

WORKERS SOLIDARITY

20p

PAPER OF THE WORKERS SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

NO. 24 FEBRUARY 1987

TWEEDLEDEE



OR



TWEEDLEDUM

WOWEE! TWO MORE MINUTES OF DEMOCRACY! IT USED TO BE A CHOICE BETWEEN TWEEDLEDUM AND TWEEDLEDEE BUT THIS TIME IT'S TWEEDLEDUM AND TWEEDLEDUM.

What a farce! Anyone bothering to vote this time will simply be selecting which chancer will be in charge of the cuts in social welfare, health and education, holding down wages and recruitment to the

public service, bumping up unemployment and emmigration, spending a million pounds a day policing the border, and generally presiding over the running down of Ireland Ltd.

None of the four main parties have any hope or intention of sorting out this mess which is a product of a worldwide capitalist recession and a reflection of the multi-national dominated gombeen-type economic system we're for-

ced to live under. Nor can the Workers Party or Sinn Fein make a difference.

The fact of the matter is that the job of sorting this country out is going to be a long one and it won't be done in the Dail. In the short term, it'll require workers and other groups under attack to organise effectively against the bosses and the government to force concessions from them. And in

the long term, this kind of activity can and must go beyond specific demands into a general struggle for socialism in a 32-county workers republic.

In the meantime, a vote for any worthwhile single issue candidate won't be wasted. Other than that, treat this election farce with the contempt it deserves and get involved in the real movement for change.

IRELAND'S ANARCHIST PAPER

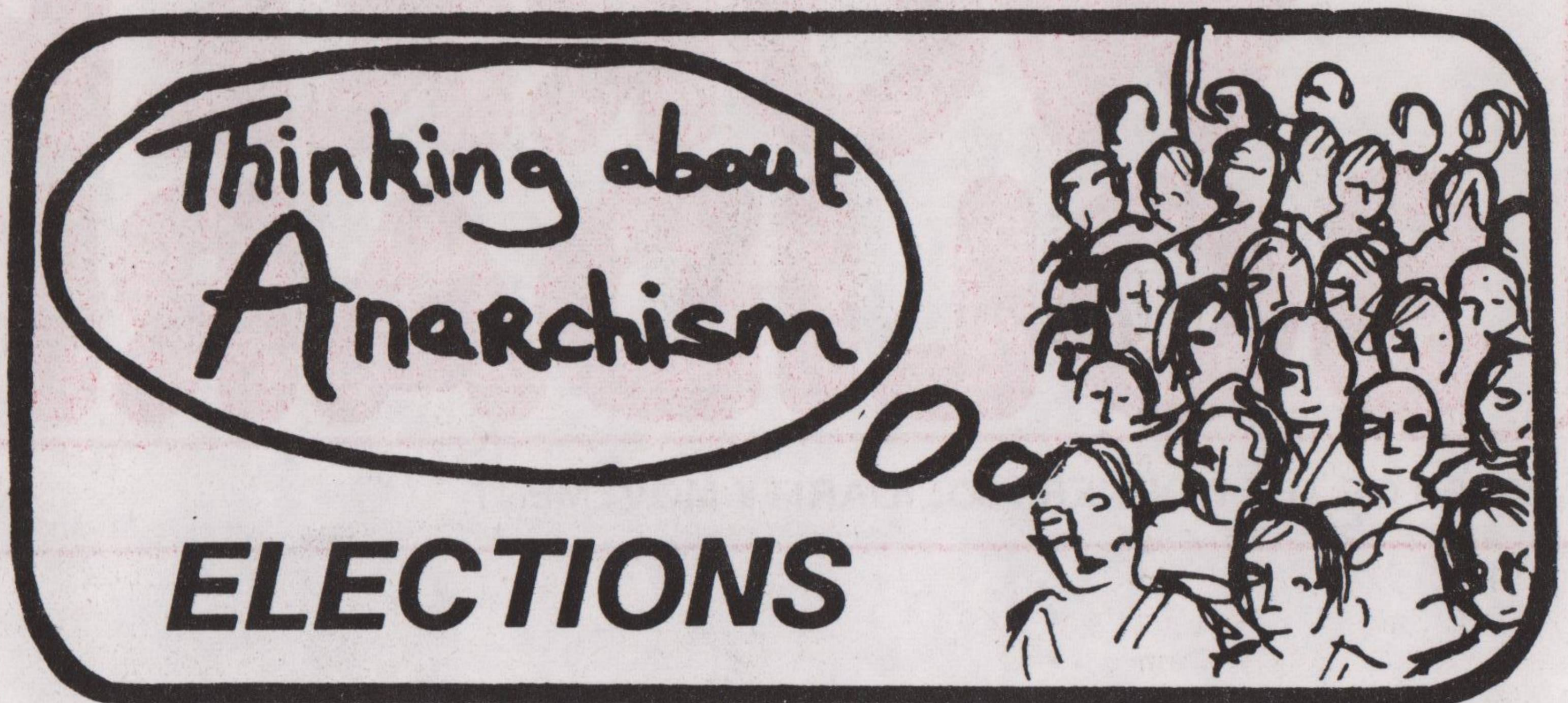
PEOPLE OFTEN say that if you really want to change things you should stand in elections. Yet there will be no Workers Solidarity Movement candidates running this month. Why not?

