

# Class Struggle

**The Workers' Republic   Women's Liberation   International Socialism**

**30p**  
**Irish**  
**Workers**  
**Group**

Irish Section of the  
**LRCI**

No. 24 April 1991

**Revolutionary  
crisis in Iraq.**

**GDR Workers  
on the march**

**Spring Dumps  
Labour's  
'Socialism'**

**Four-page supplement  
James Connolly and the  
1916 Insurrection**

## Imperialist Hands Off the Middle East Now!

**BUSH TOLD the world that his war against Iraq was to assure the triumph of democracy over tyranny, civilisation over barbarism. Bush and his cronies Major and Mitterand are liars.**

In the name of "civilisation" 200,000 Iraqis, according to Pentagon estimates, were slaughtered. Many were civilians. Now that the war is over the USA admit that their hype about smart bombs and surgical strikes were so much propaganda—approximately 70% of the 885,000 tons of bombs dropped on Iraq missed their targets.

Iraq, not just Saddam Hussein's military machine, has been laid waste in this war. Children in the towns are starving. The harvest could be destroyed with no machines to collect it. Fresh drinking water is a thing of the past. Tons of sewage flow into the Tigris. Electricity supplies are still few and far between. Cholera and typhoid reap their deadly harvest. Thousands of ordinary Iraqis are without shelter, their homes destroyed by the RAF and US Airforce "heroes".

AUN mission demanded that sanctions on food and medical supplies be lifted because of the war's "near apocalyptic results upon the infrastructure of what had been, until January 1991, a highly urbanised and mechanised society... most modern means of life have been destroyed."

Now civil war is causing a new round of destruction, homelessness and repression. Thousands of Iraqi refugees have joined Kuwaitis, Egyptians, Filipinos and others fleeing south in a hopeless search for safety. When they reach the Kuwaiti border, or the US lines, many have been turned back and sent to certain death by the guardians of civilisation and democracy.

To their credit, rank and file US soldiers, appalled by stories that only the dogs in Basra had enough to eat because they fed on human corpses, defied orders from their officers and shared their rations with the starving victims of the bloodbath. They have ignored direct instructions from Kuwait's restored government to refuse refugees entry into the country.

The Kuwaiti rulers have author-

ised their troops to counter the generous spirit of the American rank and file soldiers by terminating refugees with extreme prejudice. When one US soldier told his colonel that he would not turn back refugees, the officer told him:

"We had an Iraqi soldier give himself up near here the other day and a Kuwaiti soldier just took him to one side, shot him in the head and pushed his body into a ditch. If you let these people through... they could face the same danger."

Yet the president remains strangely silent about the atrocities being carried out by the Kuwaiti rulers now that they have been put back on their thrones. Saddam is a torturer. But so too is the Al-Sabah family of Kuwait. Journalists report increasing numbers of unmarked graves into which are dumped Palestinian corpses, badly marked by torture. There are regular pogroms of the Palestinian quarters in Kuwait city by death squads. Yet the imperialist forces are doing nothing to prevent them.

men were employed to fit the palace with gold taps, embroider velvet cushions and restore Moroccan tiles. What an obscenity!

It is little wonder that these corrupt despots—the "rightful" rulers of Kuwait restored by the vast armies of the US led alliance—have imposed martial law on the country and have made the military governor the prime minister. Whether or not they eventually give some sort of constitutional veneer to their dictatorship it will be on

famine and flooding as the result.

These are the consequences that the imperialists are prepared to impose on the rest of the world to protect their system of exploitation and oppression. Civilisation and democracy are empty phrases for the imperialists, coined freely when they need to fool the workers of their own countries into supporting their wars of plunder.

But the struggle of the Iraqi and Kurdish people shows that the imperialist predators can't rely on always having their own way. Despite the victory that Bush, Major and their collaborators have won, the workers and poor peasants of the Gulf and the whole Middle East are preparing their revenge. We must support them by continuing to raise loud and clear in this country the demand—all imperialist troops out of the Middle East now!

That means fighting in the working class movement and among youth for solidarity demonstrations and workers action on every key issue of imperialist intervention in the Middle East. It means fighting for active support for the struggles of the Palestinians and Kurds for self-determination and material aid for the working masses of Iraq in their struggle to replace the barbarous regime of Saddam Hussein with the only power that can ultimately open the road to peace and progress in the region—the rule of the working class struggling for a socialist federation of the Middle East.

That means challenging here in Ireland the accessories to Bush's mass murder, Haughey, Bruton and O'Malley, who are determined to maintain US military facilities at Shannon and to bring Ireland more and more into military alliance with imperialism. ■



Death by starvation, disease or at the hands of the Republican Guard in Iraq, or death at the hands of the Kuwaiti troops—this is the "democratic" choice that Bush's war has granted the people of the region.

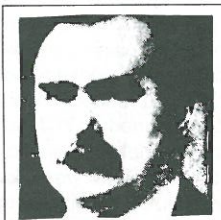
Kuwait itself is testimony to the big lie that this imperialist war was waged for noble causes. Saddam was denounced as worse than Hitler by Bush.

Daily life in Kuwait, for ordinary people, is a grim struggle for survival. Food is scarce. Water and power supplies are non-existent. Houses and public buildings remain heaps of rubble. The Al Sabah ruling clique are unconcerned. Their palace has already been restored. Workers were drafted to restore power and running water to the palace. Nightly banquets are being organised. Special crafts-

their own terms and with their own wealth and power guaranteed.

Meanwhile the whole region remains literally under a cloud. In satellite pictures the smoke from the burning wells appears as a great black area that respects no borders. Acid rain and toxic chemicals will adversely affect agriculture as far away as India and could disrupt the monsoon, with

**Connolly's  
Legacy**





# Irish Workers and the Gulf War

**T**hroughout the five months of the blockade and war against Iraq, the level of protest seen on the streets of Ireland was generally very low. The biggest national demonstration hardly touched 2,000 at the height of the war.

Apart from token statements against the war by a number of trades councils, the national leadership of the trade union movement was shamefully silent. The leaders of the Labour Party did not appear at, let alone address, the 'Gulf Peace Campaign' demonstrations which their own party supposedly sponsored.

An explanation is to be found in the strength of support for the United States and the depth of illusions in the United Nations in the working class movement. The main basis for economic expansion in the past thirty years in Ireland has been the inflow of US investment, and the trade union leadership is fundamentally opposed to any action which would alienate US investors. Silence in the face of US imperialist aggression around the world is a small price for these brokers to pay.

Ireland's role in the United Nations, indeed DeValera's role in the League of Nations before it, have been worked up into a mythology of national pride by Fianna Fáil and the ideologists of the Irish bourgeoisie for 50 years. With Irish troops serving around the world under the blue flag, with Irish diplomacy touted as significant in peacemaking over the decades, the United Nations has taken on the status of a sacred cow, alongside 'Irish neutrality'. Against such a background Bush's use of the UN as a cover for his war drive was particularly effective among the Irish masses.

Spring and DeRossa fully accepted UN security council resolutions as 'legitimate' and binding on Ireland. They supported the Blockade of Iraq under cover of which the US prepared its war. Their 'opposition' to the war amounted to little more than quibbling over what extent the UN decisions actually obliged direct military collaboration with the US. Their boldest stand was to insist that the Haughey government was not entitled to unilaterally override Irish neutrality, even for the sake of the UN, without consulting the Dáil. Haughey called their bluff, consulted the Dáil and got overwhelming support for re-fuelling US warplanes at Shannon.

Irish neutrality of course contains a progressive element of abstention from military alliances, but it has never meant ideological or political neutrality for the Irish bourgeoisie! Only a consciously anti-imperialist movement of the working class could maintain that military neutrality in the face of the relentless economic and political pressures from the US. The sacredness of 'Irish neutrality' among wide sections of the urban petit bourgeoisie led to widespread unease about Haughey's decision. The possibility existed therefore of mobilising real forces to stop re-fuelling at Shannon.

However, the Gulf Peace Campaign leaders turned their Shannon protests into an act of empty pleading with the conscience of Ireland rather than making it the focus for a call for industrial action. When union leaders were confronted in SIPTU by motions from IWG and other anti-war activists in the last week of the war, the reaction was vicious. Representing the SIPTU bureaucracy, Paul Clarke attacked as anti-democratic those who called on the union to give a lead for industrial

action at Shannon. The union, he assured us, had fully consulted its members at Shannon. They had decided to go on refuelling military planes and the union would not tolerate other elements from 'imposing' a strike mandate on them.

When the SIPTU education branch AGM voted to call for Western Troops Out of the Gulf and No Refuelling at Shannon, Clarke tried to insist that the branch could make no public announcement of its decision without the approval of the union leaders—which they would never give. He was told in no uncertain terms where to get off.

At the construction branch of SIPTU an IWG supporter similarly tried to table a censure on the union leaders for failing to mobilise in any way against the war. Union officials belonging to the CP and the Workers Party succeeded in forcing the motion's withdrawal through procedural appeals.

These events underline the vital importance of bringing into the trade union move-

ment at every level the fight for real action on every issue of imperialist aggression by the US, Britain, France etc. Without such a struggle, the concerns of the Irish masses for 'the plight of the third world' will continue to be no more than a milking

parlour for charity agencies and Church-led solidarity groups while the labour and union bureaucrats will go unchallenged in their silent collusion with capitalist imperialism and its bloody policies around the world. ■



▲ Photo Montage of Irish Anti-War campaign BY NIAMH FORAN

## NO TO WAR IN THE GULF CAMPAIGN

**F**rom September 1990 until the 'ceasefire' of March 1st the No To War in the Gulf Campaign was dominated by the Socialist Workers Movement which fully controlled its committee. The perspective on which they based it was spelt out at an SWM public meeting in October.

They expected that as war approached there would be a spontaneous mass upsurge of anti-war feeling for which their campaign would become the focus. To that end they were explicitly opposed to raising any form of opposition to the blockade against Iraq because such a 'radical' position would alienate the many who would come out against the war for purely pacifist reasons.

This idea of waiting on events to produce spontaneous support for their campaign meant doing little or nothing from September to early January while in the US and Britain substantial demonstrations were taking regularly to the streets. Nothing was done to raise opposition to the criminal blockade of Iraq which was plainly being used as the lead-in to a major war. The IWG argued for such a campaign to be built. In TCD where we helped organise a demonstration against the blockade, the SWM opposed the building of any campaign there. Sadly, in this most political of campuses SWM's attempt to control anti-war activity for themselves ultimately meant keeping the NTWG committee so secret that it hardly existed and held no meetings in the last three weeks of the war.

Nevertheless, the political platform of the NTWG campaign did contain the vital demand for 'Western Troops Out of the Gulf'. This clearly placed responsibility for the war on the imperialist coalition and did not advocate support for the blockade nor for UN calls for Iraq to surrender Kuwait. Before the campaign opened up in January, IWG therefore attempted to participate in its committee but SWM were determined to prevent this, clearly signalling that their own organisational purposes in controlling it were more important than

building it on an open democratic basis that could rally the maximum forces.

Not a single public meeting of the campaign was held until early January, from which a substantial campaign of hundreds of activists rapidly grew. Unfortunately, by then, Labour and the Workers Party, CND and the Greens had cobbled together 30 national organisations into the 'Gulf Peace Committee'—an alliance which did not pretend in any respect to have an anti-imperialist position, unlike the SWM, and was far more likely, therefore, to capture any spontaneous outburst of anti-war pacifist sentiment. The major participating organisations all had positions in support of the sanctions and blockade 'as an alternative to war' and for an Iraqi withdrawal. The only progressive element in their entire platform was to oppose re-fuelling at Shannon, even if only out of a nationalist belief in 'Irish neutrality' rather than out of any opposition to imperialism.

### Pacifist Surge

SWM's promised pacifist upsurge never materialised. The new Gulf Peace Committee upstaged the four-month-old NTWG with the first mass demonstration, but more than half of the turnout came from the 'western troops out' campaign. SWM decided over the heads of the campaign activists to affiliate to the GPC. But clearly there could be no principled agreement between the platform of the NTWG campaign and the politics of the organisations making up the GPC on the major issue of imperialist responsibility for the war and getting western troops out.

The immediate negative effect of the affiliation was that Labour's leading left, Michael D. Higgins, was able to prevent the

building of a NTWG branch in his home city of Galway by pointing out that it was affiliated to the GPC and therefore it made better sense to simply build on the basis of the GPC's platform. The degree to which SWM was prepared to build branches of the GPC instead of continuing the separate structures of the 'western troops out' campaign probably would have depended on whether SWM felt it could dominate them for its own organisational benefit. But the GPC was not going to let SWM test out such a manoeuvre.

Had this impossible 'affiliation' continued the logical development was for the NTWG campaign to put its call for western troops out in small print under the general pacifist slogan of 'No to War'. SWM made no secret of its readiness to do this, as its SWP conferees in Britain had done. In fact, the demand for western troops out disappeared altogether from the SWM-produced posters and petitions in the lead-up to the second big demonstration!

At the action groups the IWG had no difficulty in getting support for putting the 'western troops out' call back onto all literature and posters. As a distinct campaign the NTWG remained overall and in substance a principled opponent of the imperialist war drive. The 'affiliation' to the GPC never came to have any political significance in practice.

On none of their demonstrations during the war did SWM allow any representative of other far left to speak while readily handing over the microphone to CP and Workers Party figures as second-line speakers who argued support for sanctions and for Iraqi troops to withdraw. The principal speaker was SWM's McCann

who openly called for a defeat for the U.S. outside the embassy in the first week of the war. It was a position that the SWM was not to repeat in public—indeed hardly even in the small print of their paper! It forced the political contradictions between the two campaigns out in the open. The GPC demanded that affiliates give their support to a UN solution and call for Iraq to withdraw. At the Feb 2nd secretaries' meeting, all of SWM's leaders, including McCann, argued openly that they would of course agree to these conditions—while maintaining their own slogan. It was downright political dishonesty that could benefit no-one!

### Deeply Alienated

The GPC 'disaffiliated' the NTWG campaign on Feb. 14th because its posters, supporting the GPC demo, had called for 'western troops out!' Ironically only one third of the 1200 marchers followed the GPC banners, the rest being mobilised by the NTWG! Most of the marchers were deeply alienated by the semi-religious gunge and poetry which emanated from the platform.

Throughout all of this plainly opportunist attempt to 'affiliate' to the Peace Campaign, the important task of placing real demands for action on the reformist leaders was actually being ignored. Specifically, the committee of the NTWG campaign resisted the idea of fighting for affiliation of official labour movement and other mass organisation. SWM argued that it was more important to have identifiable small groups of activists. More important for their own organisational purposes perhaps, but only the politically blind could ignore the vital importance of trying to

build on the basis of drawing in mass sections, however merely formal their affiliation might initially be.

The failure of spontaneous mass opposition to the war in Ireland starkly emphasised the relatively greater importance of the forces of the far left whose combined campaign was far more impressive in its limited achievements than that of the pacifist and reformist leaders. Over a dozen action groups around the country held weekly meetings with as many as 20 or thirty attending each. It led the two biggest national demonstrations and organised many local pickets.

Sadly the national campaign was only organised on an open basis four months after it should have. In retrospect the clearly anti-imperialist outlook of the vast majority of its activists proves that there existed, all along, the basis for a campaign against the blockade of Iraq from the start without losing the 'spontaneously pacifist' masses.

A democratically open conference of activists in September or October at the latest should have been the elementary basis for launching the campaign. Shamefully, its first conference did not take place until the war was actually over. The responsibility lies entirely with the SWM.

Had the war gone on it is likely that more and more could have been mobilised in protest and that a real beginning could have been made to turn the protests into action. That would have depended, however, on radically shifting the campaign away from the SWM perspective which at every point put the building of the struggle in second place to their own organisational plans. ■



# Bombing Downing Street—No Way Forward

FOR THE SECOND TIME in ten years the IRA have come close to wiping out a Tory cabinet. If they had done so the IWG would have shed few tears. The Tory party is a key part of the British ruling class executive. It remains the major architect and agent of the brutal strategy of British Imperialism to smash the IRA as the embodiment of the anti unionist revolt against the six county Orange State.

For 20 years the British Army, UDR, RUC and Orange paramilitaries have waged a war against the anti unionist minority. They have employed every means of repression and terror from the murders of Bloody Sunday, through mass internment, juryless courts, arbitrary arrest, torture, assassination—all with the full complicity of the British ruling class and its political executive, whether Tory or Labour.

