



WHERE GOES THE LEFT?

THE DECISION OF THE serious Left deputies, Tony Gregory, Joe Sherlock, Paddy Gallagher and Proinsias de Rossa, to vote for a Fianna Fáil government in preference to a Fine Gael one is very much to be welcomed. It shows a degree of political maturity that Labour, unfortunately, is yet to display.

Yet, Labour is clearly in transition. The Administration Council decision to oppose active coalition offers the chance for Labour to develop a totally independent strategy for socialism, even if, at the moment, it is in an effective state of passive coalition.

The struggle within Labour is quite crucial for hopes of Left advance in the immediate. But what has to be recognised is that the fight for socialism has to be based on the working class movement in general; it is not merely a debating issue for the parliamentary arena.

What needs to be worked out is how to combine the parliamentary struggle in the dáil with extra-parliamentary struggle, and especially how to bring the trade unions into active political campaigning.

Within the dáil, it is clear from the budget and the anti-social attitudes elsewhere displayed that Fianna Fáil will have to be resolutely opposed. Their weaknesses of the present time offers a great opportunity for forcing concessions of a progressive character.

But the prospects of this are, in fact, weakened by right wing Labour's attachment to Fine Gael. However bad Fianna Fáil may be, Fine Gael is a hundred times worse, as the two budgets showed.

So long as opposition to Fianna Fáil's capitalist policies is posed in terms of a Fine Gael alternative, there is no alternative. This is not because the two parties are the same. Far from it.

Fianna Fáil represents, in general, the interests of the manufacturing sector. To that extent, there is more possibility that it will defend national economic interests and will favour a development strategy industrially.

Fine Gael is the party of finance and commerce. The interests of this group lie in close association with and subordination to foreign interests, as in regards to the EEC.

They lie in tight, rigid fiscal and monetary policies — which, inevitably, bear hardest on the working class — and as a consequence they must relegate development needs (the provision of jobs and an economic future) to second place behind fiscal rectitude — what John Kelly quaintly describes as "ten years of old-fashioned thrift."

Secondly, the national question — the right of the people of Ireland to unite their country in independence from British imperialism — is central. It will not go away just because it poses difficult issues. The Left must see to it that Fianna Fáil and Haughey do not backtrack, and unless they do the Left will never be able to gain the support of the majority of the working class.

This means that while rejecting sectarianism and the silly militarism of the Provisionals, the Left must give the lead in opposing imperialism: by fighting for democratic advance, and by campaigning

WE APOLOGISE for the late publication of this issue of the Irish Socialist. This has been caused by production difficulties outside of our control. We have decided, therefore, to bring forward some matter originally intended for the May issue and to publish this as a joint April/May issue. We apologise for the haphazard balance in coverage that this has caused, and hope to be back to normal in the next issue.

ing for a British Declaration of Intent to Withdraw.

WARY

Thirdly, the Left must be wary of Haughey's willingness to sacrifice neutrality for a spurious and, in those circumstances, useless unity. Tied in to the imperialist military alliance, Irish unity would not be independent.

The Left should criticise Haughey, not from the standpoint of defending imperialism as Jim Kemmy does, but should point out that reliance on contacts with the US or private deals with Britain are not the way forward.

The fight for neutrality is integral to the fight for genuine unity. It is part of the world fight for peace and democracy, for weakening imperialism and for strengthening the struggle of the working class for socialism.

National independence, national unity and peace are the three cornerstones on which the Left should build its programme.

Social Rights Attacked

THE DECISION of the Government to proceed with a referendum to write the illegality of abortion into the Bunreacht, or Constitution, is more than just a gesture of appeasement to a vicious and vociferous group of narrow bigots. It is a threat to a whole range of social rights won after many years of hard struggle.

The most obvious point about the abortion referendum is that it is not needed if the purpose is to make abortions illegal. They already are, and there are no conceivable possibilities that any change would occur in the foreseeable future.

Of course, the referendum will not stop abortions. Women will continue to go to England for abortions, and all the bigotted moralising in the world won't stop that — because more and more women are claiming their right to choose



● The three SFWP deputies, Joe Sherlock (left), Paddy Gallagher and Proinsias de Rossa can play an important role for Left advance.

MAY DAY GREETINGS

THE COMMUNIST PARTY of Ireland once again greets the Irish working class on this May Day, a time of great opportunity for political advance by the workers, but a time, too, of economic recession of unemployment and of serious industrial problems.

The key to that possible advance lies in the unity of the Left. This is why the initial tentative development of the Socialist Forum is so important. This May Day weekend, the Forum has

organised a seminar, open to all, on the problems of Left Unity. Discussions on the economy, on the national question, on the political options facing the working class present an opportunity to

clarify exactly what tactics and strategy should be adopted.

There is, of course, division of opinion on the Left about what should be done. This is why such discussions are vital. Certainly some elements will not be won to the broad co-operation that is necessary, for example, Jim Kemmy's new party which is avowedly pro-imperialist.

But if the serious Left can overcome sectional differences and reach out to combine the social and national issues, it will have a coherent political framework within which to work out specific programmes for defence of Irish sovereignty, for economic development, for social progress, for democratic advance, for the specific interests of the working class.

CONNOLLY SUNDAY

ANNUAL C.P.I. COMMEMORATION OF JAMES CONNOLLY

SUNDAY, 9th MAY, 1982

ARBOUR HILL — 2.30 p.m.

whether or not to become mothers. They will continue to exercise that right.

So what is at stake in the referendum? Quite simply, it is the right to proper and full contraception. It was noteworthy that those opposed to a right to contraception made every effort from the start to confuse the issue with that of abortion. And they have claimed that contraceptives are abortifacients.

We will need to read very carefully the wording of any proposed constitutional amendment, and to draw public attention to the dangers.

One problem, of course, is that many people will rightly want to assert the right to choose of a pregnant woman and to campaign against the narrow sectarian bigotry that has inspired this proposal. The grave danger in this, how-

ever, is that sight might be lost of the real purpose of the referendum: to attack the right to contraception, and to turn back progressive social attitudes on women's role in society, on sexuality and on parenthood.

By marked contrast, the supposed 'right to life' which bothers the militant sectarians does not extend to living human life. They are not concerned about capital punishment, nor about guaranteeing a right to a minimum of decency and dignity in life.

Nor are they concerned about the effects of the constitutional statements on private property on many hundreds of old aged pensioners, young married couples and others now, by courtesy of the property owning judges of the Supreme Court, at the mercy of rapacious landlords.

It seems that there is life and life.

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Published on the first Saturday of every month by the Communist Party of Ireland, James Connolly House, 43 East Essex Street, Dublin 2. Telephone (01) 711943. Annual subscription, Ireland and Britain, £4.00; U.S.A., \$8.00 Canada, \$8.00; Australia, \$8. Air mail rates extra. Printed by Dorset Press Ltd.

Common Market

THE 25th ANNIVERSARY of the founding of the Common Market has produced the normal quota of nauseating gush from the establishment press in Ireland. Not a single paper attempted to offer a balanced assessment of how successful the Common Market has been or what its prospects for survival are, nor how Ireland fared as a consequence of our membership.

Instead, all the problems of the EEC were glossed over. We were treated to the empty rhetoric of European unity being a means to avoid European war, and the rest of the pious European clap-trap.

The reality, of course, is that the EEC does not represent European unity, but the unity of the Western European multinational companies and conglomerates with an institutional power greater than that of the sovereign states which individually make up the EEC.

And far from being a stimulus to peace, the EEC bloc has been used as a weapon by West German revanchists to keep the political pot boiling in Europe as they dream of rewriting the Second World War and of reconquering the East. The Common Market divides Europe.

Not much idealism in that. Nor much democracy either, for the power of national parliaments and the sovereignty of national states, including Ireland, have been whittled away to service the profits and manipulations of the multinationals.

And the EEC is riddled with contradictions. The CAP is considered vital for France; it is reviled by Britain. And already the French are providing their own national supports for agriculture as the CAP declines in real value.

To pay for this, they will have to protect French industry, and this will weaken the interest of British capitalists in EEC membership.

In Ireland's case, our sycophants have consistently urged us to be "good Europeans". It is as if by tugging our forelocks most vigorously we could persuade our betters to be kind to us. And so we see the ludicrous sight that, despite the absence of a common fisheries policy, Irish fishery protection is used against Irish fishermen alone, while every other EEC country uses its protection service against non-nationals and turns a blind eye to its use.

There are signs, however, that while John Cooney in the Irish Times might have apoplexy about it, Fianna Fáil at least is beginning to sound less euphoric about the EEC. Fine Gael (including its Labour right rump) along with the Irish Times continue to preach "good Europeanism", but Ray MacSharry was quite willing to speak openly about flaunting Common Market rules (so-called) if Ireland's interests were served thereby.

It is a step forward. But it is not enough. EEC membership has a thorough-going effect on the structure of our economy, and dissipates, especially in the higher ranks of the civil service and state development areas, the very effort of will needed to switch to a new structure which alone can lay the basis for resolving our economic and social problems.

And what type of new structure is this? In the final analysis, only socialism will end poverty and poor development, end emigration and unemployment, and all the indignity and misery that go with them. But the first step to establishing a socialist society, one with equality of opportunity and distribution of wealth, is for the state to assume a more dynamic role in the economy itself.

Private enterprise will not create the jobs or the type of restructuring that we require. It can neither accumulate the funds, nor avoid the need to subordinate development to profit. The state must, therefore establish manufacturing industries directly, increasing the range of what is covered by the public sector.

The I.D.A. strategy of looking to foreign capital to provide the jobs has failed. They haven't provided the jobs, but we have provided the highest profit return to American investment of any country in the world - a very sorry boast indeed, though one that the I.D.A. apparently is not ashamed of.