Well, to begin with, if we were serious about getting elected we would have to put our emphasis and energy into getting votes, we would have to try and get as many votes as we could. Our time would be spent on this, at the expense of the struggle to actually change the fundamental ideas people have at present.

PASSIVE

In order to do this we would have to start by watering down our anarchism so that a larger section of people would vote for us. Rather than educating people about socialism, getting elected would have to be our main priority. Pretty soon we would be treating people as passive spectators, as voters, and not as human beings who can actually become involved in politics themselves.

Anarchism stands opposed to the, not very democratic, kind of democracy we have now. Between elections we have no control over the 160 odd TDs who claim to be our representatives. Yet they have a hell of a lot of control over us. Still, if we stood in elections and got into the Dail wouldn't it be possible to change that? Couldn't we then bring in



socialism and make things more democratic?

CHILE

Unfortunately the answer is no. Socialism and real democracy cannot come through the Dail. If we look at what happened in Chile we can see why. The people elected a moderate 'socialist' government led by President Allende. In 1973 this democratically elected government was overthrown by a military coup with CIA backing. The reforms Allende was going to bring in were too much for the bosses. In the repression that followed, the workers movement was smashed and thousands lost their lives.

This happened because the people who elected Allende did not understand that the real power lies not in parliaments, but in the boardrooms of multinational companies. It is these who hold the money, who control the economy, who

have the real power. And they want to keep it that way.

DIRECT ACTION

Socialism will not come through electing socialists to the Dail, but through workers taking direct control of the factories and the land. It is not something that can be legislated into being. It is something that must be created by the direct action of masses of people.

Throughout Europe, at different times, we have seen 'socialist' governments push down workers' living standards. They do it because international banks want their high-interest loans repaid and multinational companies want to maintain their levels of profit. In order to hold parliamentary power these governments have to respect the rules of the bosses' game.

RULERS

Anarchists have no desire to

elect rulers, whether they be the ones with the real power or just the law makers. We are against all minority rule. Instead we stand for a system where we **all** control the economy and society through a system of democratic workers and community councils, a system where everyone affected by a decision has a say in its making.

Against the electoral circus we put forward the idea of direct action as the alternative. This means people coming together to deal directly with the problems that face them at work and in the community. It is through such action that we cease to be passive spectators and begin to assert control over our own lives. This can lay the basis for a new kind of society.

Greg Ryan



THAT'S CAPITALISM

If you believe everything you read in the newspapers you probably think the Germans are the hardest workers in Europe, and the Irish are rather lazy. But you would be wrong... in fact the Germans work less hours than anyone else in Europe, while the Irish are second only to the Portuguese in the number of hours worked each year.

The average German works 156 hours less than the average Irish worker.

