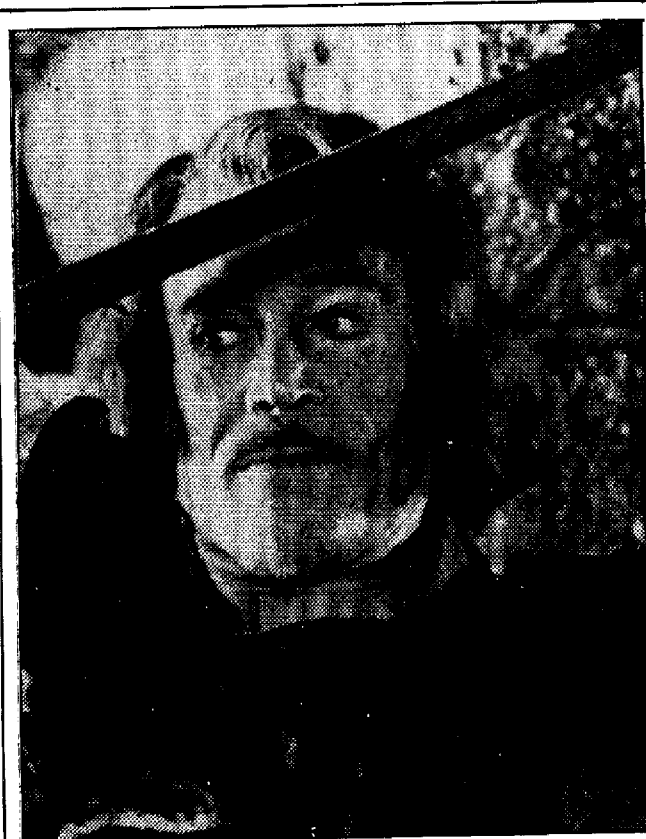
Of course the film does preserve some of its continental charm. The police thugs actually make their first appearance in a mud splattered car — something that no self-respecting car-manufacturer allows happen in American movies, and some of the one liners ('Zen is the art of buttering bread') could only have been written by a Frenchman.

'Diva' then, may be worth a visit (especially as a copy of *In Dublin* guarantees half-price entry before 5pm). But if this is what the new 'sub-titled' craze is all about, then they might have done with it, and speak American as well.

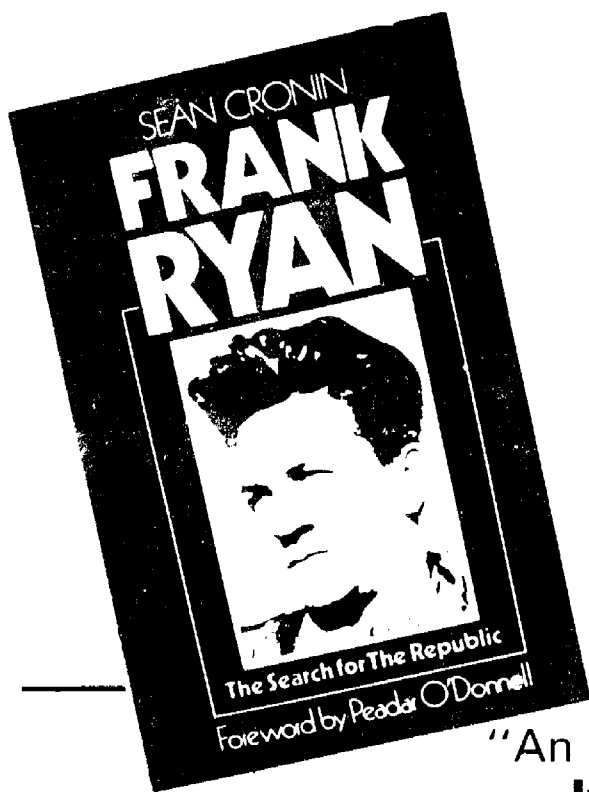
Showing next door in Curzon II, with no attendant razzamatazz, is another sub-titled film 'The Night of San Lorenzo' (1982) by the Italian team of Paulo and Vittorio Taviani. No 'stars', no cliches, but an intriguing story of the life of ordinary people in Italy towards the end of World War II, struggling both for their survival, and against the opposing politics of others (Fascists) from the same village. The film conveys not just a scenario of World War II suffering, but also a sense of human courage and optimism in the face of adversity.

Also well worth viewing (if it is still about) for some near GUBU sequences. Like when a young girl inadvertently sits on her family's only food supply — a basket of fresh eggs. Or when an old couple who have known each other since childhood finally get it together, as they later agree, 'almost forty years too late'.