Direct state industrial development would be based primarily on our own resources, especially in agriculture (e.g. the meat processing industry currently being run down) and our potential in fisheries, mining etc.

And simultaneous with this extension of the public sector must come state planning, the subordination of all economic activity to the state plan which, by its public character, is subject to democratic pressures.

Bankruptcy

ONE OF THE sorriest sights of the present political situation has been the bankruptcy of the right wing of the Labour Party as expressed by Fine Gael hacks Barry Desmond and Ruairi Quinn.

Both of these gentlemen have proved to be more monetarist than the monetarists themselves. They seem determined to uphold fiscal stringency as the sole economic virtue, and are utterly unconcerned about the effects of such policies on the working class.

Quinn's arrogance in this area is only matched by his ignorance. To hear him decry the proposal to apply VAT on imports at time of entry as discriminating against Irish industry was truly mind-boggling. Even Brian Lenihan, not noted for his economic acumen, knew that, if it had any effect, it would discriminate in favour of Irish industry and against imports.

But Quinn reads too many of Paul Tansey's pseudo-economic diatribes. He and Desmond both accept totally the strategy of the open economy, despite its evident failure and despite the fact that it contradicts Labour's own policy of supporting state planning.

Fianna Fáil, it would seem, are closer to Labour policy than some Labour T.D.s. It would clarify the political situation if Quinn and Co. would cut the cord and join Fine Gael where they obviously belong.

Washington dead-end for Haughey crusade

By CORMAC O'RYAN

WHILE THE NEW Government's return to emphasizing the question of Irish unity and the campaign for a British Declaration of Intent to Withdraw is most welcome, the illusion that the United States can be won to play a positive role in this campaign can only ultimately damage the policy and discredit it.

The simple fact that has to be faced is that US imperialism, and the ultra-hawkish political forces represented by Ronald Reagan, have deeply entrenched strategic interests in common with British imperialism; and Britain, with Margaret Thatcher at the helm, has proved itself the most consistent ally of US imperialism in the present tense aggressive climate.

It is absolutely idle to believe that the US imperialists would jeopardise their close and harmonious relationships with Britain to bring the type of pressure to bear on the Irish question that is needed.

It should be noted that Haughey's pilgrimage to the land of the brave is not a unique effort. Eamon de Valera, during the War of Independence, spent many fruitless months on a similar quest. He got much sympathy, and the shamrock was sported on St. Patrick's Day, but the US gave no political support to Ireland then, and will not now.

SUMMED UP

Reagan summed up American policy succinctly when he stressed it was not his role to interfere, though he hoped the parties would move to a settlement. In other words, the first priority is to support Britain, and the second is to be relieved if the issue can be taken away.

Another point has to be faced, too. The Irish question does not command a voting block that can influence domestic US politics, and to that extent it doesn't count. We must also realise that it is not just a question of Reagan. Irish commentators delude themselves when they imagine that Edward Kennedy would make a difference.

There would be a difference of emphasis, perhaps, a little bit more pressure—but in the final analysis the strategic interests of US and British imperialism are too close to allow Ireland to upset them, even with an 'Irishman' in the White House.

This is not to say that attention should not be paid to the US, both in terms of influencing its public opinion and official policy. Large public demonstrations of hostility to British policy in Ireland are an important weapon in isolating Britain internationally, and generating the pressures that will lead to change.

But it is obvious that the emphasis should be placed on involving the Irish American community in democratic action. Talking to the Administration is useless.

SERIOUS

Indeed, if we are serious about an international campaign to isolate Britain and to pressure for the Declaration of Intent, we must look to the natural allies of the Irish people—the national liberation movements, the Third World and the socialist countries.

There is, in fact, an enormous fund of goodwill towards Ireland which can be tapped in a positive manner. A socialist government in France, whose solidarity with Ireland during the Hunger Strike crisis was rebuffed by the Fitzgerald Government. We can look, too, to Greece and to Cyprus, where progressive governments have a great deal of understanding

of the reality of British colonialism. We can look to the countries of Africa and Asia which have fought for and won their freedom. Our problems will be understood there. We can look to Latin America, and to the glorious example of revolutionary Cuba, a small island like Ireland confronted by an aggressive larger neighbour.

We can fight in the United Nations and in international fora throughout the world to argue the justice of our case, to bring forward the interim demands of democracy and civil rights which are so essential to make sense of a policy of seeking a Declaration of Intent, and to expose the vicious basis of British policy, its responsi-

bility for the crisis in our country; and with such international pressure, alongside a renewed mass democratic movement in the North itself we can force Britain to yield.

Of course, the mass movement in Ireland itself is vital for this. Here, it is absolutely crucial that the Provisionals cease their disastrous military campaign and allow mass politics to be rebuilt.

And the Government, too, can play a role, by positive support for such a movement and understanding of the necessity of the civil rights demands which, up to now, they have dismissed out of hand.

It is worth noting that Haughey relies on pleading his case to the (continued on page 3)

When Will They Ever Learn?

THE PROVISIONALS it seems are destined to learn neither from history nor reality. They seem determined to refuse to face up to the fact that the military campaign is a failure. They genuinely seem to believe that no other method of struggle is possible and that therefore the end of the military campaign would be the end of the ideal of a free united Ireland.

Such, alas, is the contempt with which all elitist organisations regard the mass movement of working people. But the people of Ireland, especially in the Republican areas of the North, are not and will not become supine before the assaults of imperialism.

The military campaign has not stiffened their resistance; on the contrary, it has weakened the resistance by sowing confusion and disunity within the anti-imperialist camp.

SORDID

The killing of three British soldiers in a well-executed ambush in Belfast last month does not alter the sordid nature of the Provisional campaign. Of far greater significance is the death of an 11-year old boy in a bomb attack in Banbridge, and shooting down in front of his children of a man who left the UDR many years ago.

At best, this is a reckless disregard of the sectarian consequences of such actions; at worst, it is sectarian — truly, mindless, pointless killing.

We do not go along with those who regard the deaths of British soldiers in the same light. These soldiers were mercenary killers, hired gunmen who have the blood of Irish children on their hands, the proud terrorists of defenceless people, the torturers of prisoners.

But we also know that their deaths will not advance by one second, Irish unity, democracy, the coming together of Catholic and Protestant, or the weakening of imperialist rule in Ireland. It's better than killing civilians, but that's all that can be said for it.

And the killing of the former UDR man is not an isolated incident. There have been far too many such killings, soft targets all of them. The brutalisation of

Irish society has gone a long way when civilians like this—and he was a civilian—can be gunned down so callously in front of his children.

And the degeneracy of those who would liberate us is further shown by their turning in on their own. The informer is always a repulsive character, but the internal suspicion and mutual distrust which has bred so many willing to sell their comrades reveals the political emptiness, deep down, of this 'liberation' army.

Undoubtedly, British intelligence has sown profitable seeds of distrust, and one can only wonder how many innocent men have been condemned as informers after being set up by British Intelligence.

And what can be said of the social views of those who believe that fathers should be shot for the alleged crimes of their children? It is so unbelievable, because it sounds just like the rantings of a Fine Gael Law and Order crusader. What sort of Ireland would it be if such people had state power?

IDEAL

And yet, behind the sordidness there still lie the remnants of an ideal, the republican ideal of the unity of all the people of Ireland in a free independent country. There are many drawn to the Provisionals by the despair, frustration and fear of British violence and cruelty who are motivated by genuine ideals.

Can we reach out to such people and urge in the name of the people of Ireland, in the name of a democratic future of peace and independence, that the military campaign be called off, publicly and cleanly, and the way cleared for mass political action to resume its thrust for the dismantling of sectarianism and the imperialist structures of rule in Ireland.

A tale of two economists

The story of a modern version of an old-fashioned nonsense

By AINDRIAS MacCRAITH

IN THE 18th CENTURY, there lived in England a man called Thomas Robert Malthus. He was an economist who was very concerned about population growth.

He believed that the population was growing much faster than the food supplies of the country; sooner or later there would not be enough food for everyone and mass starvation would follow.

The only solution, he thought, was to cure population growth. At that time, the Poor Law system was set up, offering some tiny relief to the worst degradations of the poor.

Malthus campaigned for the abolition of the Poor Laws, arguing that they encouraged people to have more children than they could afford to feed by themselves.

Malthus was hated and reviled in his day. History has disproved his theories and the passage of time has not lessened the derision with which his name is greeted.

But the memory of Malthus has not deterred a latter-day economic "expert" from proposing essentially the same solutions to Ireland's economic problems.

Paul Tansey is an economist who writes for the "Irish Times".

He professes to be very concerned about the employment situation. Population, he says, is growing faster than new job opportunities for young people.

His solution is to curb population growth. The best way to do that is to attack the poor.

The social welfare system, according to Tansey, encourages, or enables poor families to have more children than they could otherwise maintain from their own resources. Therefore social welfare benefits should be taxed on each additional child.

It is a measure of the bankruptcy of bourgeois economics that a Malthusian solution can be proposed to the unemployment crisis by an economist, and apparently be taken seriously.

It is easy to see why he would choose a Right wing solution (curbing population) rather than direct his attention to the need to create more jobs.

Bourgeois economics, accepts, as part of its framework of analysis, that private enterprise and private ownership of the means of produc-

tion is the best and most efficient foundation for organising an economic system.

Economists recognise that capitalism is not up to the task of providing full employment, so the theory is used to justify this incapacity.

It is less obvious why Tansey should advocate the one policy which would impose the greatest hardship on poor people as a means to achieve his objective. Why not advocate more liberal contraceptive policies or abortion?

Malthus was unable to advocate contraception because it was not available to the masses as it is today. He considered the option of abstinence from sexual intercourse, but decided against it. Being a very religious man, he thought that abstinence would only encourage the spread of "perversions" among the lower orders.