If political strategy to defeat the enemy of the Irish working class could be reduced to a matter of revenge, the IWG would have no hesitation in supporting the IRA attack upon Downing Street. But we believe that the defeat

of that enemy was not brought one single step forward by this attempt. Even if it had succeeded, we believe it amounted to a further step backward—yet one more in the IRA military campaign to destroy partition and unify Ireland. The Downing Street bomb, like that of Brighton in 1984, is exceptional only to the degree to which it reveals all the more clearly the political bankruptcy that lies behind the tactic and the movement that carried it out.

Our criticism does not follow from any condemnation of the violence of the act. As we have said the British (and Irish) ruling classes, through their legal, judicial and coercive apparatus have inflicted a degree of violence throughout the island far outweighing anything the IRA has been able to mount.

Their semi-racist exultation over the mass slaughter of a routed and retreating Iraqi Army and the bombing of Iraqi cities reveals the bottomless well of hypocrisy from which they draw when they refer to the IRA as 'men of violence'. Against them and their war

machine we defend the IRA and Republicans and their right to defend themselves.

Our criticisms, therefore, are made from the standpoint of the effectiveness or otherwise of the act in advancing the struggle against British imperialism and for socialism in Ireland. In 1984 leading members of SF went on record to declare that if Brighton had succeeded, British imperialism, through a mixture of shock and demoralisation, would have sued for peace and withdrawal. So far no leading member of SF has been foolish enough to repeat this nonsense (although we are in no doubt that many in the movement continue to swallow it).

For it shouldn't need stating that any successor to either Thatcher in 1984 or Major today, probably a coalition of 'National Salvation', equipped with the most draconian emergency powers, would have wrapped itself in the mantle of 'saving democracy'.

With the aid of a similarly prepared southern bourgeoisie, a blanket of legal repression and physical terror would have enveloped the island. Internment,

prohibition, arrest would be the order of the day against anyone remotely connected with the anti imperialist or socialist struggle.

With the active collaboration of the trade union leaders in the defence of 'democratic law and order', the anti unionist and southern working class would be paralysed, while sections of protestant workers and youth would fuel the orange paramilitary murder gangs. Against all of this the IRA military campaign, divorced from even the recognition that mass action and struggle are necessary to break the log jam in the North, would be rendered even more impotent and desperate.

Only the perverted logic of a tradition which holds that the worse things become the greater is the chance for progress can continue to blind itself to these elementary political realities. Only a movement and tradition that remain wedded to the fantasy of 'pure' physical force from a few hundred guerrillas can go on believing that British Imperialism can be bombed into surrender.

The failure of the IRA exercise merely underlines further the sterility of the Republican strategy. For it immediately helped the enemy to consolidate at a time when over the issue of the Gulf war a potential existed for building a mass anti war movement. But all too predictably, as happened in 1984 when the Miners Strike was at its height, it seems beyond the wit of anyone in the Republican movement to grasp the significance for their own struggle of a defeat for British Imperialism in the Gulf.

But on this occasion it was not just the Republican movement's narrow, traditional one-eyed nationalism that blinded them to the world around them. SF leaders took a public position of support for sanctions against Iraq—ie they lined up with their oppressor in an imperialist inspired coalition.

It suggests the extent to which Adams & Co are now prepared to go to be seen as 'responsible' politicians with whom, at some future date, British Imperialism and the Irish bourgeoisie can sit around the table to negotiate a settlement. ■

## Not a United Front?

On February 2nd the No to War in the Gulf campaign held a national meeting of three representatives from each of about 13 action groups, predominantly SWM members or nominees. It adopted uncritically a lengthy set of 'perspectives' and organisational decisions tabled by the SWM leadership but never circulated or discussed among the hundreds in the action groups. It was a 'conference' by the back door in which there could be no challenge on any key decisions or on who was to lead the campaign. The lynchpin of the document was

"First, the No to the War in the Gulf Campaign is not a united front of revolutionary left groups. It is an open broad campaign based on the activists who join action groups. No political party can therefore claim its 'rights' to speakers. The public platforms of the campaign are determined by the commitment of various activists to building the campaign and the need to reach a wider audience."

After all the SWM's decisions had been duly ratified two delegates asked to know who were the campaign leaders who they represented. SWM listed 9 names. Four, they said, represented SWM, one from the Peoples Democracy (USFI), one from the Green Party (since resigned from the party), one from the Communist Party, and two 'co-opted' (by SWM in fact). What could better underline the fact that the whole campaign was initiated and led on the basis of claiming to be a united front of left groups.

What can explain such a bare-faced self-contradiction by SWM? What they were trying to achieve was two things. On one hand they needed to borrow 'legitimacy' for a self-appointed committee which they controlled by presenting it as representing a range of political groups. In reality, however, they were determined to deny the right of political representation to groups who might put up any serious challenge to their perspectives and their dominance of the campaign.

In the action groups the IWG consistently argued for an open democratic campaign in which the leadership would be fully accountable to the action groups, would predominantly be made up of delegates of action groups, but would also crucially include a delegate from each independ-

ent political, trade union and other organisation actually fighting for the aims of the campaign.

It was precisely to prevent any such political representation in the campaign that SWM laid down their 'not a united front' ultimatum. Any socialist remotely interested in winning mass support for a fighting campaign knows it is vital to unite, on a principled and democratic basis, all the small militant groups prepared to struggle if even the nucleus of an attractive campaign is to be built.

But it is not only a question of material resources. Any campaign, among a divided left, facing a working class dominated by the most poisonous misleaders, has to ensure that all distinct political tendencies which share the agreement for action, can represent their political positions in the debates in the campaign nationally. Sadly, the SWM tradition trains its members to put crude organisational considerations before any such principles of political democracy—even if that means ditching the struggle

itself, as they now setting out to do in the wake of the March 2nd ceasefire.

### Where Now After the War?

The NTWG conference on March 3rd was a disaster. Had the war not ended in the preceding days SWM would have been set in even more firm control of the campaign on the basis of the same extremely limited perspective as before with the principal aim of controlling a growing periphery for their own recruitment while continuing limited protest actions against the war.

Everyone knew, however, that the end of the war would mean a sharp fall off in the attendance at action groups, and that a new kind of campaign was needed if any of the gains of past months were to be consolidated into an ongoing campaign against imperialist involvement in the Middle East.

SWM showed no interest in such a

campaign. New perspectives were conjured up to commit the existing structure to building a propaganda block with no perspective of action, solely to raise 'awareness' on the issues. Determined to make sure that it would be the SWM's and no-one else's propaganda, McCann, Allen & Co. blocked the attempt, supported by all the other left groups, to make it an activists' conference rather than restricting votes to 'delegates'.

This position had been fought for consistently by the IWG for over a month, supported by Militant, PD, Anarchists and others as vital to draw in the maximum support and prevent the narrowing the debate. In the leading branches of the campaign SWM engaged for four weeks in sectarian wrangling in defence of the restricted delegate basis for the conference (which they had imposed without consulting the action groups).

When it came to electing the delegates in the branches, leading SWM figures opposed the use of proportional representation (PR) which is the established method in the Irish labour movement wherever any shred of workers' democracy survives. Thus in the key branch of Dublin South SWM took all ten delegates to the conference, 8 members and two nominees! So much for defining the democracy of the campaign as based on the action groups and not on political organisations! The conference was thus stacked from the start.

The conference elected for the first time a national leadership—but by now it was for a dying campaign. SWM's camp voted to lay it down that political organisations supporting the campaign would have no representation as such in the national leadership! So much for the legitimacy of the previous ad-hoc committee which specifically claimed to be based on representatives of different political organisations!

During the vote, nominations were re-opened so that SWM's Eamonn McCann could arrogantly propose the leaders of Militant and the PD as candidates, a gesture repudiated by them but greeted with raucous laughter from SWM. McCann then had the

conference reject the use of PR in favour of a points system which favours broadly acceptable mediocrities rather than representing distinct minorities!

In the situation where the action groups were imminently facing decline, an ongoing campaign of solidarity could only be maintained by centrally involving the permanent organisations, specifically the left political groups. Jointly with the surviving action groups they would constitute the basis of a national solidarity committee engaging in action projects around the sharpest issues as they arose. The SWM's rejection of this idea of a united front of the left groups and action groups thus went beyond mere sectarianism and guaranteed the collapse of any continued campaign.

SWM has no interest, however, in such a perspective. They even cynically supported an absurd motion to continue using 'No to War in the Gulf' as part of the campaign name after the war rather than name it as appropriate for a campaign concerned with the new issues of war reparations, the Blockade, Palestinians and Kurds national rights and Israeli expansionism. (They rejected IWG's proposal for 'Hands off the Middle East'.)

It was not the first time that SWM, having controlled a substantial campaign, was preparing to liquidate it after dredging it for recruits, rather than building on the existing forces for the needs of the ongoing struggle.

During the Reagan visit in 1984 McCann and Allen told the thousands at the final 'Reagan Reception' rally that 'this is only the beginning of the campaign', but in fact they never called another meeting! The subsequent years saw the attacks on Nicaragua, Grenada, Libya etc. stepped up while marginal solidarity action in Ireland was left in the control of religious groups.

The IWG, by contrast, continues to call for joint action on a principled basis to build a solidarity action network which can respond rapidly on the streets and in the work places to the likely new attacks by Imperialism and its Middle East puppets against the peoples of the region. ■

### IWG IN THE ANTI-WAR CAMPAIGN

**THE IRISH WORKERS** Group argued for a consistently anti-imperialist attitude to the war in building the NTWG action groups.

In Galway Regional College, without the least assistance from the campaign nationally, we won the student body to boycott lectures and devote 4 hours to a mass

teach-in on the war which was addressed by IWG speakers and many others. Up to 700 students were present at any one time.

The forces rallied at the teach-in came together afterwards to resist an attempt by the right wing to disaffiliate the union from USI. After three mass

meetings, a referendum for disaffiliation was defeated.

And in the University of Ulster in Derry we won the student body also to hold a mass teach-in, but sadly not a boycott of lectures, which heard a wide range of anti-war speakers. ■



▲ Addressing the mass student teach-in at Galway Regional College



# For Workers' Revolution in Iraq

CIVIL WAR is raging in Iraq. In all the principal cities there are reports of fighting and insurrection. There are three main sources of opposition to Saddam Hussein's murderous Ba'ath regime.

The uprisings are being met with ruthless repression by what remains of Saddam's security forces. They have bombed Kirkuk and fired missiles containing white phosphorus at rebels in southern Iraq. In Basra there are reports of indiscriminate tank attacks on civilian areas. In Baghdad the secret police are conducting round the clock house to house searches and summary executions.

Saddam's promised holy war against imperialism was a miserable failure. Now he has launched a "mother of battles" against his own population. At the same time he is desperately trying to buy off the leaders of the rebellion. He appeared on television to promise a new constitution and elections to parliament. So far this has not garnered him any support. But it has weakened the resolve of the army and local militias.

In Kurdistan, where the army was not destroyed by fighting in the war, there are reports of its collapse in the face of the offensive by the peshmerga. The local militia has gone over en masse to the Kurdish uprising.

The western media's combat-suited reporters have not dared venture near these scenes of new carnage. They report it from afar as if it were simply chaos, as if Apocalypse Now had been brought to the streets of Iraq's modern cities.

But the revolt underway is not an inexplicable collapse of civil society. It is an upsurge of struggle by hundreds of thousands of ordinary working people who have suddenly been denied the means to survive by capitalism and imperialism.

There is a revolutionary situation in Iraq. Though it has been created by the imperialist victory, the imperialist victors fear its consequences more than they ever feared Saddam's army. As Time magazine explained:

*More than once President Bush has publicly exhorted the Iraqis to topple their leader. Yet what the allies had in mind was a palace coup, a change of regime from the centre of Baghdad... not a free for all in the provinces that might rip the country asunder.*

The reason Bush wanted a palace coup against Saddam is clear. The allied armies murdered an estimated 200,000 Iraqis in order to impose stability in the Gulf. They flattened one of the most advanced economies in the third world in order to ensure that the imperialist balance of power was restored in this oil producing region.

The breakup of Iraq will not only leave a vacuum and upset this new balance. Its national and religious character has the potential to ignite anti-imperialist revolts in every surrounding country. This prospect is now terrifying the imperialist "victors".

Yet US imperialism is paralysed in the face of the revolts. It is, at the moment, unwilling to intervene directly to restore civil order. It did its bit to aid Saddam by letting Republican Guard units pass under the gun barrels of imperialist tanks so that they could crush the revolt in Basra. The allied offensive stopped at Nasiriyah when it could have taken Baghdad because Bush, conscious of the toll taken by years of occupying Vietnam, did not want responsibility for civilian government. Now they have "kicked Vietnam" only to create what may prove to be another Lebanon.

The Shi'ite movement in the south is headed by pro-Iranian Islamic fundamentalist forces. The leader, Mohammed Bakr Hakim, is based in Tehran and wants to extend Shia Islamic rule into southern Iraq.

Shia Muslims make up 55% of the Iraqi population, but are second class

citizens under Ba'ath rule. This guarantees the main positions of power to the bourgeoisie from the Sunni minority, who make up less than 20% of the population. The Shi'ites had remained loyal to Saddam throughout the long war with Iran, but at the end of that war they still faced poverty and repression and became increasingly resentful of Ba'ath rule. The war with imperialism caused that resentment to explode into revolt.

## IRAN'S DESIGNS

At present, reports suggest that Saddam's forces have unleashed a "reign of terror" against the southern uprising. Its fate rests more and more with the Iranian regime. Throughout the Gulf crisis Saddam sought to bring Iran into an alliance against the imperialists. The Iranian ruling class is split. There is a minority hard-line Khomeini-ite faction which, while stopping short of outright support for Iraq, wanted to maintain Iran's hostility to the Great Satan and its coalition.

These would give Iran a formidable airforce if the USSR agrees to supply them with spare parts and training (up to now the Iranian airforce has had to rely on US and French technology inherited from the Shah).

There are reports that the Iranian pasdaran, the so called "Revolutionary Guard", has participated in the fighting in southern Iraq. In turn the USA has warned Rafsanjani to stay out. The Iranian ruling class has to weigh its new-found acceptance into "civilised" diplomatic circles against the chance to defy imperialism and gain a major strategic hold on the Gulf region.

A southern Iraqi state allied to Iran would control 60% of Iraq's oil production (about the same volume as pre-war Kuwait).

On the other hand Iran itself has gained recognition and trade agreements with Turkey, Uganda and

it as one of the fruits of victory: here was the coalition replicated at the level of the Iraqi opposition, the basis for a provisional government of a unified Iraq. But it will remain a paper coalition for as long as the USA refuses to intervene directly in the civil war.

Only US military and political power held the anti-Iraq coalition together and only the same could put such a varied coalition government in power in Baghdad, since it would have to either smash or incorporate the anti-Saddam forces that America is hoping will emerge in the military.

As we write there are some signs of a change in US policy within the 15% of Iraq it currently occupies. It is being forced to feed the population and to accept deserters instead of its former brutal policy of sending them back to face starvation and the Republican Guard.

But the USA may yet be forced to make a strategic change and intervene

ing. The millions of Iraqi workers are a formidable threat to imperialism's desired peace in the region for the simple reason that they were made to pay for the war and are now being forced to pay for the peace.

Ninety per cent of the Iraqi working class stands idle, its factories smashed. It has not been paid for over a month. Having been herded into the trenches the Iraqi conscripts are returning to find their families literally starving, drinking foul water, living in shattered homes, and under the constant threat of repression from the desperate Ba'ath regime.

While we were prepared to defend Iraq against imperialism, revolutionary Marxists never supported Saddam, never ceased to be in favour of his progressive overthrow. The Stalinists and the Labour left now say we were wrong to support the military victory of Iraq, claiming that the new revolutionary potential results from Iraq's defeat. They ignore the historic scale of the defeat that has been inflicted on the masses of the whole Middle East as a result of imperialism's triumph, not least the Palestinians. They overlook the terrible price the Iraqi masses have had to pay for the failure to defeat imperialism. Moreover imperialism will never tolerate revolution in Iraq. Its troops are there ready, after their victory over Saddam, to quell any revolt which threatens the new balance of power, let alone the capitalist system in its entirety.

Now workers must enter the struggle to overthrow Saddam. There is not and never was anything "socialist" about the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party.

## WORKING CLASS INDEPENDENCE

But workers' organisations which arise in the new conditions must keep politically separate from the present leadership of the rebellions. Any subordination of the workers' organisations to these leaders will mean disaster for the Iraqi masses. Once in power those leaders will be faced with the task of rebuilding Iraq. They can only do so with imperialist money and on imperialism's terms. Those terms will exact a heavy toll on the Iraqi working class in the shape of austerity, more starvation and unemployment, more repression.