That's almost four working weeks a year. So the next time your boss tells you that you are lackadaisical and have to work harder, tell him or her to shove it.

South Korea, that bastion against the Godless North, is experiencing a crime wave. Last year, 8,098 women were convicted of adultery, which carries a two year sentence.

It took Live Aid just twelve hours to raise over a million pounds for famine relief. Marvellous. Figures just released put arms expenditure for last year at 1.7 million dollars a minute.

Maggie Thatcher constantly warns against 'political strikes'. Meanwhile, the Tories have forked out £4.73 million for policing the News International strike at Wapping. As many as 1,700 cops have been on duty at any one time; 1,260 arrests have been made; one striker is in prison, hundreds have been inj-

ured and a young man was recently killed by one of Murdoch's scab lorries. Nothing political about any of this of course.

Thinking of trying Europe for a job? Don't bother. EEC unemployment now stands at 16.2 million, or 11.2%.

One of America's best known Born-again Christian preachers has told his followers to give him 4.5 million dollars by next month. Oral Roberts claims he got a death threat from God who will "call me home" unless the cash is delivered to Oral's bank account.

BREAK THIS INJUNCTION

THE DECISION BY JUSTICE HAMILTON on December 19th, to grant an injunction to the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) preventing Open Line Counselling and the Well Woman Centres giving information and counselling to women who want to have abortions in Britain is truly outrageous. From January 12th, the clinics are in contempt of court if they even tell a woman the address or phone number of a clinic in Britain.

UNBORN

As far as Justice Hamilton is concerned the unborn, from the moment of conception, has absolute rights. This right to life completely overrides 'the equal right to life of the mother' which is a part of the 1983 Constitutional Amendment which provided the basis for the injunction.

So even if a woman has been raped, even if she may die as a result of the pregnancy, it is now a civil wrong to even give her a phone number. The right to life of the unborn puts limitations on the right to information and indeed the right to free speech. It is now open for SPUC to take any individual to court for giving out information on abortion. It is now guaranteed that an injunction will be granted and that if the person continues to give out information, she or he will be imprisoned until she or he apologises to the court and stops giving out information.

CONTRACEPTION

The decision could have implications for certain types of contraception that operate after the moment of conception. The IUD and the morning after pill could now be outlawed.

Of course the decision will not stop Irish women



having abortions in Britain. They will still go, but now they will be less informed, completely isolated, and indeed open to be ripped off. They will have nobody to vouch for the reliability of the clinic they go to.

This is nothing short of hypocrisy. The judgement in no way deals with the reasons why Irish women have abortions. It is just another piece of window dressing to show how pure and pious we are.

SPUC

SPUC have got to be stopped. So far they have had a string of victories, every time pushing back those who hold progressive views. Now they are attacking women. Next it will be gays and lesbians, and after that?

The Defend the Clinics Campaign has been organised to oppose this outrage. The campaign has already organised a very large public meeting in Dublin and is seeking to spread itself as far as possible throughout the country. It aims at reversing

the decision, demanding the right of Irish women to have information and counselling on abortion. The clinics have already decided that they will be appealing the decision to the Supreme Court.

The Campaign, though, is not waiting around until that lengthy legal process is finished. Already an information pack has been produced giving information on how to go about getting an abortion. Efforts are being made to organise alternative forms of counselling so that women get an opportunity to talk through and think about their decision.

DEFIANCE

The campaign is also organising open public defiance of the judge and his decision. It is working towards a situation where hundreds of people will publicly declare that they will provide information on abortion. Two public demonstrations are being organised in Dublin. The first will be on February 7th and the second is on March 8th, International Womens Day.

WSM fully supports the campaign. We believe open public defiance is the best way forward. The law clearly works against the best interests of Irish women. We should make an ass of it.

Eddie Conlon

PAPAL BULL

The Catholic church won't allow condoms as a protection against AIDS. Their use is ruled out in "Humanae Vitae": *Each and every marriage act must remain open to the transmission of life.* If you accept this it must also be sinful to have sex (1) if you or your partner is infertile, (2) after a woman has reached the menopause, and (3) during the so-called "safe period".