In a different sense, Tansey displays the same kind of moral righteousness and contempt for the in-

telligence of the working people.

Like Barry Desmond, he throws his hands up in despair at the Irish people. They (the people), have been living beyond their means for years, he moans.

Along comes Garret FitzGerald and Barry Desmond to clear up the financial mess which the people and their Fianna Fáil governments were responsible for.

No sooner have Garret and Barry instilled a sense of "reality" into our economic affairs than they are dismissed by the people in favour of Fianna Fáil, and free-spending lefties!

Such irresponsibility!! What immaturity the ignorant masses have displayed! Quite simply they deserve everything they have coming to them; they must be made to pay for their foolishness. Tax social welfare benefits! reduce living standards! that'll teach them.

These are the hysterical rantings of bankrupt men who are powerless and full of resentment.

Long may they remain so!



● With the price of food so high, Paul Tansey might be able to find another method of population control.

Why interest rates are rising

WHY ARE interest rates rising in Ireland and falling everywhere else in the world?

Basically because the demand for loans on the Irish money market has been rapidly increasing over the last few months. In these circumstances the banks can afford to get away with increasing interest rates, to choke off excess demand for funds and at the same time attract more deposits.

In the rest of the world, the recession has dampened the de-

mand for loans by business, forcing banks to drop interest rates in an effort to attract more borrowers.

Upward pressure on Irish rates has come from two sources.

Firstly, the Coalition Government decided to raise as much of their borrowing requirement as possible on the domestic financial market.

Secondly, before the coalition gained office, semi-state bodies, businessmen and farmers borrow-

ed heavily from banks on the continent where they could avail of lower interest rates.

These borrowings were guaranteed against exchange losses by the then government. People who borrow from abroad can lose heavily if currency exchange rates subsequently move the wrong way. The government guaranteed to compensate borrowers for such losses.

However, the coalition withdrew the guarantee. As a result businessmen and farmers are

afraid to take the risk of further foreign borrowing.

They have switched their borrowing back to domestic banks.

The extra pressure for funds from these two sources makes itself felt initially on the Dublin Inter-Bank Market.

This is a money market where financial institutions can borrow money to meet their short-term needs.

If money is relatively scarce and demand is strong, lenders can receive a higher rate than the prevailing rate in the economy.

Speculators take advantage of this by borrowing money from the banks at the normal rate, and then lending that money back to the banks at the higher rate prevailing on the inter-bank market.

To eliminate these windfall gains, banks have to increase the rates charged to their customers.

If the financial system was publicly controlled, then speculation could be eliminated and we could avoid the present crippling high interest rates.

Pub talk proposal is very hard to swallow

In a report which appeared in the *Irish Times* recently Mary Flaherty pointed out that many in Ireland had ideas which never got further than a pub counter.

The Government said the former Minister, could not meet the demand for jobs (a welcome admission to what Fine Gael promised during the election last summer) and she suggested that if people saw a product of foreign origin they should ask themselves if they could make that same product by

starting a small industry of their own.

The former Minister must think that all of us pint-swilling politicians are half-blind, besides being thick.

For her information, the reason why most of us are out of a job is precisely because three-quarters of the products on sale in the shops are foreign manufactured.

One of the 'great ideas' many people have been carrying around for quite some time now—and it

didn't have to originate in a public house where the ex-Minister apparently does her homework — is the solving of the housing shortage.

Not alone would employment be given to thousands of skilled and semi-skilled workers, but the end product would go a long way to improving the health and well-being of tens of thousands of families.

As a Minister at the Department of Health, she should surely know that much.

E. E. C. FACING A BLEAK FUTURE

THIS YEAR THE E.E.C. celebrates its 25th anniversary. However, the mood of the Brussels oligarchy is anything but celebratory. Opinion polls in Britain and other member states reveal that support for E.E.C. membership is at an all time low.

The councils, commission and Parliament of the community are convulsed in the perennial crisis over farm prices, the albatross of the Common Agricultural Policy and disputes over Britain's contribution to the budget.

New socialist governments in France and Greece are placing their national interest before E.E.C. rules.

Even the Irish government, once model "Europeans," are saying they'll break the rules to protect Irish interests.

Set against a background of over 10 million unemployed, a seemingly endless recession and a dangerously tense international climate, these factors point to a very bleak future for this would-be superpower.

The E.E.C. contains ten very diverse economies with different development needs. Common economic policies cannot work unless there is a massive community surplus available to re-structure the national economies and harmonise their varied interests.

The bulk of the surplus is absorbed by the C.A.P. in an attempt to have common fixed prices in agricultural goods by holding enormous foodstocks in intervention. This in itself is the antithesis of free-trade and everything the E.E.C. is supposed to stand for.

No progress will be made until the C.A.P. is abolished because Ireland, France, Italy, Denmark and Greece benefit greatly from the present system and will veto any attempts to change it.

On the other hand, Britain will veto attempts to make progress in any other direction as long as the C.A.P. remains intact.

Therefore, the E.E.C. is not and cannot become a real economic community. As long

it will remain a customs union with free movement of capital, labour and goods across frontiers.

But one cannot even have a proper Common Market when member states, especially France, continually impose selective sanctions on imports from other member states to protect their own wine industry or whatever.

The decision by our own government to impose V.A.T. on imports at the point of entry strikes at the very heart of the E.E.C. philosophy.

It is all a far cry from the heady days of 1972 when the forces of Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, the FUE and IFA closed ranks in holding out the vision of full employment, low prices, high incomes and unparalleled prosperity in a united, peaceful, capitalist "Europe."

Their vision is taking on all the appearances of a nightmare which will not survive another

Haughey Crusade

(continued from page two)

international men of substance behind closed doors (like Patrick Sarsfield ag déanamh a ghéaráin leis na rithe), while FitzGerald can think no further than institutionalising sectarianism through power-sharing at best, and at worst demanding that the Catholics apologise for having been the victims of discrimination.

Again there is nothing new in this. During the War of Independence, de Valera spurned the support of the fledgling Soviet Republic. He preferred to deal with the men of substance, the men of property. He got nothing, and the Free State Treaty was imposed on Ireland instead.

Irish democratic opinion must raise its voice and make sure that this mistake is not repeated now.

SOCIALISM AND FEMINISM

A discussion article

By MARY JONES

THIS ARTICLE is based on notes for a talk given by Mary Jones at the James Connolly Forum on November 4th, 1981. The main concern of the talk was to suggest directing the energy of the women's movement towards a renewed consideration of the exploitation of women both in domestic labour and in paid labour outside the home.

FEMINISM is the mark of a diverse movement of women seeking change in their position in society. The adage, sisterhood is powerful, for me remains valid, but with qualifications. Sisterhood is powerful, but as a movement feminists must acknowledge both theoretically and practically that some are more powerful, and some more vulnerable, than others.

The initial energies of the contemporary women's movement were towards a focus on the common aspects of women's lot. All women were seen to be oppressed by the image that social and political institutions such as the media, the churches, and schools, imposed upon them.

CONSTRAINED

All were constrained by socio-economic structures such as the family and legal systems, and few could boast of economic independence. All were oppressed by the perceived social necessity and 'naturalness' of service, as vocation to the needs of men and children.

For a number of reasons the early focus of the movement was on reproduction. It was an assumed commonality of experience — all women potentially, and most women eventually, bear children.

As long as the liberty of a woman to make choices was curtailed by the possibility of constant pregnancy, it was considered futile to make claims which would only apply to the minority who, by choice or circumstance, did not bear children. Reproduction was also the area that both ideologically and in 'real life' was deemed to be 'women's lot'.

This early stage of the contemporary women's movement, from

the 1970's onward, was a time when many essentially liberal claims for reform in women's position were at least considered. At this time the recession was only beginning and most women were novices politically. As in the earlier struggles by feminists, single issue solutions were seductive — the vote, education, the pill. Women, no less than men, were not above seeking the easy solution.

Ten years on, however, what is becoming increasingly apparent is that although reproduction in biological terms is a common potential of all women, the conditions in which women reproduce, or choose not to, are in most cases dependent on factors such as health and wealth. In relation to reproduction these involve questions of nutrition, of maternity services, of ante and post-natal care, of fertility and of fatality.

CIRCUMSTANCES

Such differences, when considered in relation to first and third world countries, are patently obvious. What we have to deal with are the differences in the circumstances surrounding the reproductive function of women in relation to those women in Tere-nure and those women in Tallaght.

Essentially political demands for control of our reproductive capacity cannot be viewed in isolation. The demand raises questions, two of which bear brief consideration. There are class differences in regard to the capacity to exercise choice — economic wherewithal and the status it confers effect both the capacity to obtain suitable contraception and the capacity to deal with an unwanted pregnancy.

In the case of the latter, the difference between a boat to Eng-



● MARY JONES . . . pictured in Connolly House where she spoke in the Women's Forum series.

land and a quiet check up with discreet D & C is only one of the less palatable aspects of class adaptation in Irish society.

A second question is in relation to global politics, the most notorious prospect being nuclear war and the curtailment of all choice. When individual choice is posited as the most critical feature in political control by women of their own bodies, it presupposes absolute rights for individuals and scant regard for social need. The question is thorny in the extreme, but both ethically and politically it must be raised.

Production

REPRODUCTION

The area of reproduction in relation to women's labour has been and continues to be the subject both of debate and of political struggle. The area, however, of women's part in production — either in unpaid labour in the home or paid labour in the wage market — is both less debated and more in need of concerted political action on the part of feminists.

I would like briefly to look at two areas where women's place in production has been considered but only, I believe, tentatively.

(1) **Women in Left Movements:** Towards the latter part of the 1970's it became increasingly commonplace to find women's pages in both the popular press and party newspapers. A later development was the liberated women's magazine, funded by party political machines, or by press barons.