To prevent this the workers must take charge of rebuilding Iraq. The workers must seize control of every remaining factory and utility and organise the reconstruction of the economy under workers' control. Where will the money come from? It will have to come from the seizure of all imperialist holdings in Iraq and from the wealth of the bourgeoisies in the surrounding countries.

Thus the Iraqi revolution will have to place on its immediate agenda not an accommodation with the rulers Syria, Iran and Turkey but their revolutionary overthrow. And it can best succeed in this by appealing to its class brothers and sisters in these countries who themselves suffer under dictatorships and face grinding poverty.

If imperialism intervenes militarily in the civil war workers must oppose it. They have no interest in being "liberated" at the point of US guns—guns which have refused to fire against Saddam's repressive apparatus and will be turned against anyone resisting a reactionary imperialist settlement.

Against Saddam's attempt to counter the revolution with the promised elections the workers must reply by demanding the convocation of a sovereign constituent assembly. He is



Ranged against this faction was President Rafsanjani and his supporters who played a clever diplomatic game to advance Iran's regional interests whilst playing imperialism and Iraq off against each other.

Without firing a shot Rafsanjani obtained the return of the territories and soldiers captured by Iraq between 1980 and 1988, the elimination of immigration quotas to Saudi Arabia (crucial in once again allowing Iranian participation in the pilgrimage to Mecca), reintegration into the diplomatic orbit of both imperialism and the USSR, the unravelling of the Arab diplomatic coalition against Iran and the active sympathies of Iraq's southern population.

He also gained for Iran 147 of Iraq's Soviet made top-level military aircraft, which he now refuses to return to Iraq.

Zambia since its re-acceptance into the western fold. Factional struggle within the Iranian bourgeoisie will decide whether or not it is prepared to sacrifice the movement in order to buy further accommodation with imperialism, and at present the pro-imperialist wing under Rafsanjani is in command.

If it can gain peacefully more than it could gain by antagonising the USA it will be prepared to sacrifice its supporters in Iraq.

## PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

The Beirut conference of 11-13 March, was heralded as the start of a consensus between the Kurdish leaders, the Shi'ite militants and US/Saudi-backed pro-imperialist Iraqi oppositionists. The western media trumpeted

directly into the civil war. It fears like the plague an extension of Iranian power and could not tolerate the break up of Iraq. But the power it is relying on, the Iraqi military, seems vulnerable to forces no military or diplomatic analyst can predict: the desire of ordinary workers and peasants to stop killing their own people and join with them to rebuild their shattered country.

What should the Iraqi workers and poor peasants do in this massive crisis?

## IRAQ'S FUTURE

Of the total Iraqi population 73% live in towns or cities. Iraq is one of the most industrialised Arab countries and has a large working class based in oil, chemicals, textiles and food process-

ment of the whole of Iraq based in Kurdistan.

At the same time Turkey, whose regime most brutally repressed the Kurds, has made a something of a U-turn on the Kurdish question. Turkish premier Ozal announced a much publicised decree legalising the Kurdish language, for conversation though not for official purposes, for the first time in Turkey's modern history. On 11 March he broke with all precedents and met representatives of the PUK and KDP in Ankara. Ozal's new found cosmetic concern for the Kurds stems from a position of weakness, not of strength. He is faced with the prospect of a Syrian and Iranian backed Kurdish government on his borders. Once news of the rising spread into Turkish Kurdistan it prompted immediate mass demonstrations in some towns which the Turkish army crushed with its habitual brutality, killing six Kurds on the streets.

Clearly the Turkish regime is no friend of the Kurds. Even the language law has been stalled in parliament and the Ozal regime, a Presidential dictatorship installed after years of military rule, has been attacked by the far right and the generals for its new softness on the Kurds.

## UPRISING OF THE KURDS

The Kurdish uprising is the latest in a long line of revolts within Iraq. The 22 million Kurds in the Middle East are the biggest nation in the world without a state. Over four million Kurds live in Iraq. The rest are divided between Turkey, Syria, Iran and the USSR. In every one of these countries they suffer discrimination and repression. However, throughout the whole history of the Kurdish national struggle they have been used as pawns by their oppressors against each other.

In 1975 an armed Kurdish uprising was crushed after Iran and the USA withdrew support because Saddam reached agreement with the Shah over the border dispute in the south with the Algiers Accord.

The Iranian Kurds played a major part in liberating Iran from the Shah, but fell as the first victims of the Islamic counter-revolution. As the Iran-Iraq war drew to a close a Kurdish uprising in Iraq was crushed when Saddam used poison gas. Many Kurdish villages were depopulated and their occupants herded into concentration camps. At the end of the recent war the peshmer-

gas launched a new offensive. The camp dwellers joined them, overpowering their guards and seizing the weapons, including tanks and artillery, of the retreating soldiers. The seizures of Kirkuk, and potentially Mosul—both of which are in an area where Kurds mix with Iraq's Arab population—represent the greatest military victories ever in the Kurdish liberation struggle. But the Kurdish uprising faces danger from two sources: its bourgeois nationalist leadership and the designs of the Ozal government in Turkey.

The leading forces within the uprising are Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Barzani's Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP). The PUK has traditionally been within the orbit of Iran and Syria. The KDP has a history of seeking accommodation with the Ba'ath regime with the goal of regional autonomy inside a unified Iraq. This is the stated aim of the uprising today. Barzani issued a call to all the factions involved in the Joint Action Committee, set up in December to co-ordinate the Iraqi opposition, to form a provisional govern-

Continued on page 5



# James Connolly and the 1916 Rising

Irish  
Workers  
Group

# Class Struggle

75th Anniversary Supplement

April 1991

20p

**O**n Easter Monday, 24th April 1916, James Connolly embarked on his last great struggle. As vice-president of the Provisional Government and Commandant General of the Dublin Division of the Army of the Irish Republic, he fused the Irish Citizen Army with the revolutionary wing of the Irish Volunteers, under the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), to strike a blow against British imperialism and proclaim an Irish Republic.

Exactly one week later the city centre of Dublin stood in ruins as the Rising was quelled by the relentless fire-power of British armed might. Its gunboats on the Liffey and its artillery pounded the walls of the half dozen points held by the rebels, centred on the General Post Office. Outside Dublin City, in the few centres that rose—County Galway, Enniscorthy and County Dublin—the officers in command reluctantly accepted the order to surrender.

## Citizen Army

Twelve days later Connolly was executed, the last of the captured leaders to die. The surviving Citizen Army and Irish Volunteer troops were arrested and deported to jails in Britain, interned until an amnesty could be forced from Britain's hands.

The Easter Rising took the world by surprise. The bourgeois 'Home Rule' party of Redmond ranted against the rebels. The *Irish Catholic* (published by Dublin capitalist boss of the *Irish Independent*, William Martin Murphy, who unleashed the Dublin Lockout of 1913) wrote after Connolly's executions: "What was attempted was an act of brigandage pure and simple ... no reason to lament that its perpetrators have met the fate universally reserved for traitors".

They were soon forced to change their tune. As execution followed cold-blooded execution and internment and deportation mounted, this apparently isolated rebellion registered more and more deeply in the minds and hearts of a down-trodden people. The 'Home

Rule' party was jettisoned in the 1918 Westminster elections as Sinn Féin, newly wedded to the Irish Republican Army, rose to express the sentiment of the working class and rural masses. Sinn Féin declared the first Dáil in Dublin's Mansion house in 1919, which was quickly followed by the War of Independence.

## Protracted Struggle

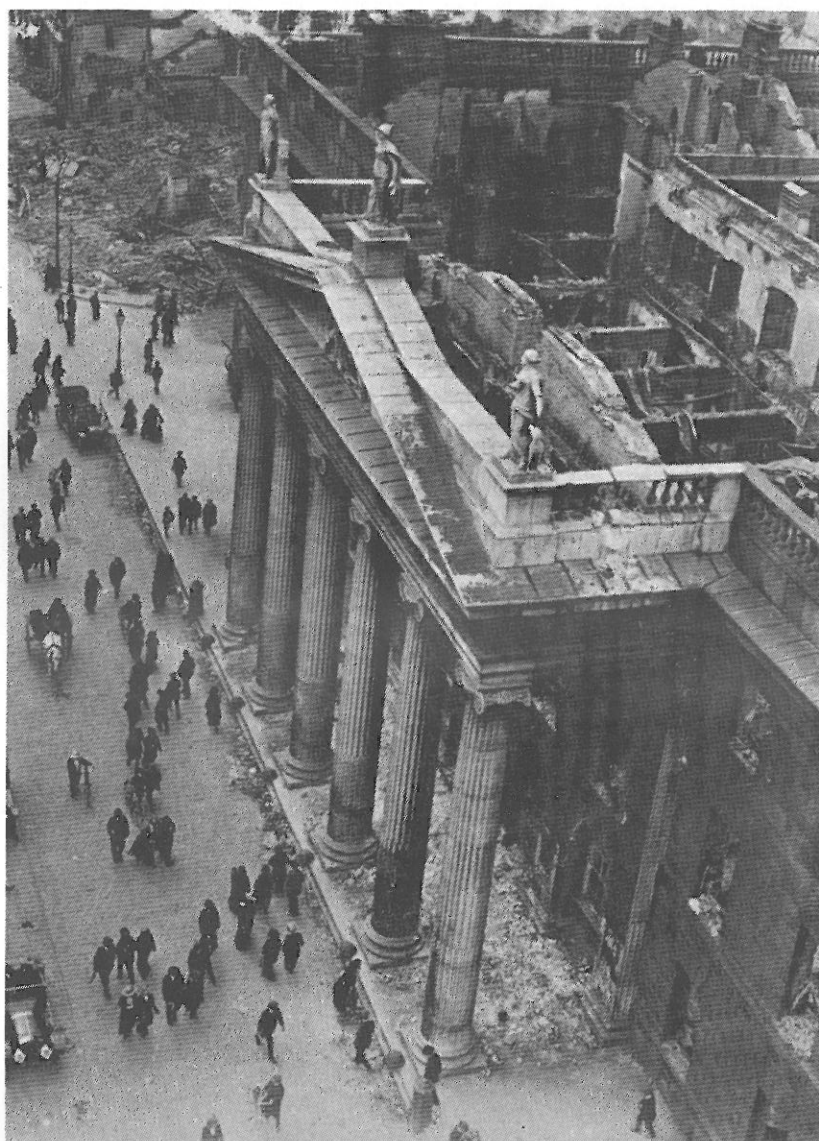
A protracted struggle, in which modern guerrilla warfare was born led to limited independence in a partitioned Ireland, by 1922. There followed a year of bloody Civil War in the 26-County Free State as the most conservative section of the Irish bourgeoisie, with English military backing, quelled the revolutionary wing of the republicans who rejected Britain's Treaty. The outcome was a formally separate state, in reality a deeply dependent semi-colony of Britain, presided over by a counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

Ever since, the popular memory of Connolly has been that of a national revolutionary and labour leader rather than a revolutionary socialist. In the article in this supplement on Republican Socialism we show how he worked out, early in his career in the 1890s, an original but flawed theory of the Irish national question which identified republicanism with socialism.

## Industrial Unionism

On his return in 1910 for his second Irish period he was preoccupied with industrial unionism and the kind of "political action" which he had come to see as necessary while in the USA. His identification of the cause of labour and the cause of Ireland was to assert itself again, however, in the major crisis that broke out—nationally and internationally—in 1914.

In that year he witnessed the rise of Carson in Ulster and the decamping of the Protestant working class to his anti-Home Rule crusade; the defeat of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union in February 1914 after seven months of bitter class struggle; the betrayal of the British pledge of



Home Rule by attempting to write 'temporary' Partition into the Home Rule deal and the attempt of the Redmond leadership to win acceptance of it in the Irish Parliamentary Party.

Most important of all, he witnessed the outbreak of the first World War in August with the betrayal in Ireland by Redmond and, internationally, by the leaders of the Social Democratic parties in western Europe.

The result of these events propelled him into merging the forces of revolutionary nationalism and of socialism to strike a blow against Britain, the major capitalist and imperialist power. Lenin had argued that the

war was one of rival imperialisms in which the lesser evil for socialists in all the major belligerent powers was the defeat of "their own" bourgeoisie. He explained how a new epoch had opened in which world capitalism would survive only through war, barbarism and the destruction of past gains.

## A Different View

Connolly took a different view of Germany which he saw not as an imperialist power but as a developing capitalist country obstructed by British imperial control of world trade

through its command of the seas. For him the military defeat of Britain would open the road to a new period of peace in which the as yet undeveloped forces of industrial unionism could grow and open the road for the socialist struggle.

It was a view which made it all the more difficult for Connolly to fight for the defeat of all of the competing imperialist powers in the war and to put the class war against capitalism to the fore in the anti-imperialist struggle.

Such a method would have seized on every opportunity created by the savagery and disillusion of the war among Irish soldiers and workers. It needed tactics to make the labour movement the most consistent and radical champion of national-democratic rights against Britain.

## Conspired at Insurrection

Instead of fighting among the mass of organised labour for such an action programme, he conspired at an insurrection without openly arguing for any course of action by the mass of workers on the issue. And he used the paper of the movement to repeatedly call upon the revolutionary nationalists to support an insurrection.

He was driven by the fear that any further delay in organising insurrection would only work to the advantage of Britain. The failure of a general strike to emerge anywhere in Europe, the betrayals of Social Democracy—all this was bad enough; but in Ireland the impending betrayal of Home Rule through Partition, the massive enlistment in the war, and the erosion of democratic liberties, left him believing that if the insurrection was not immediately organised it might never happen and Britain would win the war. *continued overleaf*

## Also in this supplement

**Connolly's World**

**Connolly's Republican Socialism**

**Connolly On Women**

# ON CONNOLLY'S SHOULDERS

His decision to join the Irish Rising in 1916 clearly marked the high point of his hope that through such action Labour alone would claim the mantle of revolutionary anti-imperialism and swiftly turn the tables against the native exploiters. Despite this tragic failure of his strategy he bequeathed a legacy on which socialism in Ireland could certainly be founded.

## Downtrodden

Connolly was one of the first to appreciate the significance of the changes taking place within the Irish working class. The downtrodden and unskilled labouring masses of town and country had burst onto the scene with the weapon of mass struggle to challenge the bosses and their system.

From the very beginning he strove to give this movement a socialist class consciousness and leadership. The great peaks of mass working class struggle of 1907 and 1913, the revolutionary idea of industrial unionism and the general strike, the formation of the Irish Transport & General Workers Union and his battle to found the Irish Labour Party; all these underline Connolly's clear sighted recognition that his class needed mass organisations on all the fields of battle if the capitalist class was to be finally brought to its knees.

But if such a battle was to be prepared for and won Connolly knew on whom he could and could not rely. Within the working class itself Connolly knew well that the privileged bureaucrats and union officialdom, especially of the skilled trades, were

at best unreliable and at worst open class traitors. He saw clearly, especially at moments of mounting class struggle; that their first instinct was for class peace rather than class struggle. Connolly's appetite and instinct for the fray of battle was a million times sharper than these jaded collaborators.

## Armed Self Defence

Against their opposition it was he, learning the lessons of the 1905 Russian Revolution who saw the need for armed self defence of the workers' struggles against the brutal repression of the Dublin Metropolitan Police and the British Army in 1913.

Finally, but not least, Connolly's shrewd

insights into the radicalising potential of women workers in struggle was exemplary. He drew attention to the way in which women workers quickly outstripped their male counterparts as the most intransigent defenders of class action against the bosses; how quickly they not only learnt the lessons of their class, but how prepared they were to break with the routine minded and more conservative male brothers when the situation demanded.

## Women

In putting an emphasis on organising women workers, whatever his general weaknesses on the women question, Connolly once more revealed his enormous capacity to learn from the action of his class and to apply what he learnt in a way which could add to the fire of its hatred and the clarity of its goals.

That is why the socialist movement in Ireland can stand squarely on the shoulders of James Connolly. ■

**J**ames Connolly was the founder of Marxism in Ireland. Throughout his whole life he fought to make its revolutionary doctrine of class struggle the touchstone of his political practice. Even where he failed in his bold and creative attempt to forge a new link between the struggle against imperialism and the fight against capitalism, his efforts were no idle theoretical speculation.