Lorraine Kennedy



Peter O'Toole plays an Errol Flynn-type movie star confronting the challenge of live television in 'My Favourite Year'.



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Looking forward

Liam Cassidy

BY recent standards, 1982 was a lean year internationally for Irish athletics. We had become used to John Treacy and Eamonn Coghlan competing successfully against the best in the world. Injuries to both of them which kept them out of competition for most of last year only brought home to athletic followers how much Ireland depended on them. Now both of them are back running and suddenly the prospects for 1983 look good.

In his few races to date Coghlan looked like taking up where he left off and it is possible that he might again break his own indoor world mile record of 3 mins. 5.06 secs. Not all the top middle distance runners run indoors and therefore the real test for Coghlan will come outdoors later in the year when he will probably run in the world championship 5,000 mts. Despite failing to win a medal in two Olympic finals Coghlan still has a good record. He has won a European indoor 1,500 mts. He has also broken the European mile record outdoors and the world indoor mile record twice. If he makes it to the World Championship without further injuries he is sure to be one of the favourites to win.

John Treacy's return to form has been more gradual than Coghlan's, and the big test for him will come in the World Cross Country Championship in Gateshead on March 20th. Having won this title in Glasgow in 1978 and Limerick in 1979, nothing less than victory will satisfy Treacy. With over thirty teams having nine runners each, all the top long distance runners in the world run in this race and it will take a supreme effort to win it. Last year's winner, Mohamid Kedir, will probably start favourite, and others who should run well are Alberto Salazar, second last year and fastest ever over a marathon, Lopez and Mamede from Portugal, and Clarke and Goater from England.

The Irish team has not been selected as I write this but it should

contain Treacy, his Waterford club-mate Gerry Deegan, Dave Taylor from Dundrum A.C., Jerry Kiernan RTE2 marathon winner, John Woods, an English based "Irishman" (like Tony Galvin and Matt Doyle) and four others, all to be selected after the National Championships at the end of February. Taylor has looked very good this year and won two international cross country races this year in Crystal Palace and Antrim, where he defeated Treacy.

The Ethiopian team led by Kedir, will start favourites to win the team race with England probably providing the main opposition. Ireland's team is one of the strongest ever, and I know that they believe that



Carey May

they can win the bronze medal. A position in the top six would be an excellent result for Ireland considering our small running population and the fact that this is a real World Championship.

The Irish ladies team should also do well as it will be strengthened by the inclusion of Monica Joyce who is travelling from university in America for the race. Unfortunately her sister Regina who was also selected is injured and cannot compete.

There is also a junior race in which Ireland will be represented, but form is hard to evaluate for this race as most of the runners are competing against each other for the first time. The Ethiopian junior team completely dominated this race last year, and had three runners in the top four. Ireland's juniors have done well in this race in the past, but it will be a surprise if they win medals this year.

Athletes from Northern Ireland will also be competing in this race and their men's team will be fighting hard to avoid last place. As for their women's team, I hope they save us all from being embarrassed and keep them at home. Argument about athletics unity in Ireland always revolves itself around 'political boundaries' and nationalistic politics whereas the greatest argument for athletic unity is the sight of the Northern Ireland women's cross-country team racing each other for the last place in an international race.

CAREY MAY's marathon win in Japan in a time of 2 hrs. 29 mins. makes her the sixth fastest marathon woman ever and, more significantly, it is the fastest time ever run in a women-only race. Carey is a member of Dundrum A.C. and is at present on an athletic scholarship in America. We will look forward to her running in the World Championships later in the summer and hopefully winning a medal. Her time should also embarrass or motivate some male club runners into making a significant improvement in their times. Very few Irish men have run the marathon under 2 hrs. 50 mins. so it is nice to see a woman athlete setting the standard for the men.

GARRET'S GANG

Garret: Come in, come in Dick. You're the first to arrive! I haven't invited every Tom, Dick and Harry to this little lecture...er...discussion with Joan and me. An inner-Cabinet so to speak. Ha! Ha!

Dick: -You're not fooling me Taoiseach — I know who is in the *real* inner Cabinet.

Garret: Oh! Come on now Dick, not that again! Alexis and Dooge and Derry and the boys are old friends of mine who just happen to be around when I need a bit of advice.

Joan: Really Richard I would not have thought a Trinity graduate would feel left out. Surely you're not suggesting that we should invite around some of those obscure persons who are giving you such poor advice?