In the early euphoria it seemed to many women that their struggle was both acknowledged and supported by their comrades. A few years on, however, it becomes difficult to deny that the Woman Question has been ghettoized — publicly acknowledged and therefore not treated to either rigorous analysis or serious incorporation into Left theory and practice.

Many men who are involved in class struggle at the workplace are unwilling to translate their struggles against the oppressor at the workplace to the oppressor in the home. Like benevolent bosses, benevolent oppression in the home does not absolve the oppressor of complicity in exploiting another person's labour.

If the Left acknowledged the woman question, no aspect of its analysis would remain unchanged

— no economy viewed as in the past, no future control of economic or social organisation envisaged without a reconsideration of the reality of work in the domestic arena.

For all the rhetoric, there seems to be a real danger that a rephrasing of an old adage applies:—

This time not labour must wait, but women must wait.

(2) **Women in academia:** Some years ago I was in a context in which most theoretical energy from women was directed at endeavouring to place women's labour in a framework which took account of the insights of Marxist analysis.

Briefly, the argument was based on the notion of productive and unproductive labour. In Marxist categories, productive labour is that labour which contributes directly to a surplus, i.e. labour which produces enough to pay to maintain the worker, plus a little (or a lot) more to be pocketed by capital or some surrogate.

Unproductive labour is that labour which does not produce a surplus, which was seen to involve the production of use value only rather than surplus value.

Using this framework, labour done in the rearing of children and the maintenance and repair of a domestic unit with labourers in it was seen to produce use value, but did not directly contribute to a surplus, did not have any direct relationship with capital, and was in effect outside of the area deemed to be 'the economy'.

Such a short account does not do justice to an argument based on the political economy of women. The problem, however, is that for the main part this debate at the academic and theoretical level did not translate into wider debate and concerted action, but dispersed its energies into particular, specialised groups which were, by definition, limited.

DOMESTIC ECONOMY

By domestic labour, briefly, I mean the work involved in bearing and rearing children, in maintenance and repair of physical welfare of men and children, in working, ironing, cleaning, economising, cooking, growing, buying and a thousand other labour intensive projects that constitute what the Chase Manhattan bank has acknowledged to be a 90-hour week.

Over the next few months we intend to publish a number of discussion articles in order to stimulate debate on the Left on a number of important theoretical and practical issues.

This month, we are publishing excerpts from a talk given by Mary Jones on socialism and feminism, and a reply by Eoin Ó Murchú.

Contributions from party members and other readers will be most welcome, but contributors should confine themselves to a maximum of 500 words, unless they have cleared it first with the editor.

The whole area also raises questions of relationships to capital, to male wage earners, etc.

The whole question of domestic labour and its part in economic organisation remains peripheral. It has been unrecognised in history and in political analysis because private, unacknowledged in economic analysis because unpaid, and, until very recently, unquestioned in sociological and psychological perspectives, because deemed natural.

In addition to the question of women's work in the unpaid domestic economy, increasingly women are involved in the paid economy — often the black economy — and in sectors which consistently underpay their workers.

Again, regardless of rhetoric extolling the virtue of satisfying, fulfilling work, this is no more a commonplace amongst women than it is amongst men. Work is work. If one has good comrades at the workplace, conditions can be improved and work can be satisfying but generally speaking this is the case for few.

TYPE

What is a major problem is the type of work most women, particularly women of the working class, have historically always done but now do in times when we feel some progress ought to have been made.

In the area in which I work, Tallaght, an increasing number of women are engaged in part-time work during hours that allow them to continue unimpeded their domestic labour. Capital has always been accommodating if it increases profits.

To give an example, a number of firms in Tallaght operate a twilight shift, from 5 — 10 p.m., for peak periods of production. These women are laid off when production eases. They then apply for unemployment benefits, which also ensure some continuity of income.

This arrangement ideally suits employers reluctant to compensate for loss of earnings, or to employ workers for long enough to ensure that the women qualify for holiday pay, etc.

Also, again on the increase, is home labour — the old term is sweat and it is blooming. A number of examples can be found of both semi-state and private companies contracting out work in this way, especially in the manufacture or alteration of clothing.

Women see such labour as beneficial, both economically and in terms of time: most work at night, or between chores, i.e. it is done in addition to domestic labour, thus making it a second job.

Whilst appreciating that such factors are significant, it must be a major concern of feminists, trades unionists and the Left that such exploitation exists in times in

(continued on page 5)

WOMEN IN BRIEF

I.C.T.U. - WELCOME STATEMENT

ON THE occasion of International Women's Day the Irish Congress of Trade Unions called on the government to remove all major obstacles to the achievement of equality for women.

Congress demanded the introduction of child care facilities for working parents, the elimination of discrimination against women in the Social Welfare system and legislation to end discrimination against women in education and in the provision of services.

Congress condemned the lamentably slow progress being made in the achievement of equal pay and the elimination of discrimination generally against women in employment.

PORTUGALS COMMUNISTS TO THE FORE!

WITH an estimated 200,000 illegal abortions each year in Portugal, the Portuguese Communist Party has presented a Bill to Parliament aimed at legalising abortion, despite the bitter opposition of the Catholic Church.

BELFAST RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

ACCORDING TO statistics compiled by the Northern Ireland office there were 296 reported cases of rape in five years from 1975 to 1980. Only 76 cases went to court and on average there were 10 convictions each year.

To cope with the growing incidence of domestic violence and rape in a city where violent events are constantly in the news, nine women opened a Rape Crisis Centre in Belfast on March 8th., International Women's Day at which there will be a 24 hour answering service at Belfast 49696.

WOMENS WORK

FRENCH WOMEN with jobs outside the home have a working week eight hours longer than their husbands because they spend more time doing household chores.

A recent study found that working women spend 28 hours a week doing domestic chores, working a total of 66 hours a week. Their male counterparts only put in 10 hours doing household chores!

A REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION

THE DEVELOPMENT of the women's movement since the sixties has led to a widespread recognition of the central fact of women's oppression in class society. It has forced the political and economic organisations of the working class in particular to search for a deeper analysis of the ways of class exploitation, and to accept the vital importance of this democratic question for any social advance, let alone for the achievement of a real socialism.

But, to a very large extent, the debate has been characterised by vagueness and woolly-thinking. And I think this is particularly exemplified in Mary Jones' article, published here. There is, I think, only one aspect of her article that I would fully agree with and that is her statement that the women's question has been ghettoised and "therefore not treated to either rigorous analysis or serious incorporation into Left theory and practice." Her article shows the lack of such treatment.

Many active in the political and trades union movements have a tendency, particularly if they are men, to pay lip service to the idea of women's liberation, to agree with anything that any 'feminist' says. While this superficially looks like overdue support for an important aspect of revolutionary

change, it is in fact pushing the issue into the area of the not serious.

This has meant, on the one side that the women's movement has been a prey to the wildest ideas, including the absurd notion that sex division rather than class division

is responsible for social inequality; that it has lacked serious theoretical coherence, and has therefore been a prey to the opportunism of bourgeois politics as in the infamous £9.60 scheme; and a tendency for disparate specific issues to be made major focus points—e.g., abortion rights—with a blurring over of the more central social questions of women's status in society, and economic questions of women's role in production.

By EOIN Ó MURCHÚ

On the other side, the Left in general has failed to grasp the vigour released by the women's movement, has been unable to direct it to a revolutionary challenge against the denial of democratic rights by class society, and has been unable to analyse the consequences of the relationship of the superstructure of society—its social forms—with the economic base of social life—its economic forms.

The series of discussions organised by the Communist Party's women's committee have been an important part of the process by which communists can play their part in developing the women's movement and in enriching their own theory and practice for revolutionary change. And it is in that spirit that I wish to criticise Mary Jones' article.

My first point is that the vague and imprecise methods of expression hide vague and imprecise thinking on the subject. This is most evident in the almost mystical use of the word 'political'. Thus, we hear of "essentially political demands for control of our reproductive capacity" and "political control by women of their own bodies".

Quite frankly, I don't know what this means, and suspect that it doesn't mean anything. Is it a

reference to the need for legislation, to achieve rights to contraception and abortion? I think that would be rather a prosaic assumption, and it is clear from the reverential way the word is used, that 'political' is meant to be a statement of something deeper.

As I would understand the problem, women can only be free when they have equal status with men in society, and that means equal status at work and for work. Our society generally regards work as secondary to women while primary to men; child-bearing and rearing, on the other hand, is thought to be women's primary role, and only a secondary role—for men.

REPRODUCTION

Society must have reproduction and child-rearing (otherwise it ceases to exist), but apart from biological limitations on the first part, men are capable of sharing the other responsibility in full equality and partnership. Women do not need to be confined to the role of mother.

The political demand, it strikes me, is that women have a right to work in social production, just like men. But to realise this demand, provision must be made by society to allow women to take their place in the workplace, creche facilities, better health care, more extensive education provision as well, of course, as the right to plan for parenthood (and it is a joint plan by mother and father), which includes rights to contraception and abortion, the woman's right to choose.

I place my emphasis on bringing women fully into social life by involving them in the productive work of society. Ms. Jones, and much of the feminist movement, places her emphasis on the woman's "political control over her body" in abstract, in individualism.

INDIVIDUALISM

This individualism, it strikes me, has its counterpart in the notion of sisterhood. At the most basic level, 'sisterhood' only implies that all women irrespective of class, are discriminated against to some extent by reason of being women. And this, of course, is correct. The woman of Tereure (presumably, from Mary Jones' reference, middle class, well-heeled and articulate) has as much right to freedom from inequality vis-à-vis men as the woman from Tallaght (presumably working class). In this sense, sisterhood is a valid and proper slogan.