More than anyone else in Ireland or Britain he knew the depths of corruption and cowardice of the Irish bourgeoisie. So, too, the extent of nationalist sentiment among the Irish masses, and the opportunities it offered the employers to ensnare workers with patriotic phrase mongering. Connolly sought to arm the socialist movement and the working class movement with a theory and programme that could chart a way forward that would make the Irish working class the champion of national freedom while remaining the most resolute enemy of Irish capitalism.



continued from page 1

## The Touchstone of 1916

Dublin's was one of many nationally-inspired revolts in that period, such as the suppressed Indian troops' mutiny in Singapore, the rebellions in French Annam and the German Cameroons and the bloody suppression of the defiant Czechs by the Austrian imperial government. Internationally, in the crisis-torn socialist movement, the 1916 Rising became in Lenin's words "the touchstone of our revolutionary views" and a bone of bitter contention. Lenin wrote in a fierce attack on Radek:

The term 'putsch' in the scientific sense of the term may be employed when the attempt at insurrection has revealed nothing but a circle of conspirators or stupid maniacs and has aroused no sympathy among the masses. The centuries old Irish national movement, having passed through various stages and combinations of class interests, manifested itself, in particular, in a mass Irish National Congress in America which called for Irish independence; it also manifested itself in street fighting conducted by a section of the urban petty bourgeoisie and a section of workers after a long period of mass agitation, demonstrations, suppression of newspapers, etc. Whoever calls such a rebellion a 'putsch' is either a hardened reactionary, or a doctrinaire hopelessly incapable of envisaging a social revolution as a living phenomenon. (Lenin on Ireland, p. 32).

Yet Lenin's arguments have, through the warp and weft of subsequent history, been treated as an uncritical celebration of the substance and form of the 1916 Rising. In fact, Lenin's analysis of 1916 was by no means uncritical. He wrote:

The dialectics of history are such that small nations, powerless as an independent factor in the struggle against imperialism, play a part as one of the ferments, one of the bacilli, which help the real anti-imperialist force, the socialist proletariat, to make its appearance on the scene ... It is the misfortune of the Irish that they rose prematurely, before the revolt of the European proletariat had time to mature. (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 22, pp. 357-358).

Was Lenin here stating that 1916 represented a "social revolution" as some have wished to imply? The Rising in no way aimed at putting an end to capitalism. It did not even pose any agrarian social overturn on behalf of landless farmers. Lenin analysed it, therefore, entirely as an expression of a national revolution, i.e. the political struggle for a seceded nation state. However, taken as a whole internationally, the social revolution by the socialist proletariat of Europe would inevitably be heralded by and combined with national revolutions which it was the duty of internationalists to support.

### Blanquist Insurrection

We stand four-square with Lenin in rejecting Radek's "putsch" allegation. The Rising, however, did reduce the task of revolution to mere insurrection, a method which Marx and Engels had criticised in detail in their writings. When contrasted with such events as the 1905 and 1917 revolutions in Russia, the 1916 Rising is seen to have been an undertaking initiated by a minority behind the backs of the masses, instead of being the peak of an open mobilisation of the masses by the revolutionary minority.

Consistent with the Marxist tradition expressed in the analysis of the revolutions of 1848, we believe that Connolly's role in the 1916 Rising may legitimately be characterised, and faulted, as *Blanquist*. August Blanqui coined the term 'dictatorship of the proletariat'—later transformed by

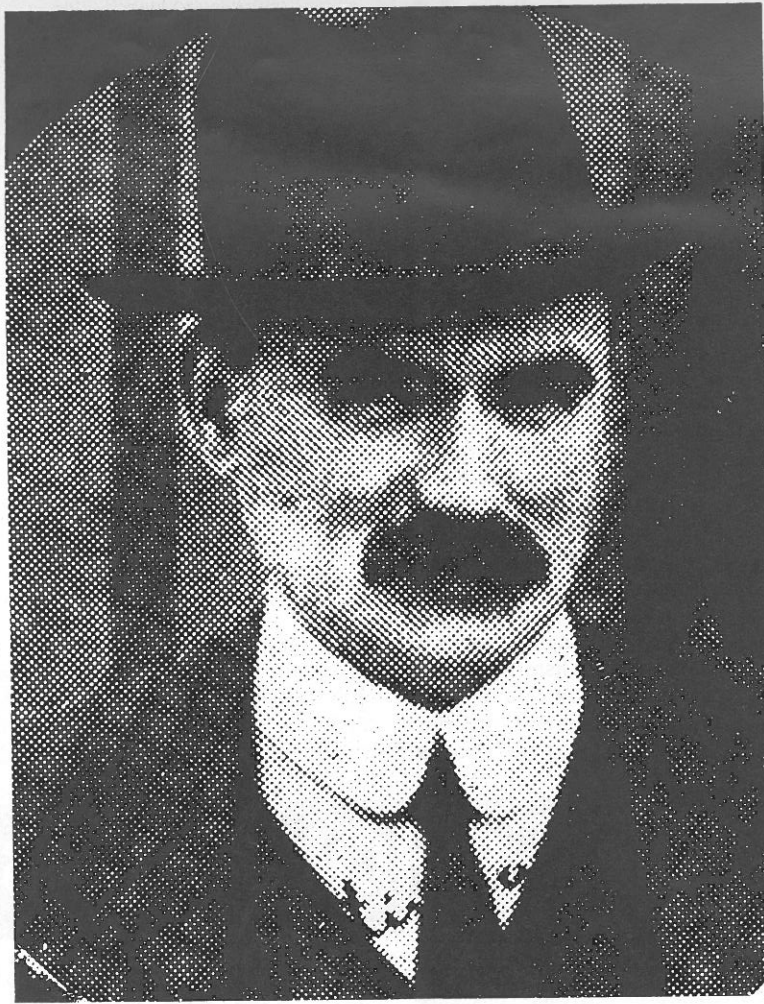
Marx—and was the inspiration of the June 1848 challenge to bourgeois rule. However, Marx rejected his abstract conspiratorial tactics. Trotsky wrote:

Conspiracy does not take the place of insurrection. An active minority of the proletariat, no matter how well organised, cannot seize the power regardless of the general conditions of the country. In this point history has condemned Blanquism. But only in this. His affirmative theorem retains all its force. In order to conquer the power, the proletariat needs more than a spontaneous insurrection. It needs a suitable organisation, it needs a plan; it needs a conspiracy. Such is the Leninist view of this question. (The Art of Insurrection, in History of the Russian Revolution, p. 1020)

Trotsky, writing at the same time as Lenin about the Dublin events, showed a perceptive grasp of the class relations of Irish society at the time but his general prognosis for the Irish revolution was proven to be plainly wrong by history—on one side. He argued after the defeat—"The historical basis for the national revolution had disappeared even in backward Ireland." Clearly he was wrong inasmuch as the subsequent years saw a renewed national struggle in the form of guerrilla warfare with mass support.

### Ultimately Compromised

That these forces ultimately compromised with imperialist partitioning the country into two states, both profoundly stunted from the standpoint of democracy and social development, lends a broader validity, however, to Trotsky's prognosis. He was recognising that modern imperi-



alism made it virtually impossible for a bourgeoisie in a backward society to free itself from imperialism and carry through the classical social tasks of the bourgeois epoch—independent industrialisation. Trotsky's prognosis was valid for Ireland in the general sense that there was no material basis for a bourgeoisie capable of developing as an independent competitor with the major powers.

The strength of Trotsky's article lies in identifying the significant role of the working class forces and his

Connolly served his political apprenticeship within the Scottish Socialist Federation (SSF), an Edinburgh based organisation linked to the Social Democratic Federation (SDF), the British Marxist wing of the 2nd International.

These organisations shared the general Marxist principles established by Marx in the Communist Manifesto and the First International. Central to them was the idea that, as a result of the development of capitalism on a world scale, the working class everywhere shared the same fundamental interest to overthrow capitalism and create a planned world economy.

### Second International

The programme of the 2nd International (1889-1914) thus reflected the confident belief that capitalist development itself was destined to expand everywhere, in the process creating the proletariat and its mass organisations. Thus one part of the programme—the minimum programme—concerned itself exclusively with day to day issues of immediate reform especially around wages and conditions, the fight for which strengthened the organisations of the class. The maximum programme, on the other hand, represented the ultimate demands, only realisable in a fully socialist society.

From this perspective, therefore, national struggles, understood by Marx as part of the bourgeois democratic revolution against feudal absolutism, were part of the minimum programme for socialists.

# THE WORLD OF James Connolly

The achievement of national unity, independence, universal suffrage and national economic development would clear the deck, so to speak, for the class struggle between worker and capitalist. The right of nations to self determination had been formally adopted by the 2nd International in 1896 as an inevitable step towards the class struggle within emerging capitalist states.

As such what is clear from this position is that the working class of the oppressed nation must not, apart from its formal commitment, involve itself in or seek to lead the National revolution. In this view national struggles while necessary historically have no progressive content in the fight against capitalism.

### Orthodoxy

The SSF/SDF maintained this orthodoxy on the Irish question, formally supporting political and legislative independence. What they and the leaders of the International failed to recognise was that where colonial oppression and absolutism still existed it was not simply the legacy of a precapitalist world.

Increasingly it resulted from the action of modern imperialist capitalism as the great powers fought to carve up the globe. National oppres-

cal role of the Irish proletariat is only beginning. Already it has injected its class resentment against militarism and imperialism, under an outdated banner, into this uprising. That resentment from now on will not subside. (L. Trotsky, Writings on Britain, Vol.3, pp. 167-169).

### Lowering the Red to the Green

Tragically, Connolly's overarching focus on the need for insurrection profoundly shaped his political propaganda during the war years. In the Workers Republic in January 1916 immediately after joining the IRB conspiracy, he answered at length the question—"What is Our Programme?". There we find nothing whatever with which the IRB could disagree—and nothing at all of a fighting socialist character:

Mark well then our programme. While the war lasts and Ireland still is a subject nation we shall continue to urge her to fight for her freedom. We shall continue, in season and out of season, to teach that the "far-flung battle line" of England is weakest at the point nearest its heart, that Ireland is in that position of tactical advantage ... But the moment peace is once admitted by the British Government as being a subject ripe for discussion, that moment our policy will be peace and in direct opposition to all talk or preparation for armed revolution. We will be no party to leading out Irish patriots to meet the might of an England at peace. The moment peace is in the air we shall strictly confine ourselves, and lend all our influence to the work of turning the thought of Labour in Ireland to the work of peaceful reconstruction. (Labour and Easter Week collection, p. 139).

In the middle of January 1916, fearful of precipitate action by Connolly, the IRB reputedly 'kidnapped' him for a few days during which Pearse told him of the plan for an Easter rebellion, that Casement was in Germany recruiting a brigade of Irish

sion was not inevitably disappearing with economic development but rather assuming an even sharper form as the epoch of imperialist rivalry unfolded.

### New Analysis

This new situation called for a new analysis which clearly understood the outbreaks of national struggles as symptoms of the growing crisis of imperialist capitalism, while still holding to the principle that the democratic struggle for nationhood was not in itself a challenge to the rule of capitalism in the colonial countries.

New tactics were needed to guide the proletariat whose tasks were not only to act but to fight for leadership in such struggles around its own independent banner. It fell to Lenin, during the period of the First World War, to elaborate such a position. Connolly's brave attempt to overcome the stale orthodoxy of the SDF/SSF on the Irish Question was, as we show in the article on Republican Socialism, deeply flawed from a theoretical and programmatic point of view.

Historical processes, according to the 2nd International were inevitably and rigidly determined by economic processes alone. In Britain especially, where Marx's work was largely unknown outside his strictly economic

prisoners of war and that Germany would supply arms and ammunition. From that moment he became co-leader of the rebellion.

The basis of his alliance with the IRB and the whole of his public propaganda in the lead up to 1916 show that he did not consciously seek to independently assert, let alone fight for at that time, a socialist programme. It was the abandonment of a principle long established since Marx, in 1850, referring to the working class, wrote: But they themselves must contribute to their final victory, by informing themselves of their own class interest, by taking up their independent political position as soon as possible, by not allowing themselves to be misled by the democratic phrases of the democratic petty bourgeoisie into doubting for one minute the necessity of an independently organised party of the proletariat. Their battle cry must be: The Permanent Revolution. (The Revolutions of 1848, p. 330).

### Connolly's Orientation

Connolly's orientation in the year before the Rising was certainly not consistent with this principle. Politically he dissolved the Citizen Army into the rebellion of the nationalist Volunteers led by the Irish Republican Brotherhood. He wrote in the Workers Republic in June 1915:

In this battle, the lines of which are now being traced, it will be the duty of every lover of the country and the race to forget all minor dividing lines and issues and in contemplating the world before us to seek earnestly after the unity of progressive forces.

Later he wrote, referring back to 1913:

Out of that experience is growing the feeling of identity of interests between the forces of real nationalism and labour which we have long worked and hoped for in Ireland. Labour recognises daily more clearly that its real well being is linked and bound up with



# olly

texts, this outlook powerfully shaped the views of the SSF/SDF.

Absent from it was any grasp of Marx's unique materialist method whereby all aspects of life—economic, political, social and ideological etc.—were critically interrelated. Instead a reduction of Marxism to economic necessity alone led logically to making *passive* propaganda for the doctrinaire "truth" that socialism was inevitable.

## Trade Unions Ignored

Education of the few, not intervention in the living struggles of the masses was the order of the day for SSF members. Thus the trade unions were largely ignored because they were merely concerned with the 'bread and butter' issues of survival *within* capitalist society, rather than challenging it. An indelible strain of sectarianism was etched into Connolly's political character through this experience, only overcome in America when he was confronted by the mass industrial union struggles of the Wobblies.

Connolly was not so fortunate with another aspect of his political outlook created within the SSF/SDF milieu. For while he shared the strict economic reductionism of the SSF/SDF, he combined it with an outlook that separated economic processes, from culture, ideology etc.

This meant that Socialists were invited to agree on economic facts alone, but not on important matters involving religion, the churches, the family and sexuality etc.

In this view the employer was the only enemy of the worker. Outside of that arena, issues were of a different order of priority or to be left to individual conscience.

## Processes

Marx and Engels had always recognised that while economic processes were decisive in history, political, social, ideological forces and institutions interact with them, posing a range of concrete problems to be tackled in developing the class consciousness and political armoury of the working class.

In Ireland, particularly, it meant scientifically analysing the key issues of nationalism, religion, the land question, culture etc. in relation to the class struggle.

The SSF/SDF position was totally at odds with this. It tended to sever all connections between economics and politics.

Thus Connolly failed to see religion as a social process having roots not only in material life but intimately tied to the defence of the capitalist social order.

He saw it as a private matter, not to be discussed among socialists. Similarly on matters of the family, his background radically disarmed him, leaving this undoubted champion of women workers struggles opposed to divorce and defending the monogamous bourgeois family.■

*the hope of growth of Irish resources within Ireland; and nationalists realise that the real progress of a nation towards freedom must be measured by the progress of its most subject class. (Labour and Easter Week collection, p. 124).*

The whole weight of his propaganda in the period was of this tenor. And if evidence be needed from the Rising itself, there is the 1916 Proclamation, written jointly with Connolly and stating the aims of the rebellion.

It has not a single feature to rescue it from the category of radical democratic proclamations in general. It is certainly in no way a proletarian socialist document. Nor did Connolly independently state any other programme for his forces in the Rising.

He was, in fact, the most resolute leader in carrying out the insurrection, but the IRB were in unchallenged control, politically and militarily throughout.

Despite his articles on revolutionary warfare in *Workers Republic* in 1916, he seems not to have applied in Easter week the important lessons spelt out there.

These articles had drawn the lessons of Russia in 1905, Lexington 1775, Paris 1830 and Alamo 1821. In 'Moscow Insurrection 1905' and 'Street fighting—summary' the stress is on the importance of involving the city masses, at which no attempt was made in the Dublin Rising.

## Conclusion

Where then must Irish socialists stand on the 'touchstone' of the Easter Rising?

Firstly, we say that Connolly was wrong to lower the red flag to the green, to subordinate the working class programme to that of the revolutionary democratic petty bourgeoisie. The legacy of that error is still visited on the Irish working class

in the appropriation by Sinn Féin of the mantle of Connolly in the name of an anti-imperialist programme which, even if fully carried out, would never bring the working class to power.

Secondly, we hold that, even had Connolly openly made propaganda for independent action by the working class, he still would have been wrong to organise an insurrection against British rule in the conditions of 1916 where by no stretch of the imagination were any significant working class forces prepared for revolutionary struggle.

And what of the Rising itself as a historic reality? Lenin and Trotsky, from an internationalist standpoint, and from outside Ireland, were powerless to intervene as a political factor in the Dublin of 1916.

## Decades Later

We, too, many decades later, are equally powerless to determine a different course on the part of the working class leaders in Dublin as the revolutionary ferment was maturing throughout the capitalist world.

We can make our critical assessment today only out of an understanding of the revolutionary programme enriched by a whole epoch of struggle since 1916.

Notwithstanding our criticisms, like Lenin and Trotsky we stand by the Rising and defend it as objectively a heroic and historically progressive blow directed at the heart of imperialism, a blow, therefore, for the proletariat and oppressed everywhere.