Dick: Yeh! Like taxing children's shoes.

Garret: I swear that wasn't my idea. That came from Babyarse Barry.

Joan: I've told you not to use that vulgar term Garret — anyway they now refer to him as the Elder Lemon.

Dick: Well he certainly shattered the peace in the Lemon Grove when he told you to stuff your pro-hypocrisy Bill.

Joan: Really Richard you know very well that Garret doesn't believe in that Bill anymore than you do.

Dick: I'm beginning to wonder what Garret *does* believe in. He seems as confused as I am.

Garret: What's that supposed to mean?

Dick: Well you conned me on the Budget. You cheated me on the Property Tax. You promised you'd contrive to abandon this outrageous referendum. And now the Elder Lemon is going to attract the wrath of the trade unions with his Social Welfare Bill, further punishing the poor. There isn't a tourist or a school bus left in Kerry. Indeed, the Kingdom is going down the Tubes.

Garret: That's not fair Dick. You know it was E.T.Dukes that fooled you on the Budget. Incidentally, may I compliment you on your interesting speech in Trinity about next year's Budget.

Dick: I wish you'd despatch E.T.Dukes back to whence he came, Brussels or Mars or wherever. He's not human.

Joan: Really Richard. I know you're much stronger in rigger than economics but I told

Garret to explain to you what the 'cuts' would mean for the hoi-polloi.

Dick:Huh! He said the poor would be protected.

Joan: Garret was speaking relatively. All our relatives and friends have been protected. And that nice boy Bruton from down on the farm — we also exempted his farmer friends.

Dick: Then you went and jailed the Ranks workers thus exposing the cock-up the union made of it.

Garret: But Kavanagh persuaded me that making a cock-up of a major dispute was the only way to succeed in that union.

Joan Oh, darling, those unions are really a bit like politics!

Dick: You won't think they're such fun when the unions are on the streets marching against ET's Budget, and me having to defend it.

Garret: Don't worry Dick. We can easily handle that.

Dick: How in God's name?

Garret: We'll set up a joint Committee to study the problem. Ha! Ha! Some of them trade union chaps talk even more than I do. Good night Dick.

Maurice Goldring
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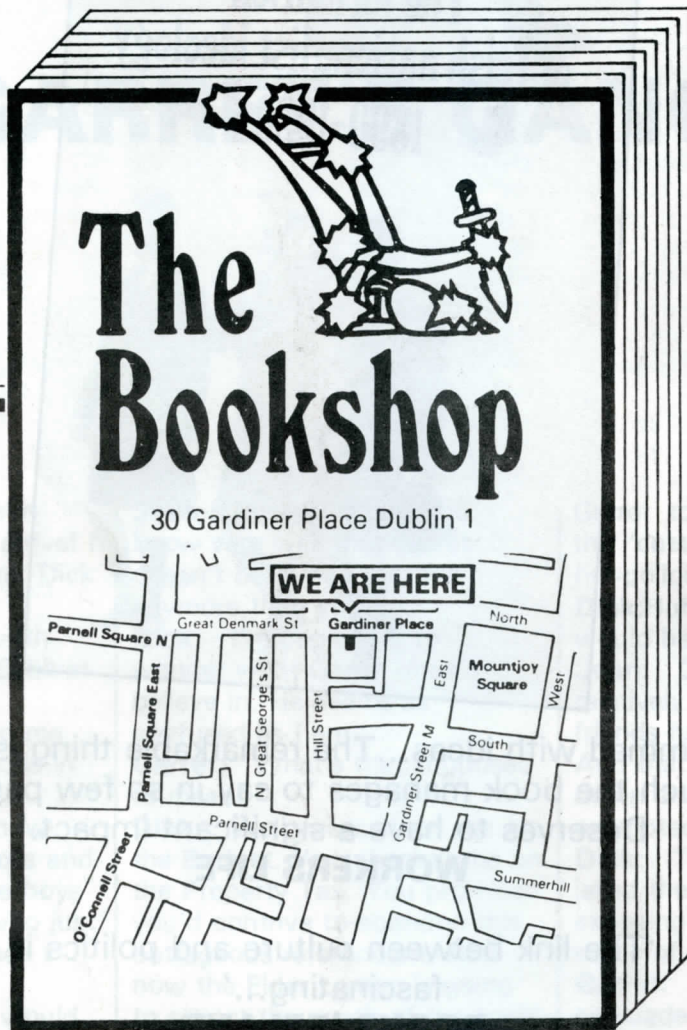
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