But there is also an implication that is to be found in Ms. Jones' article that sisterhood is the opposition of women to men, the division of society on sex grounds. Like individualism, it escapes from the economic realities of class society and reduces all antagonism, all conflicts, to personal relationships and personal qualities.

There is an aspect here of the weakness of the petty bourgeoisie: alienated from big capitalist society, but afraid to put its trust in revolutionary change by the working class.

And this escapism becomes paramount in discussion of domestic labour. In a general sense, domestic work is none of society's business. If I don't cook, it's my problem how I eat; if I don't wash, it's my discomfort what my clothes feel like (though my work-mates might object to the smell). Basically, domestic labour is a personal matter.

So, there is no such thing as unpaid work in the home. Certainly, if a man hires 'help' and doesn't pay up, that would constitute unpaid labour. But the assertion—and it is fully implied in most feminist declarations—that a marital relationship is only one of giving

services (domestic labour, child-care and sex) is not the reality for the vast majority of couples married or unmarried.

It is posing as the norm a tragedy of relationships that, while all too prevalent in our tension-ridden society, is a minority problem. It doesn't help any analysis of the women's question to pretend otherwise.

And it is not just politically conscious men, i.e. men who are aware of the importance of the women's question, who do not beat their wives. But what is at stake is the idea that a woman can find full personal satisfaction of her humanity through housework, child-rearing and a closed relationship with her husband.

I repeat my assertion that, in general (there are individual exceptions), she cannot. Full satisfaction of an individual's human capacity—given the limitations of society's existing technological level—can only come from a full and equal role in social production, in social labour.

The task is not to try and convert domestic labour into paid labour, but to bring women into the workforce, and share domestic labour. I find it incredible that women who profess to fight for their sisters' liberation cannot see that liberation is to be found outside the home.

£9.60

The £9.60 scheme, which Ms. Jones appears to favour, was devised to reinforce bourgeois society's excuses for keeping women in the home. It is fundamentally anti-women.

Nor is the argument helped by a crude misunderstanding of Marxist theory of value. In fact, surplus value only arises under capitalism, and the division of production is production for the market (exchange value) and production for use alone (use value). A commodity only has exchange value if it is useful for someone (who will buy it), and it only has exchange value if it is brought to the market (to be sold).

Sexual intercourse is not the production of use values, except perhaps in prostitution. And here arises another absurd implication of the extreme feminist position: that all sexual relationships between men and women are those of prostitution. And neither is a child a use-value, unless it is born so that its labour can be used. A child's labour may be used, but in our society that is never the purpose of reproduction, and it is ridiculous to assert otherwise.

CONCEDE

I must concede, of course, that Ms. Jones has not openly stated some of these points, and may not even consciously accept them. But the logic is there in her method of presenting the issue.

I have concentrated on my points of difference, naturally. But I would stress the importance of the fight not just for a woman's right to work, but her right to training and education for skilled work, her right to equality in the labour force. Women must not be confined to the menial and low-paid areas of employment.

Nor do I think that the women's question is purely an economic one. On the contrary, it is social: it relates to the status of women in society, and the range of specific democratic demands that are required to win a change of status.

But, the way forward is not through uncritical acceptance of the feminist line. Mary Jones' article has at least proved that Marxism has a special part to play in giving real theoretical coherence to the women's question and the vigorous progressive movement that has developed around it.



● Communist women at the recent French Communist Party Congress, playing a full role in all the affairs of their party.

Socialism and Feminism

(continued from page 4)

which we pride ourselves on protective legislation.

AGENDA

Before finishing, I would like to raise a couple of items that are of current interest and potential usefulness in politicising women's part in production.

(1) This concerns the £9.60 offered by the Fine Gael Party. This £9.60 costs a government no more than the administrative cost of transfer. Any increase in this figure, however, can only occur in direct proportion to political control of male resentment at what is referred to as State direction of 'private' purse strings.

Other increases could come from central government funds—but would be severely limited by the availability of funds and by the overall ability to raise revenue: such ability is limited in turn by the political will, or lack of it, to tap alternative sources.

Finally, the only other source could be a levy on employers. Already this group argues that they pay a family wage. By definition employers seek profitability, which is why any notional commitment to a 'recognition' by government of women's labour in the home has rested on the assumption of government funding.

But this payment, token though it is, can, I believe, be used politically. What it is paid for is for 'stay at home wives'. What is a mistake is to translate this, or any other payment, into wages for housework.

Housework is one component of the work done by women in the domestic arena. The payment for those working in the home directs attention on the domestic unit as a unit in the economy. When once payment is made, correlations can be made. The Chase Manhattan estimate, as has already been noted is 90 hours a week for child rearing and house labour.

This is equivalent, under the government's proposals, to a wage equivalent to 10p. an hour, e.g., 20p. for a two-hour laundry session to provide full laundry facilities for, say, three children and two adults. Not earth-shattering—but potent propaganda, particularly in terms of consciousness raising for those women who still consider the movement of women as something that does not concern them.

(2) This concerns the area of part-time work. Since 1970, the number of part-time jobs has increased from two to four times faster than the total number of jobs in most countries, the rise

being mainly in the service sector (where three-quarters of part-time jobs are to be found) and in jobs held by women.

For, although the proportion of part-time jobs varies a great deal from country to country, one feature is common to all: women, who make up less than two-fifths of the labour force, on average account for four-fifths of the part-time jobs.

Women not only do more part-time work but also work less overtime. Thus, women generally work shorter hours than men, and the growth of the female work force tends to reduce the average hours for the workforce as a whole (cf. 'Structure of the Labour Force' in OECD Observer, November 1980).

If the overall composition of the workforce is changing, and if such change is marked by shorter working hours, it seems reasonable to suggest that all trades unionists should again consider women and paid work.

The battles they choose to fight are above all political, and to fight for women part-time workers is to negotiate for reasonable conditions of work for all the future labour force—and it is quite some time since workers celebrated the beginning of the 40-hour week.

Thompson visit boosts Irish peace movement

By DERMOT NOLAN

THE RECENT VISIT of Professor E. P. Thompson gave a welcome boost to the rapidly growing Irish peace movement. Professor Thompson, here as a guest of the Irish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (ICND), addressed overflow meetings in Maynooth, Dublin, Galway, Derry and Belfast.

In Dublin 1,200 people attended the meeting and another 400-500 had to be turned away because of lack of space.

Prof. Thompson, a leading historian and author of "the making of the English working class", has given up his academic work and spends all his time in the struggle for peace and disarmament.

Speaking in Liberty Hall, Prof. Thompson referred to the absolute urgency of moving towards disarmament. Nuclear deterrence has been a disastrous failure. Instead of gradual disarmament and an assured peace, deterrence has led to a massive arms race.

Not one nuclear weapon has been dismantled — instead there has been a huge increase in the number and power of these weapons.

Most frightening of all, NATO generals and leading western politicians are now talking in terms of "limited and "winnable" nuclear war based on horrifying new technologies developed under cover of deterrence.

Neutron bombs, Cruise and Pershing missiles are all designed to allow the US to fight a nuclear war in Europe while leaving their own territory unaffected.

Prof. Thompson sees the answer to this threat as the campaign for European Nuclear Disarmament (END) — the proposal to exclude nuclear weapons from the territory of Europe — from Poland to Portugal.

This proposal (in effect for a European nuclear-free zone) was

first made by the Polish foreign minister Rapacki in 1957 and was promoted by the Irish Government at the UN in 1959.

Prof. Thompson referred to the growing threats to Ireland's neutrality and security. There is the possibility that Cruise missiles will be placed in the 6-Counties and the certainty that military communications facilities are and will be located there.

It is also likely that NATO is putting continuing pressure on the 26-Counties Government to provide such facilities here. And in the event of threat of war it is quite possible that NATO would grab our airports and ports.

If the continental peace movement is successful in preventing the location of Cruise missiles on the land territories of the NATO countries it is likely that they will be located on ships off the west coast of Ireland thus putting Ireland at the very centre of a global war instead of being on the periphery as has hitherto been expected.

Prof. Thompson pointed out that for our own security, indeed survival, it is not enough that Ireland should resume the role it played in the past of actively promoting disarmament and acting as a mediator between the US and USSR.

Ireland should be declared a Nuclear Free Zone guaranteeing that it will not be used for manufacture, storage, or passage of any nuclear weapons or components of weapons.

Potential military facilities such

as ports, airports and communications facilities should be permanently mined (as they were during the Second World War) with the objective of denying them to combatants in a war.

Prof. Thompson said that the implementation of this type of policy of Europe and of the world. Any more to join in NATO or any form of so-called "European Defence Agreement" would threaten peace rather than promote it.

ARGENTINE FOLLIES

THE CRISIS between Argentina and Britain over the Malvinas Islands, stolen by British violence from Argentine sovereignty nearly 150 years ago, has elements of farce mixed with the danger of loss of life.