The tragedy of Connolly and the Easter Rising is that the founder of the Irish socialist movement, a heroic figure of renown to every Irish worker, confused rather than clarified, in the most testing moment, a crucial task that faced and still faces our class—the struggle for the *Workers' Republic*.■

# Connolly's Republican Socialism

**L**ike all Marxists of his time, James Connolly understood that the development of capitalist nation states had been a great advance for humanity out the world of feudalism and of absolute monarchies which had preceded capitalism in Europe.

But already by the time Connolly was setting out for Ireland, national movements for self-determination around the globe were confronting a new enemy—not the old order of feudalism but the new imperialism of the developed capitalist states themselves.

The leaders of the International continued to see colonialism as a harbinger of development and progress worldwide. They did not grasp the fundamental change that had taken place, nor the implications for socialist strategy and tactics towards national movements beginning to struggle against the European colonial powers. The class struggle of labour against capital was seen as the universal road for the proletariat in backward and developed countries alike. National struggles in this mistaken view had no progressive potential in the fight against capitalism.

## British Marxists

This was especially true among the 'Marxists' in the British Social Democratic Federation who shaped the early ideas of James Connolly. But it was not good enough for Connolly whose experience in the Irish ghettos of Scotland had convinced him of the burning relevance of national oppression to the Irish labouring masses.

He was driven into conflict with the orthodoxy of the SDF on the question of Ireland. His break with them was sharply expressed in the programme of his Irish Socialist Republican Party in 1896. Whereas the SDF had placed the issues of national self-determination and bourgeois democracy in the 'minimum programme' of reforms to be achieved under capitalism, Connolly placed Irish national freedom in the 'maximum programme' as an integral part of the achievement of socialism. How could Connolly justify this leap?

In essence he made a deliberate exception for Ireland from what he ac-

knowledge to be the correct, scientific, analysis of historical development. Elsewhere the development of nation states had meant the fullest development of private property, creating eventually the conditions for the class struggle for socialism. In Ireland, however, the struggle for nationhood was to be seen as a struggle *against* private property!

Deeply influenced by Irish nationalist historians, Connolly believed that Gaelic Ireland had been a democratic society based on communal ownership of wealth until the 1600s. In fact it was a system of several social orders in which an aristocracy controlled the productive wealth and exacted service from the mass of toilers. Marx analysed it in these terms 20 years before Connolly, but this has only been rediscovered in recent times and noted for the first time in Ireland in the IWG's book on Connolly. Building on this myth, Connolly held:

*The history of Ireland ever since the English invasion has been one long history of a conflict between common property, represented by the Irish and private property represented by the English. (The Harp, Vol. 2, No. 11, page 1.)*

*The Irish question has in fact a much deeper source than a mere difference of opinion on forms of government. Its real origins and inner meaning lay in the circumstances that the two opposing nations held fundamentally different ideas upon the vital question of property in land. (Erin's Hope, Edwards and Ransom, p. 172-173.)*

The consequences for Connolly's socialism were to identify the national movement with the interests of the toiling classes rather than, as he knew to be the Marxist position, with the interests of the emerging bourgeoisie. He developed the belief that Irish history had an inner dynamic towards socialism. The national struggle would recover communal property forms, and thus only a socialistic society could embody the national principle in Ireland:

*There is only one remedy for the slavery of the working class and that remedy is the socialist republic, a system of society in which the land and all the houses, railways, factories, canals, workshops and everything necessary for work shall be owned and operated as common property much as the land*

*of Ireland was owned by the clans of Ireland before England introduced the capitalist system amongst us at the point of the sword. (Workers Republic 1898.)*

## Populism

A number of other sources and ideas reinforced Connolly's schema of identifying the national struggle and socialism in Ireland. In particular he inherited a mistaken belief that the world market imposed absolute limits on the further development of capitalism, and that therefore no new industrial capitalism could develop in Ireland. (Ironically, he overlooked the remarkable industrial development in the north-east!)

*...the thoughtful Irish patriot will throw rant aside and freely recognize that it is impossible for Ireland to do what those other countries cannot do with their great advantage—that is, to attain prosperity by establishing a manufacturing system in a world market already cluttered with every conceivable kind of commodity. (Erin's Hope, Ransom & Edwards p. 179.)*

This was a conclusion also reached by the Russian Populists in the 1880s about the prospects for Russia. Marxism in Russia was born in the struggle against such ideas, but in the British SDF Connolly's mentors had uncritically accepted as Marxist the entirely wrong idea that capitalist development is limited by the inability of existing markets to consume existing production (underconsumptionism). Marx had in fact showed how capitalist development is not limited in this way because it continuously *creates* new markets.

The significance for Connolly's programme was that an independent Ireland *could only develop* on the basis of socialism. It would have to 'skip over' the stage of capitalist development because this would be impossible. From this it was a small step to believing that radical Irish nationalists, who were in clear conflict with the constitutional reformism of the capitalist Home Rule Party, would inevitably place themselves in the camp of the labouring masses and of socialism.

Continued on the back page

## THE CONNOLLY CONTROVERSY

**WHEN JAMES CONNOLLY'S** part in the Easter Rebellion became known among socialists internationally in 1916 they were deeply unsympathetic if not outright hostile. Socialist and Labour leaders who knew him stigmatised him as having capitulated to nationalism.

The Irish Trades Union Congress and Labour Party, in which he had been a leading figure, deliberately distanced itself from him. Even in Lenin's oft-quoted defence of the 1916 insurrection there was no recognition of any socialist leadership in the Dublin events, let alone any mention of Connolly. It was a *national* revolt against imperialism, entirely progressive from an international viewpoint but not a socialist uprising.

Yet as soon as the militant nationalism took hold of the masses in the wake of 1916, Irish socialists began to claim Connolly once more as their own, and since then al-

most every political current claiming to be socialist has sought legitimacy in the legacy of James Connolly.

This striking turnabout cannot be explained by supposing that it took time for socialists to come to an understanding and appreciation of Connolly's role in 1916. Indeed, to a large extent, time has actually blurred the evidence of just how much Connolly did indeed fall in behind the nationalists of his day at the cost of postponing the fight for socialism.

The controversy about Connolly's role has, if anything, actually sharpened in recent years. No less than three new books in two years have challenged the accepted view of Connolly. The first full critique of Connolly's ideas, from the standpoint of the revolutionary communism of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, was not undertaken until the mid 1980s when it was pub-

lished by the IWG in 8 major articles, since edited into the book *Connolly: a Marxist Analysis* (by A. Johnston et al, IWG, 1990). The book refutes the notion that Connolly was an Irish Trotsky. It also refutes the view that the socialist Connolly 'became a nationalist' after 1914—as argued in Austin Morgan's political biography of Connolly (1988). There was no such fundamental discontinuity in Connolly. His action in 1916 was the outcome of a 20-year development of his ideas.

The anniversary supplement can only summarize the outlines of that development. The reader is urged to study the IWG book for a fuller—and critical—understanding of how Connolly evolved the ideas of 'Republican Socialism' inherited by the Irish left.■

The book is on sale in major bookstores or by post for £4.50 to IWG, c/o 12 Langrishe Place, D.1.



## Connolly's Republican Socialism

Connolly had been deeply influenced by his fellow SDF socialist and friend in Edinburgh, John Leslie. Leslie in turn drew inspiration from the writings of Fintan Lalor, the Young Ireland revolutionary of 1848. Lalor attempted to link the national question to the social struggle of poor peasants against the semi-feudal landlords. He recognized that the oppression of the peasantry could mobilize them as a revolutionary force both against landlordism and for national independence.

This was not the classic bourgeois revolutionary programme which focused on the rising industrial urban class. It was in fact similar to the Russian Populist Narodnik tradition mentioned earlier. It based itself on the peasantry whose possession of their land, Lalor wrongly believed, would mean that the development of capitalism could be avoided. The goal for Lalor was...

*not to resume or restore an old constitution but to found a new nation and raise up a free people, and strong as well as free, and secure as well as strong, based on a peasantry rooted like rocks in the soil of the land. This is my object (Readings from J.F. Lalor, Belfast Republican Centre, p.68).*

If Lalor's strategy had been taken up it could have become part of the means to rid Ireland of landlordism. But such an outcome would have accelerated the emergence of capitalism from among the peasantry itself, as witness the later development of the Irish farmer class. Lalor, of course, did not understand this. What is relevant is that he had conceived a solution both for the land question and the national question which seemed to exclude the industrial manufacturing bourgeoisie and the development of capitalism.

He was wrong on both counts. It was historically impossible to write the bourgeoisie out of the solution of the national question. This was even more true from the standpoint of a peasant struggle around the land. Except under the lead of either of the great modern urban classes created by capitalism, the peasantry has never been able to develop a general political programme and movement for its own emancipation.

Leslie, forty years later, sought to creatively apply Lalor's idea that the national question could be reduced to the social question of the most oppressed class. He did so, however, in conditions where a modern proletariat existed and the struggle for socialism was on the historical agenda.

Leslie drew the wrong conclusions. In describing Lalor as "the man who first pointed out the class nature of the Irish movement" he overlooks that Marx saw national independence movements as arising from the strivings for bourgeois capitalist development.

He therefore describes Wolfe Tone not as a classic Irish Jacobin and bourgeois revolutionary whose goal was an Irish bourgeois republic, but simply as a protagonist of peasant freedom from landlordism. He uncritically adapted Lalor's essentially wrong premise:

*That the enjoyment by the people of the right of first ownership of the soil is essential to the vigour and vitality of all other rights" (The Irish Question, p.5)*

*That the land question contains, and the legislative question does not contain the material from which victory is manufactured" (Readings from Lalor, p.73).*

Believing wrongly that bourgeois nationalism in the 1890s was "a dissolving view", Leslie inserts the working class of town and country as the leading class in place of the bourgeoisie, where Lalor had inserted the peas-

antry. Such a re-interpretation would make it possible for militants such as Connolly, at odds with the sterile SDF position, to conclude that Irish nationalism could be fully reconciled with the socialist struggle.

### Labour in Irish History

The most dramatic evidence of Connolly's confusion of socialist and national struggle is to be seen in his *Labour in Irish History*. Here he systematically re-writes history in a manner clearly at odds with Marx's general method and in contradiction of Marx's own analysis of Irish history. His purpose is to prove that the Irish national struggle has always been the struggle of the toiling classes against the alien imposition of private property. For Marx the essential dynamic and outcome of national struggle was the attempt of the bourgeoisie to develop private property and the conditions for exploiting the toiling masses!

He strips the Irish national bourgeoisie of any positive role in the struggle for its own nation state, either in the past or in the present. Instead he casts it as "an apostate", since its social and political goals have always been and remain the consolidation and development of private property in Ireland.

Connolly clearly perceives the profound difference between revolutionary nationalists prepared to struggle against colonial rule and constitutional reformers who repeatedly betray the potential for mass struggle and victory—the Irish 'republican' tradition. But he is wrong to believe that they thereby represent different classes. He wrongly assigns the revolutionary republicans to the camp of the working class (precursors of the socialist future) and the nationalist reformers to the camp of the bourgeoisie (champions of private property).

The heroic and revolutionary representatives of the bourgeoisie in the 18th century—Tone, McCracken, Emmet—are identified as champions of the interests of the toilers against private property, rather than what they actually represented—the struggle for a bourgeois republic based on the greatest freedom for private property to develop! Wolfe Tone and the United Irishmen are correctly regarded as the founders of Irish Republicanism, a revolutionary brand of Irish nationalism prepared to take up arms to bring about the separation from Britain.

Connolly conveniently overlooks the origins of the United Irishmen out of the reform movement during Grattan's Parliament. Only when that period of constitutional action had failed were they forced to develop a conspiracy for insurrection against Britain. After their bloody defeat in 1789 such revolutionary nationalism remained marginal and conspiratorial throughout the 19th century, but a new and essentially reformist national movement soon developed which was at all points opposed to revolutionary action, led by the southern bourgeoisie—Daniel O'Connell, Isaac Butt, C.S. Parnell, John Redmond—and the Catholic Church.

The 19th century Fenian movement was the direct precursor of the radical republicanism of 1916. In *Labour in Irish History* Connolly fits them also into the camp of the working class, failing to analyse what class interests their programme really represented. Such a historical analysis led him finally and fatally to a misunderstanding of what class interest is really represented by the revolutionary nationalists of his own day, the IRB.

Contrary to Connolly's and Leslie's belief, the national movement of the bourgeoisie and petit bourgeoisie in Ireland in the 1890s after Parnell was

As the suffragette movement became a mass struggle for the vote for women in Ireland and Britain, Connolly, unlike most other socialists and trade unionists, took the women's side.

He used his power of mass oratory and the written word to help women win the vote. He became the socialist most revered and respected by the suffragettes, a fact shown in the number of times he was asked to speak on their platforms. And unlike many trade union bureaucrats who ran a mile from the suffragettes as they began to use violence to promote their aims, Connolly never condemned them—feeling that their oppression made these actions understandable. He staunchly defended suffragettes, Irish and British, who were imprisoned because of their militancy and fought inside and outside the labour movement for their release.

But it was in turning to the women of his own class that the quality of Connolly's revolutionary activism was shown at its best. At a time when most male trade union activists in Ireland and Britain did not go out of their way to organise women in fighting unions, Connolly did precisely this. Both in the USA and Ireland he strove to draw working class women into industrial unions for the unskilled and semi-skilled proletarian masses. There is evidence that owing to this experience in the US he fought against Larkin's policy of ghettoising working class women in women's unions. He so promoted working women to become stewards and union leaders that some of them who struggled alongside him e.g. Helena Moloney, went on to become formidable working class women leaders.

But despite his genuine sympathy for the unenviable plight of women, Connolly held views which were highly peculiar for a self-confessed revolutionary. While working with De Leon in America he objected to August Bebel's book *Women and Socialism*—a pioneering Marxist study on women's oppression, the family and sexuality. Twenty years after the initial publication of this standard Marxist classic, Connolly still condemned it as "an excrescence on the movement". His prudery

not dissolving. Events from 1896 onwards consolidated the hold of the Catholic Irish bourgeoisie in town and country over the masses as the farming class grew with the land settlements. Home Rule became the rallying cry of hundreds of thousands who looked to constitutional nationalist leaders.

Having decided in 1896 that any form of bourgeois national independence was impossible, Connolly had no tactics to break the working class from illusions in the nationalist bourgeois leaders. By 1912 he had to accept the prospect of peaceful Home Rule as an inevitability, and as a framework in which labour could develop on a 32-county basis.

His dramatic turn to planning a nationalist insurrection after 1914, sadly, did not mark any attempt to reassert an independent political strategy for the working class. After the trade union defeat of 1913, with the shelving of Home Rule and the threat of Partition, he was impatient to use England's war as Ireland's chance to strike against imperialism.

Mistakenly identifying the democratic programme of the radical nationalists with the class interests of the workers, he had no difficulty in placing himself and his Citizen Army forces at the disposal of the IRB conspiracy. The Proclamation of the Irish Republic which they co-signed was the manifesto of a provisional government of a bourgeois republic and in no way reflected the distinct interests of the working class.

The fusion of Republicanism and Socialism, the confusion rather than the linking of two distinct programmes, was consummated on Easter Monday 1916. He went into the General Post Office believing that these forces were opposed to the class interests of the Irish bourgeoisie and that it was no political compromise for the working class to lower the red banner to the green flag of insurrectionary republicanism.

## CHAMPION OF THE WOMAN WORKER

becomes clear when he goes on to add: "I consider that whosoever tells of the sexual action needlessly or in any other manner, but as a scientist would speak of his investigations or a surgeon of his operations, is acting indecently".

In his polemic with the Jesuit, Fr. Kane, answering Kane's suggestion that divorce would lead to women becoming the mistress of one man after another, Connolly responds by accusing Kane of a slander against "Irish womanhood". The concept of freedom for women to explore their own sexuality was entirely alien to Connolly. What he defends in women is their role as dutiful mothers and wives.

Connolly failed to understand the family from a class standpoint. He further departs from Marxist orthodoxy in identifying divorce as a bourgeois evil, not as a democratic right which socialists must fight for. Instead he contends that it was mostly the wicked capitalists who were clamouring for divorce! Not surprisingly he was appalled at the thought of 'free love' and was an ardent defender of monogamy.

### Unprecedented Explosion

And all of this during a period which witnessed an unprecedented explosion of struggle around women's issues. In Germany especially, a mass working class women's movement had been built which mobilised thousands to fight around the issue of equality and which championed the Marxist outlook of Bebel's *Women and Socialism*. Although considering himself a revolutionary, he never accepted the full scope of Marx's materialist method. He believed that there were some issues which socialists couldn't have a definite opinion on—issues outside the realm of political and economic factors—that were matters of personal belief exclusively.