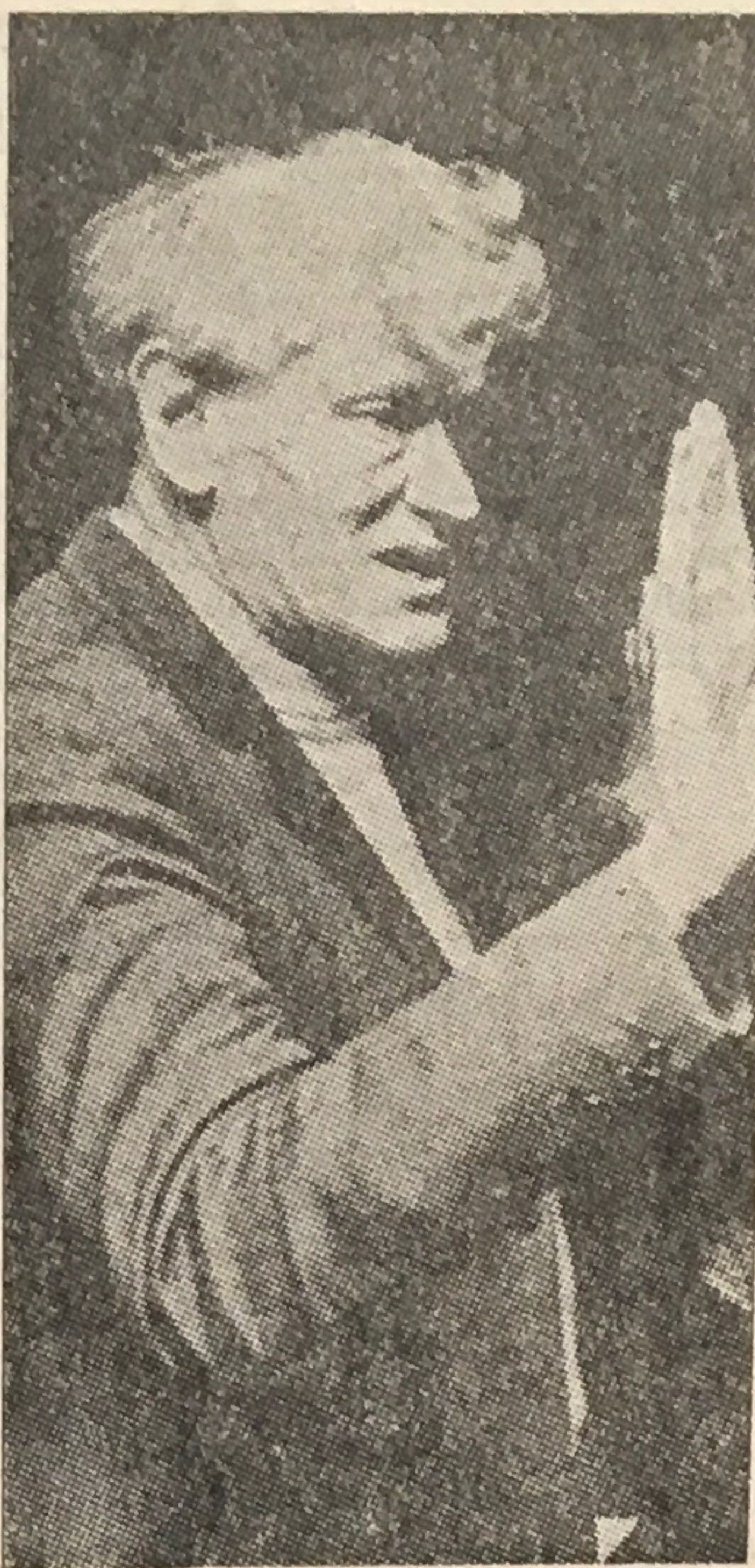
Anyone who heard the debate in the British House of Commons must have thought he was listening to another age. The jingoism, the hysteria, the contempt for the 'dago' — it was all there a plenty. But worst of all, it was as strong on the Labour benches as in the Tory ranks of Empire Loyalists.

The British Labour leader Michael Foot made an absolute disgrace of himself. His main complaint seemed to be that the Tories hadn't rattled the sabre early enough or hard enough. It was an appeal to the worst chauvinistic sentiments of the British people.

However, not all of Britain was caught up in the imperialist fervour. Tony Benn and the Left of the British Labour Party along with the Communist Party, took the courageous but unpopular position of condemning the sending out of the fleet, and called for real negotiations.

Of course, all the British posturing over their military determination is plain nonsense. To wage a naval campaign so far from Britain and so near to Argentina is just not on. The lines of communication would be too thinly stretched.

And even if the British could recapture the Malvinas — and that would probably mean destroying most of the population whose welfare is supposed to be the



● E. P. Thompson

matter of concern — there is no way that they could maintain it.

It is a hard thing for the British empire blimps to face up to but the days of the empire are gone.

All the more surprising, then, that the Irish Government took such an equivocal position at the United Nations. Britain, of course, has no more right of sovereignty in Ireland than it has in Argentina.

But perhaps, most importantly for us, is the fact that the very forces who are most obdurate in relation to Ireland are the ones who have sabotaged the negotiations with Argentina over the last 20 years.

The assertion that those minorities — in Malvinas, Gibraltar or Northern Ireland — who claim British citizenship can have a right of veto against the decolonisation process is profoundly reactionary. Surely, no responsible Irish government could recognise such a claim, and our tagging along behind the imperialist bandwagon at the UN and in the EEC is hard to understand.

A defeat for Britain will mean a defeat for the whole mentality of jingoism and for the psychology of empire. It will strengthen the hand of those in Britain who wish to come to terms with the Irish reality. It is a defeat which we should do all in our power to assist.

Our obligations to S. A.

"WE HAVE AN obligation and a duty to play our part in this struggle. If not the blood of the hanged will be partly our responsibility."

So said Sean Hoesey, an Irish-born Trade Unionist, who had endured five years in a South African jail for his attempt to assist black trade unionists. He described the conditions in the jails—the electric shock tortures and other tortures. Sean was speaking at a public meeting in Dublin.

He called for solidarity action for the release of all political prisoners jailed by the South African regime.

The IAAM reported in its March bulletin that it had received an urgent appeal from the South African Congress of Trade Unions to take up the case of the President of the South African Allied Workers Union who had to be admitted to a psychiatric ward in a Johannesburg hospital, he was released and re-detained by security police.

It is reported to be the sixth detainee to be taken to hospital since the beginning of the year.

The wave of trade union detentions taken with the death of Nile Aggett another trade union official who died in detention, gives rise to serious concern for the lives of all other detainees in South African jails.

The message in the IAAM Bulletin appeals to all supporters to start mobilising now for sanctions against South Africa, and the message went on to mention "Irish trade with South Africa must be brought to a halt."

The Apartheid regime and multinational corporations are intensifying the campaign to attract workers to go to South Africa.

There are two conditions insisted on—you must be white and skilled. The white workers who undertake to work for the regime are offered several privileges but what does Apartheid offer black South Africans?

The system prevents them from doing skilled work, so they are forced into menial jobs with starvation wages.

There are thousands of black workers who could be trained; why does the regime not make skilled jobs available to black workers?"

The South African Congress of Trade Unions calls on Irish workers to support the struggle of the black workers of South Africa and to refuse to emigrate to that country.

Over the past years Western Europe governments and industry have provided the racist minority with all the apparatus of repression.

Recently they have helped South Africa acquire the atomic bomb. A recent report exposes the Western European complicity in trade, investment, supply of technology, of arms, oil, loans etc. and the role played in it by the E.E.C.

The report calls for measures for action to bring this politically and morally indefensible European involvement to an end—and ensure that Europe plays its part in aiding the liberation struggle in South Africa."

—LILY O'ROURKE

Union leader murdered

ON THE 25th OF last month, the body of the Chilean trade-union leader Tucapal Jimenez was discovered in Santiago de Chile. He had been murdered.

Tucapal Jimenez, who was president of the National Association of Civil Servants, had initially welcomed Pinochet's coup, but turned later into an outspoken critic of the military regime.

The organisation which he headed is one of those professional associations which have not been outlawed. It represents, in the main, members of the middle classes and does not hold any left-wing views.

Tucapal Jimenez "disappeared" a few hours before he was murdered; his body bore the marks of torture. A week before his death he had called for the creation of a National Patriotic Front in opposition to the regime's disastrous economic policy.

An interview with Tucapal Jimenez, recorded in Chile at the end of December has reached us. Here's an excerpt:

They ordered me, too, to leave the country; the expulsion order was reversed only at the last instance. I don't know why, but it's a crime in our country to speak your mind.

We, the men engaged in trade-union work for many years, have no vocabulary for these conditions; we don't use pleasant-sounding phrases. We are men who developed through struggle and who have passed through a special kind of university; not the university that is now open to a certain class, to people who have money, but the university of life.

It has taught us the heat of struggle and the cares and problems which the working people face every day.

We had no idea what a dictatorship meant. Of course such a situation existed in other countries, but we really had no idea of the dimension it would assume, especially when the regime's security services exercise such absolute control, not only over the individual but also his family.

This is terror by fear, and lots of things aren't done because of it.

Our trade-union movement has had to pay for its lack of experience in opposing a dictatorship. It has exacted a great social price. Living under a dictatorship for eight years is an experience which we wouldn't wish even our worst enemies to make.

Our country has many volcanoes, above all in the south. One of them, about 400 kilometres from here, is especially beautiful. There's fire in the mountain, and there's snow. But when there's an eruption, there's an end to this beauty; it sweeps everything away.

I believe that our country also has many volcanoes of a trade-union nature, which will also cease being beautiful one day and which will sweep everything away. I believe that this day is approaching with giant strides.

A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE

THE DUBLIN Well Woman Centre recently announced the inauguration of a sperm bank from which it aims to provide insemination by donor. Insemination has been provided for eight women with a further 13 women awaiting insemination.

REDS: A rare film and one well worth seeing

By MICHEÁL O'RIORDAN

HAVING BEEN GIVEN a few minutes question and answer chance to speak on Radio Eireann I feel like beginning with an "as I was saying before I was interrupted" lead in. REDS is a mighty film not only in its over three hours showing but in the scope of its treatment. It is rightly regarded in the US as an excellent production that put it on the line for 12 Academy Awards, but even more in the sense of it being an important political breakthrough. That assessment is understandable since Hollywood has long been the centre of organised anti-communist propaganda — don't forget that it was the stable that Ronald Reagan came out of.

It is indeed a rare experience to see a film portraying the founding of the Communist Party of the U.S. some 60 years ago, and showing it as a reaction to the Soviet Revolution of 1918. The latter event is presented as an event of inspiring grandeur, but at the same time as the almost bloodless event that it was — the blood came later with the counter revolution of the rich and with the massive intervention of the 14 imperialist states.

Basically, the film is about the well-to-do born American John Reed (Warren Beatty), his development as a progressive journalist into a revolutionary fighter. It deals to a large degree with the development of his relationship with Louise Bryant (Diana Keaton) and her progression from a middle class bohemian into one who defiantly declares her stand with the Soviet Revolution before one of those U.S. Committees.

Betty acts not only the main part; he also directed and produced the film, in which he introduced the technique of contemporaries of Reed recalling impressions, memories and facts relevant to particular parts of the film.

INNOVATION

An interesting innovation that injects an element of documentary without destroying the thread of the film-story.

It's a pity that the "witnesses" were not identified with some caption as one would almost have to be a contemporary to recognise them. The credits show that they were a rich galaxy and one could almost kick oneself for not having known them when they appeared.

For myself, having had the advantage of meeting some and having familiarly known of others, I still could recognise only Art Shields, veteran U.S. Communist journalist, William Weinstone, co-founder of the C.P. of the U.S.A. with Reed, and Hugo Gellert, a true artist of the American people.

Naturally, there will be some who will try to fasten on to some scenes in the film to bolster their anti-socialism. One is in which Reed is depicted as an insensitive party leader trampling on the serious personal problems of another who he castigates. Later, he himself is shown arguing with Zinoviev, a Russian leader of the Communist International, who in turn behaves like an inhuman robot.

ENEMY

How many will know that Zinoviev was a far from typical example of the revolutionary leaders? He was in fact an enemy of Lenin and it was he who along with another anti-Lenin character, Kamenev, who deliberately blurred out the decision to start an armed revolt just before the actual October Revolution date. Zinoviev was expelled from the party in 1927.

There is the portrayal of Emma Goldman who argues that the Revolution had failed, but in no way is she revealed as an anarchist and not as a Communist.

Reed answers her point that Russia is in a mess simply because of the 14 nation invasion of its ter-

ritory and the tight capitalist blockade that tries to choke the young soviet republic.

Reed further makes the more important point that every revolution carries with it the worst problems of the pre-revolutionary era and they don't simply disappear overnight, as the pipe dreamers of anarchism and other pseudo-revolutionaries believe they should.

What I would have wished for — but I suppose it would have been too much to expect even in a film of its length — would have been even a glimpse of the "Irish connection". Reed's time was the time of Big Jim Larkin in the U.S. and it would have been good to have even a fleeting remark if not a glimpse of Larkin.

Big Jim like Reed was a co-founder of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. and he later also served in the Communist International in Moscow. Like many of the Ameri-

cans in the film, Larkin was a victim of the infamous 'Palmer Raids' which incarcerated him in Sing Sing Prison for a long period.

A last word: It is significant that the film should come out of Reagan's and Haig's America at a time when the cold war is being stoked again — but then when one remembers that the actual filming took over four years to complete one realises that it was pre-Ronald.

The detente that existed then is needed now, not only on the paramount issues of life and death — but also, as a bonus for life, the production of really good films.

The film ends with the off-screen voices of the pro and anti witnesses. If you listen hard enough you will hear as the film fades out the voice of Hugo Gellert summing up the life and work of John Reed (and himself incidentally) — "the revolution is something to live and die for."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Were Libyan hit squads a U.S. plant?

So asks the headlines in the "Evening Press" (4/1/82). Most people now seem to think it was just that.

In the same Evening Press on another page, we read the headline "Castro's Rejects Terrorise New York," and that police have arrested about 1,000 Cubans in the past year for crimes ranging from robbery to murder.

In New Jersey, officials say arrests of Cuban immigrants have averaged one a day for the past 18 months.

Unfortunately for the Yanks, they are unable to blame Fidel Castro for the wrongdoing of Cuban immigrants, for the majority of Cubans living in the States are refugees from Castro's Red Cuba — Refugees because they disliked living in a country where the people are in control.

Many of course are not just engaged in robbery and murder but in plotting with the cooperation of the C.I.A. to overthrow the People's Government of Cuba.

Dr. Kireiskey stated that although he believed the Catholic Church was a great moral force it was not cut out to give leadership to the Polish workers.

He compared the Church's stand to the attitude of the Papal Nuncio at the time of the attempted coup by Austrian Nazis in 1934.

As for the Reagan Administration, Dr. Kireiskey said "it could hardly claim to understand the Polish trade union movement after the way it had treated its own striking air traffic controllers."

E.E.C. confirms dumping of nuclear waste in Irish Sea.

The "Irish Times", 11/12/81, in a report from its correspondent, Leonard Doyle, states "that Radio-Active waste from Britain, Holland and Belgium is being dumped off the Irish coast."

This fact of course has been known by the Government, and the previous Government, but then we cannot afford to give offence to our E.E.C. partners.

WHO IS THE REAL THREAT TO PEACE?

WHENCE THE THREAT TO PEACE

Available, New Books
43 East Essex St., Dublin 2
PRICE — £1.00

Whence the Threat to Peace is the title of the book brought out by the Military Publishing House of the USSR Ministry of Defence.

This is not merely an answer to the massive propaganda campaign mounted in the West with regard to the so-called "Soviet war threat" and which has been given an official character in the USA. As General of the Army Valentin Varennikov, First Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces, said at a press conference in connection with the publication of this book, the authors had the aim of showing, in facts,

and by comparison, the actual balance of military strength between the United States and the Soviet Union, NATO and the Warsaw Treaty.

The book brings together a wealth of objective facts, from which the reader can draw the conclusion for himself and answer the question posed in its title. What are these facts?

It is the USA that initiated the building of a fleet of inter-continental strategic bombers and nuclear-powered submarines carrying ballistic missiles. It was the USA that first launched the massive deployment of ground-based inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). Quite recently Washington announced its decision to begin the full-scale production of neutron ammunition and adopted a programme for the deployment of



SLUMMING IT

TELL THEM EVERYTHING by Margarette D'Arcy,

Publisher: Pluto Press.

by NIALL FARRELL.

FOR ANYONE WITH an interest on how women in Armagh Goal endured the mental and physical torture of the no-wash protest, this book would certainly seem a worthwhile buy, as the author tells the story of how she spent three months on this protest in N.Ireland's women's prison.

Her prosecution and that of ten others for picketing this very same jail on International Women's Day in 1979 shows to a certain extent the arbitrary legislation which is part and parcel of everyday life in the North. But while you get a slight glimpse of that side of life in the first 30 odd pages of the book you become more aware of the actions of Ms. D'Arcy and her companions, who are all members of "Women Against Imperialism."

Indeed, the political maturity of this very group comes very much under scrutiny at this very stage. The evening before they are to appear in court for the first time, their fiery brand of revolutionary socialism is tested. This all occurred because they were completely unprepared, they had not decided how to approach the coming court case and disagreements arose between two sections of the organisation.

This was accentuated by the fact that "one section had begun drinking too early," and worse still "the other group had arrived sober just before closing time" (P.26).

What an unfortunate combination for making a political argument, but clearly a sign of the infantile political make-up of this organisation.

As for Margaretta D'Arcy, there are numerous incidents in the early part of the book, which illustrate her true character. Probably one of the most vivid is when she discovers, while jet-setting it

between London and New York, that there's a warrant out for her arrest for not paying a fine relating to her court case.

She quickly returns to Belfast to spend her time "going like a yo-yo in and out of the security gates in the middle of the city" (p.37) hoping to be picked up by the police.

Alas, to no avail, and eventually with the assistance of "Women Against Imperialism" (sic) she gives herself up, at the second attempt, to what seems, believe it or not, a very reluctant RUC man.

The author, throughout the rest of the book, remains as silly as this scene portrays her, although being in a prison cell 23 hours a day and under the discipline of the highly organised set-up of the political prisoners did limit her activities quite considerably.

Any hopes that D'Arcy — "a writer committed to the integrity of the written word," as she likes to describe herself — will tell us everything about life in the harrowing conditions of the no-wash protest never really are fulfilled; not really surprising I suppose, "slummers" seldom get to grips with the stark realities of a situation.

For example, certain awful aspects like the smearing of excrement on to the cell walls are told so indulgently that one could be forgiven for thinking she was actually enjoying herself.

As for her understanding of the friendship and unity of feeling of all the prisoners, the reader does get an idea of this, but this is to a great degree marred by D'Arcy's underlying condescending approach to the majority of her fellow-inmates.

In fact, to get to know what life was really like in Armagh jail during this period, it would be much more worthwhile to read some of the letters written by the protesters, which were smuggled out of the prison and have since been published.

ANOTHER REAGAN LIE NAILED.

U.N. experts have failed to find proof of chemical warfare in Cambodia and Laos. Their findings failed to substantiate U.S. charges that Cambodia and Laotians resisting the Communist regimes were killed this year by a poisonous yellow rain as alleged by Washington. U.S. sources had suggested the poison must have been produced in the Soviet Union. (Irish Times, 26/11/81).

Washington's approach is different. The United States aims to break the existing approximate military parity no matter what the cost. This policy is expressed by the astronomical increase in military spending by the US administration and in the development of ever new types of strategic weapons.

The present administration in Washington does not conceal the fact that it has adopted a course of "direct confrontation" with the Soviet Union on both the global and regional scale. Moreover, emphasised Valentin Varennikov, the United States continues to rely on the preparation for war with the use of strategic nuclear forces in different variants—from a global nuclear war to a nuclear conflict limited to the confines of individual regions of the world.

However, the arms race is not the way to ensure peace, the General noted. It is in the interest of both the United States and the Soviet Union to come to an agreement on limiting armaments and on radically reducing them and lessening the military danger. It is this programme—the Peace Programme for the 1980s—which is the official policy of the Soviet Union.

AGEMOU and the dispute in C.I.E.