For Connolly, Catholicism was one such case. He held that the tradition of Irish Catholicism contained a spiritual and ethical

heritage which could not be logically understood by historical materialism. He believed that Irish Catholicism in response to foreign conquest had kept alive the Celtic values of solidarity and communalism. He attributed to it a progressive dynamism that could be salvaged in a socialist Ireland.

In a separate but connected way he held that issues like the family and sexuality were external to the question of socialism. Ironically, this did not prevent Connolly from treating these subjects at great length in his own works. Of course it is possible to produce extracts from Connolly in which he criticizes the role of the church. But what he never does is go beyond this to draw any conclusions about the inherent nature of religion in capitalist society. This stands in stark contrast to the kernel Marxist idea that the dominant ideology invariably reflects the interests of the dominant social class.

Connolly's syndicalism caused him to encourage the suffragettes to involve themselves in the trade union organisation of women. However, he had no perspective of mobilising women in a specific struggle, using class action, for women's emancipation. While he saw the necessity for women to fight together against their oppression, he narrowed the horizons for organised women workers to the fight around economic issues in the unions.

In doing so, he showed himself to have dumped some of the prejudices that were the stock-in-trade for others who considered themselves socialists. But, well-intentioned though he was, Connolly's strategy couldn't confront in action the real depth and extent of women's specific oppression in a deeply oppressed colony.

We make these criticisms of Connolly only in order to benefit by the lessons of his past in ensuring that we do not repeat the same mistakes. This is a sentiment that Connolly himself—huge of heart and solid in principle—would thoroughly have approved of.

His motives were the most honourable—to create the conditions of national freedom in which he believed a resurgent labour movement would steadily win control of the economy and finally capture the 'political citadel'. But his flawed understanding of Republicanism involved a major strategic mistake which has dogged Irish revolutionaries ever since.

Radical forces have repeatedly cited Connolly's republican socialism to justify the postponement of the class struggle at moments of heightened national revolt. The result has been a double disaster—failure to complete the tasks of the national revolution, and failure to bring the working class to the lead of the Irish nation and to break it from its twin deceivers—the Catholic nationalism of Fianna Fáil, and the openly imperialist chauvinism of northern loyalism.

### What Alternative?

The inspiring quality of Connolly's life was his attempt to make the struggle against British imperialism a central concern of the labour movement. Sadly, he failed to work out a strategy and tactics to link the class and national struggles without subordinating the cause of labour. To understand and learn from his mistake is the best service to his memory.

Within a year of his execution the Russian revolution was to vindicate and bring to prominence a new programme which was being hammered out on the left wing of the International and which did indeed spell out the kind of principles, strategy and tactics which Connolly's heroic enterprise so desperately needed.

The Comintern under Lenin and Trotsky recognized that struggle for demands of the minimum programme, such as national independence, had the potential to arouse revolutionary struggle against the capitalist system itself, if decisively led in that direction. It was equally possible

that the demands of the democratic programme might be partially conceded on a basis favourable to continued bourgeois rule. This was especially true if the working class did not resolutely pursue its own strategic goal at all points in the struggle. Ireland was such a case in 1916-22.

Thus there were two preconditions for a favourable outcome for socialists in a national struggle. The working class had to become the leading force, mobilising all poor and oppressed of town and country under their banner. And they had to maintain their political independence from the radical democrats and bourgeoisie and at no point to suspend the class struggle against the capitalists even where united action against a common enemy was tactically agreed.

But Lenin and Trotsky never equated even the most radical national-democratic programme with the working class programme for power. Tactics were necessary which would link the two in a way that responded to shifts in the mood of the masses and the degree of their illusions in the bourgeois nationalists. Demands for the most radical forms of democracy, such as the revolutionary constituent assembly, the most radical solution of the land question etc. were crucial in challenging the hold of the nationalist parties.

Connolly's much acclaimed slogan, therefore, "The cause of Ireland is the cause of labour, the cause of labour is the cause of Ireland", did not represent such a method. It was founded on a populist misconception of the national struggle as inevitably socialist. It masked in reality a tragic liquidation of the political independence of the working class into revolutionary nationalism. In that respect it is a part of Connolly's legacy that must be rejected in the fight for the overall goal which Connolly first placed before the Irish working class—the establishment of a Workers Republic and international communism.



certain to restrict the elections and use what is left of the Ba'ath apparatus to intimidate voters. A sovereign constituent assembly, elected by all over the age of 16, could only advance the revolution if it was convened by the workers' organisations themselves and defended by a workers' militia.

This, together with every other aspect of the crisis and civil war gripping Iraq, faces the working class with the immediate task of building democratically elected cross workplace and city wide councils of action and an independent workers militia. Such organisations will be capable of making a limited alliance with the Kurds and the southern insurgents but will also protect the distinct class interests of the workers and poor peasants. They can impose working class order in the cities against arbitrary looting and vendettas against continued repression and against real counter revolutionaries. They can defend the regime of workers' control and ensure a fair distribution of food and fuel, crushing those who try to exploit the misery of the masses in search of profit.

The struggles of such councils and such a militia will not be confined to routine administration. Iraq is being torn apart by civil war. The question of who is to rule the country is directly posed and a revolutionary party can and must be forged in the heat of the current struggle that can answer this question. Instead of a provisional government of US allies the workers must fight for a workers' and peasants' government based on the action councils and the workers' militia. Immediately the Iraqi working class should fight for:

- the release of all political prisoners
- full political and social rights for women
- complete separation of religion from the state
- self-determination, up to and including secession, for the Kurds and all other oppressed nationalities of Iraq. Launch the fight for a unified, socialist Kurdish republic in every part of Kurdistan
- cancel the \$30 billion debt to imperialism. No reparations to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia
- nationalisation without compensation of all major industries
- workers' control of every workplace
- an immediate programme of reconstruction under a plan drawn up by the workers and poor peasants themselves

Spread the revolt throughout the Middle East. No peace with imperialism and its puppets.

Forward to the socialist federation of the Middle East!■

# GDR Workers on the March

The anniversary of the first free elections in what used to be east Germany was marked by demonstrations across the south of the country. This year though, the demonstrators cheered on the speeches which denounced Helmut Kohl. Peter Main looks at the changes taking place in Germany and the tasks of Trotskyists as hard times approach. Below we print the text of a leaflet distributed by supporters of Arbeitermacht and the Communist Platform of the PDS.

DEMONSTRATION of 100,000 on a Monday night in Leipzig is a powerful symbol in the united Germany. It was in Leipzig that small scale protests began. These were transformed into the mass movement that toppled the Stalinist regime. That the streets now ring to the demand for Kohl's resignation is a measure of how much has changed since unification.

Behind the demonstrations lies the growing realisation that an economic catastrophe is about to overwhelm the "new states". Immediately after the currency union in July, strikes erupted across the GDR. Workers demanded wage increases to cope with Western prices. Western trade unions entered the fray to recruit new members and to protect their Western membership from a wage-cutting flood of cheap labour. Typically, they negotiated a breathing space; wage deals and job security packages for between six months and a year.

The government's strategy was to rationalise the GDR economy under the control of the Treuehand, a state trust which was given control of all nationalised industry.

This strategy has failed. Buying off unrest has cost the equivalent of DM35,000 million and forced higher interest rates and taxes.

Meanwhile the sheer scale of trying to reorganise an entire planned economy in accordance with the norms of capitalism, added to the complications thrown up by promises to return state property to its original owners, has defeated the Treuehand's management.

Their plan now is simply to sell off all property at knockdown prices and allow the new owners to "rationalise" it as they see fit. Now the deals that bought the breathing space are running out. Workers' fears are stirred by the forecasts of unemployment reaching three or even four million. Already 30% of the workforce is either unemployed or on short time. On top of the mounting fears about unemployment came last week's announcement that rents in the "new states" will rise by 360% in August. This has begun to create increasing pressure for action.

The demos themselves were big but not especially militant. In Leipzig, 100,000 responded to a call from the West German engineering union, IG Metall, and the Citizens' Movement, which was formed during the first phase of the revolution against the Stalinists in the Autumn of 1989.

In Berlin, still an important region of

PDS influence, the discontent, and the realisation that a new political direction is needed, has penetrated into the ranks of the PDS itself. Supporters of the LRCI, organised around the newspaper Arbeitermacht, are working within the Communist Platform group inside the party. Since the last party conference in January they have seen the support for their arguments grow rapidly.

The developing German crisis is unique in history, the result of the first attempt to restore capitalism in what was a degenerate workers' state. The chief feature of the former GDR was the state control of the economy after the expropriation of the capitalist owners. Until the final collapse of the old regime, the strategic task of the working class was to seize control of the economy and the planning mechanisms from the bureaucrats. Today's objective has to recognise that the working class lost the opportunity to install its own regime and its own control of the economy. Today we have to fight to get control of the Treuehand, to stop it breaking up the workforces, to stop it privatising the assets, to stop it creating the imperialist world's biggest reserve army of unemployed workers.

The starting point for this is the current wave of protests. The way forward lies through the occupation of threatened plants and their use as organising centres of resistance to all the attacks on living standards.

Without a doubt this will bring the working class up against the full might of the state. Speaking to BBC Radio, after the Berlin Demo on 23 March, the Mayor of Berlin said he was expecting "a lot more than just demonstrations" in what might become a very hot summer.

The working class must create the alternative to the old state. Its factory committees, its democratic trade unions, its workers' councils, its control commission and its defence organisations are not only necessary here and now to stop the destruction of the economy, they are also the embryos of the future healthy workers' state.

That is the strategy to which the LRCI is winning recruits both inside and outside the PDS.■

This leaflet was distributed by Arbeitermacht and Communist Platform members in the PDS and reproduced by several PDS branches instead of the official Party leaflets for the Berlin demonstration on 23 March. On 22 March, Neues Deutschland, the PDS newspaper, condemned the leaflet because "it might spoil friendly relations with the trade unions". At the demo the official slogans of the PDS were: More Money! and As Few Redundancies As Possible! No doubt this explains the warm reception given to the Arbeitermacht/KPP leaflet!



## GET HOLD OF THE TREUEHAND!

"Nobody will be worse off than before!" and "There will be no tax rises!"—who doesn't remember the CDU's election promises of last year?

Lies have short legs, so the proverb says. None have shorter legs than the taxation lie served up by "Unity Kohl" and his deputy, de Maziere. Massive tax rises for all workers, tax cuts (abolition of property and commercial capital taxes) for the rich and investment gifts for big companies. They would have us believe that the "social market" was a miracle worker that would bring us out of stagnation and economic collapse. For that every second job is to disappear, whole industrial regions are to be turned into industrial graveyards, a merciless policy of demolition destroys the factories. Rents leap to astronomical heights, whole cities and states are already bankrupt, and the health service and social services are to be liquidated.

It was all lies and deception, like everything else the Bonn government promised. The market economy means the capitalist economy and there profit rules, not the needs of working people (who are of interest to the bosses only if they represent a profitable market).

The Treuehand was set up to "renovate" the clapped out GDR economy and to make it "competitive". Now we can see what that means, the reckless destruction and throttling of all GDR industries. The Treuehand is not working in the interests of the people of the "new states". It is working solely in the interests of the West German employers, and they want three things from it: a viable market for their goods, no competitors in their own sectors, the ruin of the existing plants.

What they are looking for is to pick up those plants for next to nothing as soon as the property question can be sorted out, so they can then move production over to the low-wage regions of the East.

That is what the Treuehand is doing—that is what we have to fight!

The economic and taxation policies of the government affect everyone. We must give a massive and determined answer to this general attack

on our living and working conditions. Tens of thousands have joined the demonstrations in the last couple of weeks; tens of thousands have walked out in protest strikes. In some areas, factories have been occupied. But protest demos and token strikes alone will not be enough to stop Kohl.

Parliamentary protests and resolutions from the SPD and PDS or harsh words from the union leaders will be just as ineffective. These struggles can, and must, become the starting points for broadening the resistance and organising to make it effective. From protests to real resistance is a big step! It will only be successful if we take control of the fight into our own hands!

The employers and their government will press on with their plans for as long as we let them!

The Treuehand must be taken under the control of the workers!

● Get control of the Treuehand! We must open all the books and accounts, inspect all the deals and make them public—we can't leave it to the managers of the Treuehand!

● to get this we need a control commission in every plant with the right of veto on all plans, elected by mass meetings of all employees!

"We must scrimp and save every penny" the government tells us—but on the very same day Kohl can shell out DM 15,000 million to the US to help pay for genocide in the Gulf. In total some DM 60,000 million are to go up in smoke in the Gulf war. They have money enough for that, in the last couple of years the bosses have had their highest profits ever, in part thanks to the Anschluss with the GDR. Take the money from those who've got it! Let the bosses pay for re-unification!

The GDR economy had a lot wrong with it. First and foremost that the SED (Stalinist party) bureaucrats decided on production, not the workers. But it was "state socialism" that made possible secure jobs, low rents and that our pensioners didn't go below the breadline.

Did we march on the streets in Autumn 89 so that we could sleep out on them today?

Mass meetings in every plant to decide on the next steps!

Occupy all plants threatened with closure!■

The last redoubt of European Stalinism is tumbling. The collapse of Stalinism in other East European states last year provided the spark that lit the powder keg of unrest in Albania.

Albania was already wracked with the hardship associated with a stagnating economy. Growth was at its lowest in 15 years. Agricultural production was not meeting demands, resulting in chronic food shortages. People were starving in towns and villages.

Gaining confidence from the revolutions elsewhere, Albanian workers and students rose up in revolt against a Stalinist regime that spelt poverty, starvation and repression. Democracy, food and higher wages became the demands.

Before Christmas, city after city erupted in mass demonstrations. The crackdown was swift. Alia Ramiz, head of the Stalinist state apparatus, sent tanks and troops into the cities. The Sigurimi, Albania's Securitate, shot and killed demonstrators. Workers were arrested and jailed.

But the protests gained momentum. In February, 10,000 students boycotted classes and some later went on hunger strike in Tirana to have the name of Hoxha—founder of Stalinism in Albania and now hated symbol—struck from the university's title. In Tirana also, a 30 foot bronze statue of Hoxha was toppled as hundreds of thou-

sands of protesters demonstrated their hatred.

Police retaliation was again brutal. More demonstrators were killed with hundreds arrested and given punitive jail sentences. Then began the mass exodus out of Albania as thousands sought to escape a desperate economic situation and police repression.

What we are witnessing is the disintegration of yet another Stalinist regime. Since 1944 when Enver Hoxha led his guerillas to victory against the Nazis and the collaborating Albanian ruling class the country has been a hideous monument to Stalinist repression and backwardness. The Stalinist programme of "socialism in one country" cut it off from the outside world in the fantasy that socialism could be developed on a scale higher than the most developed capitalist economies. Like other East European states created bureaucratically from above, capitalism was indeed overthrown but not in any way heralding emancipation for the working class. A bureaucratic caste of parasites, headed by Hoxha, fed off the suffering of the workers and peasants.

Desperate to avoid the fate of fellow dictator Ceausescu, Alia Ramiz, Hoxha's successor introduced a number of reforms. Elections were promised for the end of March, a new opposition party was founded, striking workers were awarded higher pay

## Stalinist Albania Bites the Dust

and restrictions on travel and religion were eased. But these were not enough to quell the masses' unrest. Ramiz's brutal repression of workers and students and his hard line defence of Hoxha, whom he has made a symbol of his election campaign, shows clearly the Stalinist apparatus remains unbroken.

The workers' and students' hatred for Hoxha's legacy is justified. Albania was the

showcase for economic misery and political repression. No wonder the masses have illusions that anything, even capitalism, would be better than the misery of monolithic dictatorship. It discredits the very idea of socialism in the eyes of millions.

But the experience of the workers in the rest of the Stalinist bloc shows that such illusions are no way forward against either

Sigurimi terror or the squalor and the poverty of the capitalist market. What is needed is the organisation of the workers, youth, peasants etc to resist police and army terror. Linked to this must be the building of democratic workers' and peasant councils to call for and co-ordinate general strike action across Albania. Fraternisation with the soldiers must be a key part of the goal of a mass armed uprising in the political revolution to destroy the coercive apparatus of the Albanian Stalinist state, while replacing it with real democratic planning and workers power.■

The Communist Party of Ireland ('Marxist-Leninist') have for a long time hailed Albania as the only real socialist society in the world today. These hardy annuals of Stalinism recently outlined their position in a pamphlet "Freedom and Other Articles". It's author Hardial Bains defends Albania against claims by the United Nations that there is no freedom in Albania. He enthuses on what has been achieved in the face of difficulties and in particular he praises "the measures to deepen and broaden the socialist democracy". The Albanian people, he says, "who by shedding their own blood, through hard work and great deprivation charted their own course, will not lose their independence..."

While it is certainly true that Albanians

## CPI(ML) Flat Earthers in a Top Spin

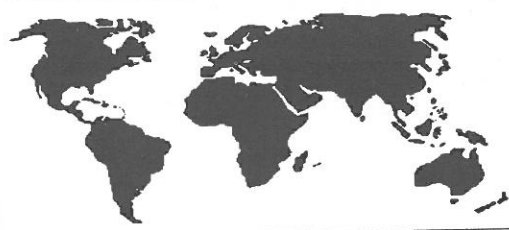
shed their blood against Nazi terror and their own exploiting rulers in 1944, and that they have worked hard and suffered deprivation ever since under Stalinism, Bains merely parrots Hoxha's lies about freedom and socialism in Albania. Why have hundreds of thousands come out on the streets demanding democracy, why are tens of thousands desperately anxious to escape from Albania, risking life and limb in the process? Why are workers on strike in this socialist paradise. The CPML is silent.

The CPML believes Albania is truly socialist and free because it operates a

centrally planned economy and, most importantly, does not borrow capital from the West. The possibility that neither the economy or the "plan" was ever under the direct control of the working class never occurs to them.

Events have finally blown the smokescreen of self delusion and lies from around the apologetics of the CPML. There is little hope that Stalinist fanatics like Bains will ever see sense but one hopes that some of those in the CPML's front organisations, such as the Irish Student Movement, will at last begin to see fact from fiction.





**LRCI**  
NEWS  
League for a  
Revolutionary  
Communist  
International

## NEW ZEALAND WORKERS IN STRUGGLE

After more than a year of intensive discussion and debate, the Communist Left of New Zealand recently made the decision to become a sympathising section of the League for a Revolutionary Communist International.

So opens the article in the March issue of *Red Letter* (No71) announcing the welcome fact that the LRCI now has a presence in Australasia. The comrades have also taken the decision—to mark this new stage in their development—to change their name to Workers Power (NZ).

The full text of the declaration of fraternal relations between the LRCI and WP(NZ) will be published in the forthcoming issue (No6) of *Trotskyist International*. This declaration expresses the fruits of written and face to face discussions on such questions as the socio-economic nature of New Zealand, the struggle of the Maori people, the history of the Fourth International and the political economy of world capitalist crisis. We are also able to test out this agreement in practice through joint work inside New Zealand.

This new step for WP(NZ) could hardly come at a more important time for the left of the labour movement in New Zealand. From 1984 until the general election in October last year, the Thatcherite Labour Party government rode roughshod over the working class. The scale and tempo of privatisation of state assets surpassed that of the Tories in Britain. Presiding over a near permanent state of economic recession in New Zealand since the end of 1985, the Labour government acted in concert with the trade union bureaucracy to ensure that working class resistance to a major rise in unemployment was muted. Not surprisingly six years of drastic attacks by Labour left the working class disgusted and confused. Mass abstentions and defections at the last October elections ensured the return to office of the openly conservative National Party.

The new administration lost little time in attacking the two areas that the last government held back on: compulsory trade unionism and the level of state welfare benefits. The Labour government, needing the assistance of the trade union officials to get through its attacks, agreed to underwrite the closed shop since this underpinned many of the privileges of the bureaucrats. The National Party felt no such compunction.

The government has tabled a new Employment Contract Bill (ECB) which, in a calculated insult, is due to become law on May Day. This bill replaces the Labour Relations Act. Under the ECB unions are not recognised as such and compulsory unionism is abolished. The ECB clearly shifts the whole of industrial relations in favour of the bosses and is an attack on effective trade unionism.

And the other main plank of National Party's attack shows how important effective trade unionism is going to be in the months ahead. On 1 April a new Finance Bill is due to

become law. This cuts \$1NZ billion off welfare benefits for hundreds of thousands of claimants, including the abolition of the universal child benefit.

As *Red Letter* explains the two Bills are related in the minds of the government:

"The cuts in benefits and the social wage ... will force the 300,000 unemployed to compete with low paid workers for jobs on the bosses terms or face a 26 week stand down. At the same time the ECB will pressure workers to accept individual contracts on the bosses' terms."

The Labour movement has moved hesitantly into action. Most major unions have stopped work to hold meetings on the ECB or in pursuit of new contracts before 1 May. Such renegotiation is the favoured approach of the bureaucracy as it would prevent them coming into head on collision with the government. The dockers took a decision to strike for two weeks in March, but settled on a new contract before the action was due to start. In return for recognition the union has agreed to abandon national agreements and settle port by port. We have seen the consequences of this in Britain!

In a similar process the hotel workers have agreed to the end of overtime rates for weekend working, and to increased casualisation.

The bureaucracy has planned a Week of Action for 2 to 9 April which may include strike protests on 4 April by teachers, and possibly other workers, plus a march of claimants. In the best move so far the seafarers are threatening an indefinite strike from 3 April.

WP(NZ) have been quick into action. Their leaflet, calling for a general strike to beat the ECB, has been distributed to many of the union meetings. They were instrumental in getting the University technicians union nationally to call action against the ECB. The stakes are high in this fight. The union leaders are only interested in mitigating the effect of the Bill; those with the unions' interests at heart should be fighting to smash it now.

As *Red Letter* says:

"Workers Power believe that the only way the Bill can be defeated is by launching an all-out indefinite strike. ... Different unions going on strike at different times will allow the employers to employ the salami tactic and take us on piecemeal. ... Militants must put forward motions calling on the CTU to organise an all-out indefinite stoppage, every meeting should decide on their claim and strike for it now regardless of the expiry date of their award. No groups should settle until all claims are agreed by the bosses."

Copies of *Red Letter* are available, price \$20 NZ for 12 months, from

Workers Power  
Box 6595  
Auckland  
New Zealand

**TROTSKYIST INTERNATIONAL**

Journal of the LRCI

£1.50 per issue  
(2£ p&p from IWG)  
Publishes theses and

resolutions of the League  
for a Revolutionary  
Communist International

## CONTRACEPTION

# Condoms: ACCESS FOR ALL!

The successful prosecution of the Irish Family Planning Association for supplying contraceptives to an illegal outlet came as a sharp smack in the mouth to anyone fool enough to believe Mary Robinson's election heralded a new dawn of sexual freedom in the republic.

The severity of the fine and the threat of imprisonment if it happened again signalled clearly that in spite of the 50 million condoms imported every year this moral police state will resist to the teeth any fundamental changes.

The response of the bourgeois politicians was an object lesson on the hand-and-glove relationship of Church and State in Ireland. Haughey, predictably alert to the "new constituency" which elected Robinson, baldly

declared himself in favour of a reduction to sixteen of the age which contraceptives should be legally available. Immediately the crawthumpers in his and other parties sounded the trumpets for the Catholic Church to move front stage.

The fire and brimstone damnation of Newman was entirely to be expected, but when Comiskey—"a prelate with a social conscience" began to lament the scourge of unemployment and emigration as more worthy of concern, the fat was in the fire.

Haughey got the message. Any change to sixteen would mean a full scale attack from the Church, a battle that Fianna Fail as the party rooted in rural society, knows only too well, it could not win.

Once again we have witnessed the

revolting and shameful spectacle of a collection of medieval celibates dictating the sexual mores and behaviour of the people. The silence of the trendy liberals and professionals has been as predictable as it has been deafening.

More importantly, the silence from the self-proclaimed champions of women's rights—the feminists—and the abortion information campaign, merely underline the hopeless cul-de-sac into which, down the years, these people have led one struggle after another.

Having had at one time all the possibilities of building a mass campaign that could have challenged the whole catalogue of anti-democratic legislation on matters of sexuality, they have watched it wither and die as their schemes become more and more patently bankrupt. Rather than act now around this issue, they await the judgement of Strasbourg on the issue of abortion information, a judgement that the Irish bourgeoisie will surely ignore. ■

## UNIONS

THE NEXT SIX months are crucial for workers of An Post. They face a £24m cost-cutting plan to ax 1,500 jobs or 19% of the workforce, the contracting out of work, the introduction of part-time/temporary staff and major changes in work practices, unlimited flexibility, measured output rates etc.

On top of all this the company has refused to guarantee the payment of basic wage increases promised under PESP. It has linked payment of a 6% award to the unions' acceptance of the Plan—a case of industrial blackmail if ever there was one.

When asked to comment on the prospects for compulsory redundancy, chief executive John Hynes—ex-hatchet man at Dublin Bus, left nobody in any doubt when he replied, "I won't quibble over how it's done". In return for all these concessions, there is absolutely nothing on offer.

### Tough Talking

The tough talking Hynes insisted all along on implementation of the Plan in full. Negotiations would be about how to implement, there would be no flexibility on objectives. But this time he bit off more than he could chew.

The proposal to close 550 post offices in the provinces caused consternation among Fianna Failers squirming at the prospects of a drubbing at the local government elections. Already, Hynes has been forced to put this proposal on hold—by referring it to the NESC—at least until after the elections in May!

But workers can take no great consolation from this fact. It merely means that the pips will be squeezed even more when it comes to the remainder of the Plan. Worse still, there is something qualitatively new about the threat implied in the Plan—that it will be imposed unilaterally through the use of the new Industrial Relations Act to force settlement via the Labour Court "to ensure changes are achieved." Management have thrown down the gauntlet. Their recent attempt to scrap the existing industrial relations machinery—the Conciliation & Arbitration Scheme—was deliberately meant to provoke.

### ICTU Dodge

ICTU responded not with an attack on the loss of jobs (to which they had given the nod under PESP) but by calling on the government to refer the whole package to a third party for consideration! This is a recipe for delaying the "inevitable" not for fighting these attacks. The union leaders speak of defiance but are, in reality engaged in a softening up process. They have no fundamental objections to the Plan.

# Smash An Post Plan

## 5 GOOD REASONS



TO FIGHT TO SAVE

## THE POST OFFICE

▲ Leaflet resisting the Plan distributed nationwide by postal workers

They seek merely to influence its shape.

No sooner had tentative agreement been reached on talks, when CPSU top nobs were slipping in for a 'cup of tea' with Jack Russell—Hynes' right hand man. Branch committee members were only informed of this by default.

### Fighting Form

On a more positive note, the 7,000 members of the Communications Workers Union are in fighting form. They stand to

lose most from the deal, especially if overtime earnings are eliminated. They are not in the mood for pussyfooting, whatever the dallying of their General Secretary, David Beggs. Already they have orchestrated a nationwide drop of leaflets (the first ever) outlining their opposition to the Plan. 88% of them balloted in favour of industrial action to secure their deferred 6% arbitration award.

### No Redundancies

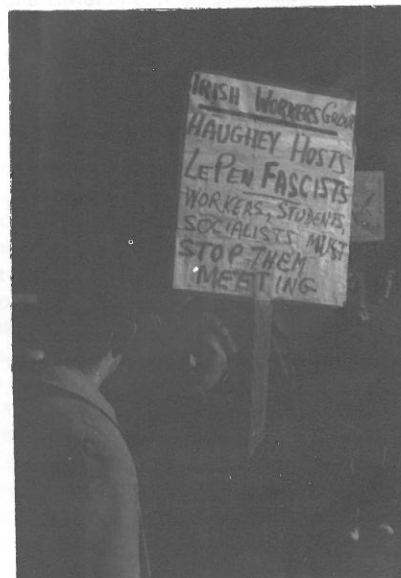
On the Civil and Public Services Union branch committee in An Post, an IWG supporter secured outright opposition to negotiation on redundancies. However the lack of Head Office opposition to this move is due to the belief that they can sit back and do nothing when members are offered redundancy or early retirement.

Many dangers lie ahead. Not least of which is the possibility that ICTU will secure acceptance for the core Plan proposals on the basis of some concessions around the issue of pay claims. This would be disastrous. An Post workers need a vigorous campaign to break out of the circle of doom, defeat and demoralisation that the leadership is trying to foist on them.

They may have been the first into the firing line but they won't be the last. The other semi-states workers know this. That is why the best way to fight the An Post fit-up with is to co-ordinate resistance win conjunction with them. That means fighting to build a public sector alliance now. ■

ANTI  
FASCIST  
ACTION

The Irish Workers Group joined in demonstration against Le Pen and his European Parliament cronies when he hosted a meeting in Dublin Castle by permission of the Haughey government.





# Spring Clean for the Starry Plough

THE CRISIS OF STALINISM and the collapse of the Stalinist states in Europe has for the moment discredited the idea of communism among millions of workers across the world. It has resulted in a new arrogance on the part of the bourgeoisie everywhere in pushing the idea that the capitalist system is the only viable way of organising things.

Buckling under this new offensive, the Social Democratic and Stalinist parties have turned sharply to the right in a gadarene rush to jettison any remaining commitment, however formal, to fighting capitalism. The Irish Labour Party is no exception.

Two years ago in Tralee Dick Spring crushed the opposition from anti-coalitionists in his party. Now as a new conference approaches he is determined to carry through his victory with the replacing of the old Labour Party constitution by a new one.

One might expect a party which says such a lot about democracy to decide this issue democratically. Spring is having none of this. Taking a leaf from the book of the SIPTU bureaucrats in imposing a new rule book without debate, Spring has succeeded in getting the Administrative Council to put the new constitution down as an item on the "final agenda". This means that referral back or amendments would be excluded.

## The Old and the New Constitution

In Spring's new draft the aims and objectives of the Labour Party are relegated, along with the Labour Party Youth constitution and Standing Orders, to the position of appendices. This in itself speaks volumes about the cynicism of the Spring leadership concerning the principles and aims of the Labour Party.

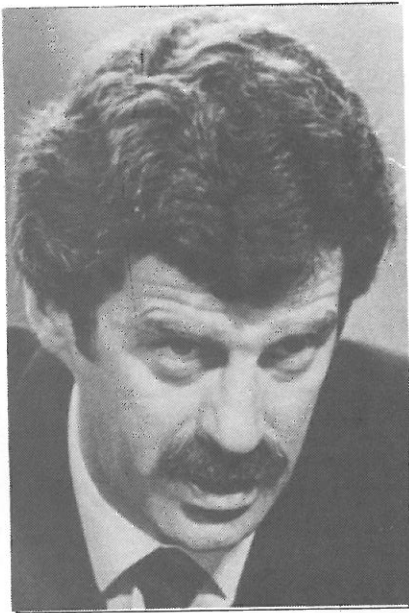
Longstanding political objectives of the Labour Party enshrined in the old constitution, such as the nationalization of the banks, the democratic control and ownership of industry and the creation of a 32-county workers republic, are to be scrapped. Even the statement that "The Labour Party is a distinctive independent political party representing the interests of the workers" is to be replaced by the following piece of gibberish: "The Labour Party came into being to close the gap between what ought to be and what is".

Goals hailing back to the Labour Party's founders, Connolly and Larkin, are to be replaced by the following:

"The wish of the Irish people is for an open and mixed economy providing individual choices and opportunities. We pledge ourselves to the development of that economy so that it is efficient, dynamic and capable of creating and sustaining wealth."

This is nothing but a thinly disguised apology for greater efficiency in the capitalist exploitation of workers. The new draft constitution goes on to substitute four new aims for the working class. These turn out to be no more than four bland principles of vaguely liberal politics—freedom, equality, community and democracy. These are to be the core value of the brave new Labour Party.

In one fell swoop Spring aims to jettison the few remaining gains of Irish workers' struggle that the Labour Party still embodies, in return for a mess of platitudes. Gone is the commitment to "break up ranch lands, to settle as many persons as possible on adequate holdings with facilities for stocking and working the land"—the only really radical concession to small farmers' needs.



## Root and Branch Reforms

The AC is to be scrapped and replaced by a General Council which will be:

... responsible for the organisational and administrative affairs of the Party and shall direct and co-ordinate party activities.

Several erosions of democracy are implied here. Among the most important are the following:

- The AC members from the parliamentary party, the conference, Labour Youth, Womens National Council etc were elected by these bodies. In the General Council, they will be appointed.

- The 17 members elected to the AC by conference will be reduced to 15 appointees to the General Council.

- The AC power to "... borrow or receive money, with or without security, from such bank, company or person as it thinks fit" is to be siphoned off into the hands of a new body—the Executive Committee. The aim is to further remove such important powers from the scrutiny of members and conference. Will this be the first move in giving us the Labour Party's *Taca*?

- This new EC, defined as a standing committee of the General Council will be the bureaucratic rubber stamp for Spring and his cronies. It will, in effect, neutralize the General Council's accountability to Conference through its "power to make its own rules and standing orders".