By NOEL MARTIN

LAST MONTH, craftworkers, general operatives, store issuers and drivers, members of the A.G.E. & M.O.U. employed by C.I.E. in Dublin walked off the job to discuss on unprecedented situation which had occurred in C.I.E.

That morning, members of that union had been victimised in relation to the Proposed Pay Agreement (Public Services).

Although Clause 1. of the agreement stated clearly that no group of employees would be paid the monetary terms until all the unions representing the particular group had accepted the deal, C.I.E. went ahead and paid some, but not AGEMOU.

The manner in which the deal was pushed through raises fundamental questions regarding trade union democracy C.I.E. management's cover up of the potentially most expensive "White Elephant" in the history of C.I.E.

Firstly let us deal with question of trade union democracy.

The past National Wages Agreements, narrow though they were, at least contained some input from the trade unions.

However this present Public Services agreement contains not one iota of trade union aspirations except maybe in the clause regarding annual holidays.

Undoubtedly this agreement which is supposed to be a collective bargaining agreement will be used by the right wing of the trade unions to justify future National Wages deals and deny free collective bargaining.

In C.I.E. only one union convened a General Meeting of its C.I.E. membership to discuss the Company's proposals and widely circulated copies of the proposed agreement. That union was the A.G.E.M.O.U.

At that meeting, two Clauses, (4) which referred to Major Changes and (7) which referred to annual leave, were rejected subject to clarification by the company.

At a meeting between A.G.E. & M.O.U. officers and C.I.E. Management, the union side expressed fears that Clause 4 of the agreement would result in redundancies or layoffs and Clause 7 would result in the erosion of service related days.

Management, in answering these questions, said that Clause 4 was mainly aimed at the one man bus operation. They would not be declaring redundancies but would be seeking voluntary severances.

On Clause 7, Management accepted the union point of view that this Clause could lead to the erosion of the service days, but pointed out that two sections,

Bus Workers and General Operatives had accepted this.

A.G.E.&M.O.U. members would not be paid unless they accepted all sections of the agreement. So this is what led to the walkout by A.G.E.M.O.U. members and a vote for official action.

The implications of this agreement coupled with the gradual reduction of staff, productivity agreements, buying in of new parts for a fleet that is due to be scrapped and subcontracting out of work that could be done within C.I.E., put together like a jigsaw, points to a coverup by C.I.E. of the enormous and escalating costs incurred by the acquisition of the Bombardier fleet with its numerous faults and maintenance costs.

200 of these buses are due to have corrective work carried out on them, much of the work of major proportions.

The conspiracy by C.I.E. management to cover up has become so blatant and alarming that a group of shopstewards representing such unions as AGEMOU, AUEW NEETU, ITGWU, E.T.U., and ATGWU, employed in Broadstone Overhauls, Dublin City Services and Dublin Provincial are meeting with Socialist T.D., Tony Gregory S.F.W.P. and Michael D. Higgins and also hope to meet with the Minister for Transport to discuss the situation.



● What mother would have pride in C.I.E.

A set of proposals including the setting up of a Commission to investigate the reasons for awarding the contract to Bombardier and to look into other sources of bus building such as the ICARSUS bus which is supplied by Hungary to the Socialist and other countries and a further Commission to investigate industrial relations and grade of pay in C.I.E., are to be presented to the T.D.

A deal between the Hungarian and Irish Governments to build the Icarsus buses in Ireland would be a major step in co-operation with the Socialist Community. It would not be without precedent as a Hungarian State-owned company is already operating in Ireland manufacturing light bulbs.

An illustration of the faults with the Bombardier bus can be gleaned from the facts that the bus has suffered from premature engine, transmission, brakes, steering and welding faults, some potentially lethal, and one bus has been sent to Germany for stress tests because of the numerous welding breaks in the chassis etc.

The public must be made aware of the C.I.E. conspiracy and those responsible, such as Liam St. John Devlin and others should be dismissed without compensation.

Nuclear free Dublin

AT ITS MEETING on April 5, Dublin Corporation unanimously passed a resolution declaring the city to be a Nuclear Free Zone.

The resolution stated: "In recognition of the importance of the Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly on Disarmament called for June 1982, Council resolves to declare Dublin City a Nuclear Free Zone in terms similar to those adopted in Belfast, Cork and Derry.

"The declaration opposes the manufacture, positioning or temporary presence of nuclear weapons or related equipment on land or water within Dublin City.

"It refuses transit, docking and communications facilities to any vehicle or craft carrying such weapons or equipment and expresses its support for the region extension of such Nuclear Free

Zones as first proposed at the U.N. by Ireland in 1959.

"Council further recognises Irish Neutrality as a means of promotion of Peace and Disarmament and encourages the Government to initiate efforts to secure guarantees from Nuclear States not to use or threaten the use of nuclear weapons Nuclear Free Zones and non-nuclear states".

LATE RESULTS

Fianna Fail 1 (Burke o.g.), Fine Gael 0.

Argentina 3,000, Britain 80.

(Righteous indignation stopped play).

PRIOR PLAN DOOMED

THE PRIOR PLAN for a watered down form of power-sharing as a solution to the Northern crisis is doomed before it even starts—and Prior knows so. It is a reflection of the refusal of the British Government to face up to the real issues, and, especially, a refusal to face up to unionism.

The simple fact of the matter is that unionism is a system of privilege and discrimination, and it is absurd to expect unionism to agree to anything that will dismantle its power.

Equally absurd is the idea that anything short of dismantling the unionist system of rule through sectarianism can bring either a solution or a step towards an ultimate solution.

The Prior plan is doomed not because it attempts to make the unionists move, but because it doesn't, and the Irish Government is quite right to dismiss it out of hand. It is a pity that SFWP do not appear to understand this.

Clondalkin Statement

THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S commitment to nationalise Clondalkin paper mills if a private buyer can't be found is a testimony to the determination of the workers involved whose sit-in has forced the issue.

Full credit, too, must go to Socialist T.D., Tony Gregory, and to S.F.W.P., who sought specific commitments on Clondalkin in their negotiations with Charles Haughey.

The issues involved at Clondalkin were, of course, distorted by the media at the time. For the record, we publish a statement from the workers giving the facts about the case.

The Board of Clondalkin Paper Mills Group decided to put Clondalkin Paper Mills into voluntary liquidation on 5th November, 1981. The work force received four weeks' notice which, in effect, meant that the mill would close during the first week in December.

During the months of November/December 1981, and into the first and second week of January, 1982, extensive negotiations took place between Foir Teo (State Rescue Agency), Clondalkin Group Ltd. and the Trade Union Group catering for all the workers in Clondalkin Paper Mills.

It was agreed that it was feasible to create a new company which would be financially structured on the basis of, Foir Teo 45 per cent., Clondalkin Group 45 per cent. and the work force 10 per cent.

The negotiations were aimed at securing manning levels, labour costs, etc. which would enable the new venture to be operated viably, that is to say that it would make a profit.

The Unions' Negotiating Committee had, through their endeavours, reached the decision where they were prepared to put to the total work force the following;

157 redundancies (a reduction from 458 to 301);

To accept that in the final analysis any problems arising from the bonus scheme would be resolved by arbitration, was a tremendous concession to be made by the work force. This was appreciated by Foir Teo but derided by management.

We want to make it clear that, at this point, Clondalkin Paper Mills withdrew from the negotiations and allowed the gates to be closed on 22nd January, 1982. We are issuing this statement in order to correct erroneous statements which appeared in the media and which undoubtedly influenced the thinking of not alone other employers but indeed fellow workers in other employments.

It has been stated that Clondalkin Paper Mill workers earn bonuses of £50 per week and that it was fair and reasonable for the employer to have this figure reduced; it has been stated that the workers receive a basic rate of £150 per week to which must be added bonus earnings.

Here are the facts: the basic rate of Clondalkin Paper Mill workers is £85.79 per 40 hour week. In addition, there are job differentials commensurate with the skill of the operative.

For those who operate a twenty-four hour cycle shift work, there is a shift premium of 25 per cent. of their basic rate. For those who earn bonuses there is an additional payment which by the company's admission is on average—£24 per week.

Office staff salaries commence at the princely sum of £59 per week. These are the facts.

It is understandable why the workforce unanimously agreed to fight for the right to work. They have been guaranteed full support from the rest of the workers employed by Clondalkin Paper Mills Group plus the tremendous support pledged by the Dublin Council of Trade Unions.

And now they have won a commitment from the government that Fianna Fáil must not be allowed renege on.

A seven month pay freeze until May 1982;

A two and a half year wage deal of 8 per cent. in 1982, a further 10 per cent. in 1983, with no further increases until 1984 (approx. CPI for same period 60 per cent.);

A commitment to negotiate a new house agreement tailored to the requirements of the new company;

An injection of approximately £700 per employee into the capitalisation of the new company;

A commitment to have ICTU Industrial engineers examine the existing or other possible bonus schemes which would produce sufficient savings to contribute to the viability of the new company and, in addition, to agree to arbitration should management and unions fail to reach agreement on an agreed bonus scheme.

The foregoing must illustrate the sincerity of the work force. These conditions were totally acceptable to Foir Teo, as a tremendous commitment from the workers, and Foir Teo itself was prepared to inject their 45 per cent. into the new company.

However, the Clondalkin Group were not satisfied and withdrew from the negotiations. They claimed, without explanation, that a new bonus scheme would save £500,000 per annum. They insisted that a new scheme would replace the existing scheme which was negotiated as recently as 1979.

The Trade Unions were willing to consider a new scheme when three months of normal running had been completed, to enable Industrial Engineers to perform their function.

JOIN THE COMMUNIST PARTY

To: The Communist Party of Ireland, 43 East Essex Street, Dublin 2
Please send me information about membership of the Communist Party of Ireland

Name:

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