The victory of Spring at Tralee meant an erosion of democratic rights. This is now crystallised in the draft constitution. The most important instances are clear:

- Annual conferences will henceforth take place biannually.

- Control by the AC subject to conference for the "... development and promulgation of party policy" is replaced by control by the parliamentary party "... subject to the ultimate control exercised by party conference and the determinations of the General Council".

- Previously the AC, in consultation with the Labour Party in the Oireachtas had the power to prepare and oversee local, national and European election programmes. This power is now placed in the hands of the EC.

- While the AC had power, subject to annual conference, to decide the procedure for the selection of all Labour Party election candidates, the EC now usurps this power.

- The new constitution gives both the EC and the General Council absolute rights over admittance to and expulsion from the Labour Party.

- The right to appeal cancellation of membership to national conference will be scrapped.

- Branches under the new constitution can be suspended by the EC, where previously only the AC had fulfilled this role. There is no appeal to national conference.

- The EC has been given the power to admit, refuse or cancel corporate membership—with appeal to national conference.

- Proportional representation procedures in co-options to the national organs of the Labour Party will be abolished.

- The draconian measures to prescribe Militant are retained.

- Women and youth will lose their ex-officio delegates at conference.

## The National Question

The rank and file of the Labour Party and the affiliated unions sharply resented the undemocratic decision of the Dail T.D.'s to support the deletion of articles 2 and 3 of the 1937 Constitution. Nevertheless Spring wants this position endorsed. The draft constitution gets rid of the following statement:

"The Labour Party affirms that the national territory consists of the whole island of Ireland, its islands and territorial seas and it accepts as part of its immediate programme the work of securing social justice and equal opportunities for all its citizens in accordance with the declaration of the democratic principles embodied in the Proclamation of Easter 1916.

For Ireland and for Labour, freedom and the unity of our country are indivisible. The unity of Ireland for which James Connolly died, and to which Labour will always aspire, is a unity of people, in equality, mutual acceptance and trust and not just of territory."

Spring & Co. are preparing for coalition—one that, if necessary, will repeal articles 2 and 3 as a bait to Paisley and Molyneux.

## Resist Spring

Labour Party members must reject Spring's take-it or leave-it constitution. His bureaucratic ruse of putting it into the final agenda must be defeated.

Branches, constituency councils, the Womens National Council, Labour Youth and the Trade Union Group, should use clause 4 of the standing orders of national conference to put down motions referring both constitutions back to the rank and file of Labour and the affiliated unions. Failing this, an emergency motion for referral should be tabled.

Those who genuinely believe that Labour must be an independent working class party committed to the goal of socialism and Connolly's Workers Republic must resolutely defend the retention of these aims in its constitution.

All democratic rights under attack must be defended as the prelude to a fight in the Labour Party branches and affiliated unions to extend them, and to turn the Labour Party out to workers' struggles.

The best trade unionists, youth, women and anti-imperialists in the Party will learn in struggle for such goals whether their party can become the champion of the exploited and oppressed or as the IWG firmly believe whether it needs to be replaced by a revolutionary workers' party of the kind fought for by Lenin and Trotsky.■

# COMMUNISTS AND YOUTH

YOUNG PEOPLE are systematically oppressed in class society through the denial of specific social, economic, legal and political freedoms. These forms of social oppression are a fundamental feature of bourgeois society. They are rooted in the social structures of the family and the nation state and they are essential to capitalism.

The social structure which most fundamentally reproduces = the oppression of youth is the bourgeois family. It is not an eternal feature of human life, but rather a product of class society. The family instils into youth the rules they are expected to abide by in adult life as obedient workers.

The youth of the working class and the poor are subject to the most intense exploitation. Such youth are the backbone of the low waged industries. This in turn reinforces youths dependence on parents. Their poor quality of education and training is designed to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie.

## Dependence

Another consequence of this economic and legal dependence on the family is the repression of their sexuality. This is an essential starting point in class society for instilling conformity and obedience. Youth are not allowed to develop a rational understanding of their sexual feelings, even when those feelings conform to the heterosexual norm prescribed by bourgeois society.

Instead, youth are subjected to moral and religious taboos and their sexuality is distorted and denied genuine expression. Those youth who happen to be either gay or lesbian are not only repressed, they are also denounced, abused and criminalised. Their sexual orientation is considered "unnatural" in bourgeois society.

To liberate youth from these various forms of subordination requires the revolutionary transformation of society. This will ensure that the individual family household is no longer an institution for oppressive and unpaid domestic toil centred on the raising of children and care of the ill and aged. This would free youth to be independent of their parents, with as much or as little contact as they wish.

## Differentials

Economic independence, unrestricted access to education and freedom from super-exploitation are the key demands for youth. For those in paid employment, equal pay for work of equal value must be achieved under workers control in order that gross pay differentials, which exist between youth and adult workers, can be overcome. Reduced hours, with no loss of pay, should be worked by youth when they first enter employment. They should also have the right to longer holidays.

Education and training for youth must be fought for by the whole class. Education should be free, with all expenses paid by the state. It should be comprehensive and available to all. It needs to be compulsory up to a certain age, agreed by the labour movement. Therefore we fight for the abolition of all tests and the savage points system which are designed to restrict entry into educational institutions. Students also need a living grant, set by committees of students and workers.

The workers movement should strive for integrated schooling. Furthermore schooling should be secular.

The bourgeois bias of the curriculum needs to be fought at every opportunity in favour of instruction in the history of the workers movement and humanity. We fight for free discussion of sexual, social and political questions in schools.

We fight to bring all educational facilities under the control of the working class and students. We fight for the autonomy of education from the capitalist state. School and college students should be free to form unions and political organisations. Worker and student control bodies must fight for the right to veto the appointment of reactionary teachers and the teaching of racist/fascist materials.

## Students

Though students as a whole are not automatically a natural ally of the working class, nevertheless many can and must be won to the side of the revolutionary workers' movement. Mass student struggles show that they have a vital role to play, alongside the proletarian vanguard, in the struggle for socialism.

Full benefits must be available as soon as youth leave full time education, so that they are not dependent on the family. When youth are unemployed the labour movement must fight for genuine training and education for them.

## Family

Within the family parents are responsible for implementing the oppression of their children. This is most obviously the case when disobedience is met with violence and abuse. Youth, therefore, need to fight for full legal and political rights within the family to help break the domination that parents exert over them. Where a family denies youth the right to pursue their chosen sexual and social activities, social centres need to be provided, under their own control, where all such facilities are freely available. Information and education about sex and safe sexual practises should be available there with free contraception and abortion referral services.

Youth must also be given full political and legal rights in the public sphere. If youth are mature enough to be drafted into the bosses army—to defend their system of exploitation—then they are mature enough to make responsible decisions in peace time. That means that the right to make legally binding decisions in financial and civil matters must be guaranteed at the same age.

## Organised

The organised working class must draw youth into the unions on reduced dues, but with full membership rights. Youth must then organise sections within the unions to press for their own demands.

Youth generally lack the conservatism which has broken the spirit of older workers. They have not been worn down by years of reformist misleadership and betrayal. Therefore, a revolutionary youth movement must be built as a key organisation in the struggle for working class power.

Such a movement, armed with a revolutionary transitional programme, can draw youth from other classes, from the small farmers and the urban petit bourgeoisie, under the leadership of revolutionary communism. And only revolution communism can really answer the problems of youth.■



# SUBSCRIBE!

To make sure you get a copy of *Class Struggle* each month take out a subscription NOW!

To get the next ten issues send £7 (outside the EC £10) to:  
J. Larkin, c/o 12 Langrishe Place, Dublin 1, Ireland.

Make payable to Class Struggle

Abortion  
Information  
Helpline

Telephone  
(01)  
6794700

Irish  
Workers  
Group

# Class Struggle

## After PESP Rebuild the Fight

**T**he two to one majority vote by trade unionists in favour of the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP) was a major disappointment by activists on the left. Not that we take such figures at face value. The vote in most workplaces was wide open for a fiddle, and in several known cases anti-PESP members had to hunt down ballot papers.

Nevertheless, there was a real increase in the number of unions voting for the pact as compared to a much closer result last time round.

### What Went Wrong?

The coming together last year of more than 300 shop stewards and activists around TUUAP in a fight to oppose the new deal seemed to augur serious resistance to another sellout.

But it is noticeable that while many shop stewards themselves were against the deal, they were unable to deliver a No vote in their workplaces. The gap in outlook and expectations between them and their members shows how national wage bargaining (conducted by the ICTU behind the backs of the rank and file since 1971) has worked to undermine participation and militancy at grass roots level.

Meanwhile attacks by right wing economists on the PESP added to the impression that the ICTU had secured a good deal. PESP was sold as a victory for the trade union movement at a time of ever-deepening recession. A special SIPTU glossy bulletin devoted its entire contents to marketing the deal.

Nevertheless the effort put into the anti-PESP struggle in Galway, especially in SIPTU, resulted in the vote there being carried a majority of only twenty. IWG members played a leading role in that campaign.

Asked about how a surge in inflation figures would affect basic wage increases under PESP, SIPTU supremo Bill Attley replied: "We are ensuring that inflation does not get out of line, a strong currency is our protection. The PESP will ensure that our currency remains at the top of the Exchange Rate Mechanism of the EMS and that will deliver the stable prices workers need."

And just to prove that the union bosses mean business Edmund Browne, co-president of SIPTU warned workers "The deal will last, we won't have unofficial strikes". That he and the SIPTU bosses mean what they say is shown in the breaking of the National Bus and Railworkers Union strike in Dublin under duress from Browne & Co.

Where persuasion failed to work, less subtle tactics were resorted to. The CPSU Executive was mandated

at its last conference to "oppose any new wage deal that restricts the right to strike". The Executive responded by recommending acceptance of the PESP the Friday before the terms of the deal were officially published! Activists within An Post branch who sought to use their branch newsletter to oppose the deal were told bluntly by their official that union funds would not be used to promote arguments against PESP. Despite the fact that the public sector had traditionally backed such deals, one quarter of the CPSU membership voted for rejection.

Among other sectors traditionally opposed to national wage bargaining, union bureaucrats managed to sweeten the pill by buying off key sectors, like the construction industry with extra increments.

### What Alternatives?

In the end of the day the deal was struck because most workers saw no real alternative to it. "That's all we'll get anyway. Aren't we better off with £5 in our pockets than on a wing and a promise from union leaders" was how one disillusioned activist put it. If that's the case in unionised workforces—how much more despondent is the mood among the non-unionised and among those without a major say e.g. unemployed (neither of whom couldn't vote).

TUUAP never addressed this vital issue. It doggedly persisted in limiting the campaign to the call for a No vote. It did so in the belief that the attempt to forge an alternative would have split its forces. This referred to the danger of alienating left bureaucrats, such as Brian Anderson of MSF who, as it turned out, didn't lift a finger against the deal.

TUUAP failed to offer any solution to the question on the tip of every worker's tongue—what's the alternative to letting the official union leaders bargain conduct national talks? The lack of even the beginnings of an alternative leadership and strategy on this issue caused even sympathetic workers to ignore advice to vote against.

Meanwhile the bureaucrats have steamed ahead in their collaboration with the bosses. "We've set the agenda during the recent talks and not the employers", claimed a jubilant Attley. His suggestion of a ten year strat-



▲ Christy Kirwan (centre), ICTU president, at home with Haughey and employers' leaders launching PESP in Dublin Castle.

egy was warmly received by Haughey.

Hardly was the ink dry on PESP, when it was used as a stick to beat the workers of An Post. Management introduced a rationalization package which linked the payment of basic wage increases promised under PESP to company performance. Given that An Post faces serious financial difficulties, this is effectively a wage freeze. The 'inability to pay' loopholes with which PESP is riddled provide cover for this action.

Yet the proposals to cut 1,500 jobs in An Post and even more in Telecom were first announced in the media months ago. They were contained in a document submitted for consideration by the "social partners" during PESP negotiations.

Persistent leaks over the intervening months were designed to weaken workers' resistance and to destroy their morale by inoculating them with large doses of apathy—hopelessly resigning them to the "inevitable" in advance.

### Buzz Word

Haughey's union lackeys have a new buzz word—"consensus". They are at pains to peddle the notion that workers' organisations have a role to play in managing capitalism on behalf of the Irish bosses. SIPTU official Jimmy Somers pleads for a "...more pro-active approach, and to have a say in the planning of the economy. .... These can only be advanced by discussion and consensus at national level. Further these discussions give the movement a say in the planning of the economy". On the prospects of 1992 bringing job losses Somers (who earns approximately £49,000 per year) agrees that this is "inevitable".

Part of this "pro-active" approach involves giving the green light for the privatization of the semi-states. The fate of Irish Life and Irish Sugar has

already been sealed. The new nonsense approach was summed up by Attley. On the forthcoming privatisation of the commercial semi-state firms, the unions have a clear choice. They could, said Attley, say it was wrong and stick their heads in the sand. Or they could recognise the inevitable and seek to influence the shape of the privatisation process.

Unprofitable commercial state companies like An Post are being whipped into shape with the connivance of ICTU. Since 1984, when An Post went semi-state a strategy was pursued of giving fax and electronic communications to Telecom, despite the fact that core mails revenue was terminally in decline. Telecom received an investment injection of £1.6 billion (beefing it up for privatisation at some date in the future), while An Post was starved of essential funds—with the government reneging on the initial promised investment of a mere £50m.

The targeting of An Post's workforce with the new Viability Plan will serve a double purpose. It tackles a financially weakened semi-state with a traditionally militant workforce. Apart from job losses, worsening of work practices—the introduction of temporary/part-time workers and the contracting out of work etc. are on the cards. If management succeed in An Post, the floodgates will be opened. The state is already putting pressure on Aer Lingus workers. O'Hanlon is looking for £10m cuts in the funding of local health boards. And flexibility is to be forced on teachers and workers in education.

### Building a Fightback

The recall conference of TUUAP, planned for April 27, sharply poses the issue of how to fight back despite the bureaucracy's victory in carrying the PESP:

The union leaders have warned that the terms of the deal will be enforced to letter. We must hold them to this. That means fighting to ensure that every single worker gets the basic wage increases promised. The union leaderships have said that the 3% local bargaining element is as good as realised. Don't take their word for it. Officials must be put under pressure by workplace branches to ensure that the 3% is delivered without strings.

This means mobilising to defeat every use of the inability to pay clause. We must defy every part of the PESP which obstructs any side of our struggle, especially the no-strike clause, which is already being used with the Industrial Relations Act to bludgeon CIE workers back to work. For active solidarity with every worker breaking PESP's no-strike clause

### Low Pay Scandal

In addition to this we must mobilise the rank and file to attack the scandal of low pay. The ICTU have been committed to fight for a statutory minimum wage by a whole set of Congress motions. We must build a mass fight from below now for this demand, forcing it on the ICTU and the national executives of the unions, while not holding back for them to act.

The PESP is a crying betrayal of the unemployed, especially the long-term unemployed. And within days of its being signed, we saw a massive spurt in unemployment figures. We must build a rank and file movement that addresses the issue of mass unemployment by demanding a massive scheme of public works at union rates of pay. At the same time we must resist the new wave of redundancies in the pipeline by rallying round the demands:

### Cut the hours, Not the jobs

The PESP offers no advance for women on either the front of equal pay or equal access. This is despite the fact that women's pay is still 67% of men's and women's access to apprenticeship is still less than 5%. We must mobilise women workers as a vital part of a rank and file movement to begin a serious fight on this front.

Finally the Industrial Relations Act, a fall-out of PESP's fore-runner, the PNR, faces workers with new draconian restrictions on union rights, especially the right to strike. As we go to print, it is being used against CIE strikers in Connolly station. A rank and file movement must fight to commit striking workers to defy the Act.

It must pledge itself to mass solidarity action, including sympathetic strikes, with every worker victimised under this Thatcherite law. In addition to this workers must be prepared to oppose tooth and nail the changes in union rule books that the union bureaucrats will be demanding to meet the terms of the Act.■

**TUUAP Conference**  
Tel. 375760 for details



**Title:** Class Struggle, No. 24

**Organisation:** Irish Workers' Group [1976]

**Date:** 1991

Downloaded from the Irish Left Archive.

Visit [www.leftarchive.ie](http://www.leftarchive.ie)

*The Irish Left Archive is provided as a non-commercial historical resource, open to all, and has reproduced this document as an accessible digital reference. Copyright remains with its original authors. If used on other sites, we would appreciate a link back and reference to the Irish Left Archive, in addition to the original creators. For re-publication, commercial, or other uses, please contact the original owners. If documents provided to the Irish Left Archive have been created for or added to other online archives, please inform us so sources can be credited.*