VICTORY IN FRANCE

THE FRENCH RULING class got its biggest shock since the general strike of 1968 last December. Mass demonstrations all over France, one million on the streets of Paris alone, forced them to tear up one law and hold back the implementation of another. And just when they thought they had things under control it looked like a strike wave, led by the train crews, might burst forth.

It started with the "Dev-aquet reform" (named after the Minister responsible for it). This would have restricted entry to the universities, reduced the choice of college, made education more costly and given business interests more control over what it taught.

The majority of students voted to strike and organise protests. The government wasn't worried at first. There had been no sizable opposition to the Chirac government's previous attacks. There had been few major strikes in industry, unemployment is high. School leavers don't even get the dole. Some young people have been involved in anti-racism with *SOS Racisme*, but the fascists of Le Pen's National Front have been getting stronger all the time. The vast majority of young people were inactive and feeling very insecure.

Contrary to all the expectations of the politicians 300,000 turned up for the first student march. Almost all thought the government would listen to them. It didn't. But the movement began to grow and thousands of school students joined in with their own demands.

The state responded with a desperate attempt to turn the "reform" into a law and order issue, to pretend the movement was merely a front for "left wing violence". However the state was too blatant and few were fooled. An example of this was when a gang of 100 right wing thugs went on a window smashing spree in Paris' Latin Quarter. They did it under the nose of literally thousands of police yet no action was taken against them.

POLICE RIOT

The next big Paris demonstration attracted one million. The CRS riot police were unleashed. Cops riding pillion on motor bikes raced along the pavements with their long batons cracking skulls, vans were driven at speed into the crowd and there were numerous brutal baton charges. A north

African student, Malik Ouss-ekine, was kicked to death by the CRS and left lying in the gutter for an hour and a half before an ambulance was called. Two other students were taken to hospital in a critical condition.

Students who had earlier been chanting "CRS with us" were now shouting "CRS=SS" and "This is not Chile". Without the police attack, which the government initially supported by saying the CRS had "done its duty", the movement would probably have gone into decline as its leaders had no strategy for going further than a gigantic march. The brutality changed all that. Thousands of students and young workers took to the streets over the next few days and fought pitched battles with the CRS.

THE UNIONS

The teachers unions, who had been on strike in support of the students, reaffirmed their solidarity. The two main union federations, CFTD and CGT, were pushed by their own members to declare solidarity with the students. Chirac appealed for calm...

and was ignored.

The government, afraid of the movement which was growing in militancy, climbed down. The "reform" was scrapped. The proposed nationality law, a racist offensive against North Africans, was put on the back burner. Some of the school students' demands were conceded. The state was afraid of antagonising people, even to the extent of managers in the dole offices being told to be more polite to claimants.

VICTORY

A great victory had been won. Unfortunately, instead of using the confidence gained to go on the offensive against the government the movement quickly disappeared. This happened because in most areas the student leaders ran the movement in a bureaucratic manner which left most students uninvolved at any level other than going to protests. They also did all they could to make it 'non-political', they even tried to stop the teachers marching under their union banners on the big Paris demonstration.

It could have been different. In colleges where the

anarchists of the *Libertarian Students Co-ordination* and the *Union of Libertarian Communist Workers* were involved, such as Nanterre, the level of activity and political awareness was higher. They organised on the basis of elected delegates who had binding mandates and had to report daily to General Assemblies of the students. This structure allowed for real participation as opposed to leaving all the decisions in a few hands.

In these colleges there was a deliberate attempt to involve the movement with the struggles against the racist nationality bill, the proposed rise in health charges and the destruction of hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Despite the return to classes by the students, their victory inspired the train drivers at the Paris North station to come out against managements' plan to only give pay increases "on merit". This would mean the management deciding which individuals would and wouldn't get a rise! Their lead was followed by train staff throughout France and by the metro workers. While their union

leaders sold them out, they were more interested in flexing their muscles for a day or two than in actually winning as happened here with the PAYE campaign, it did show what great potential there is when people feel confident.

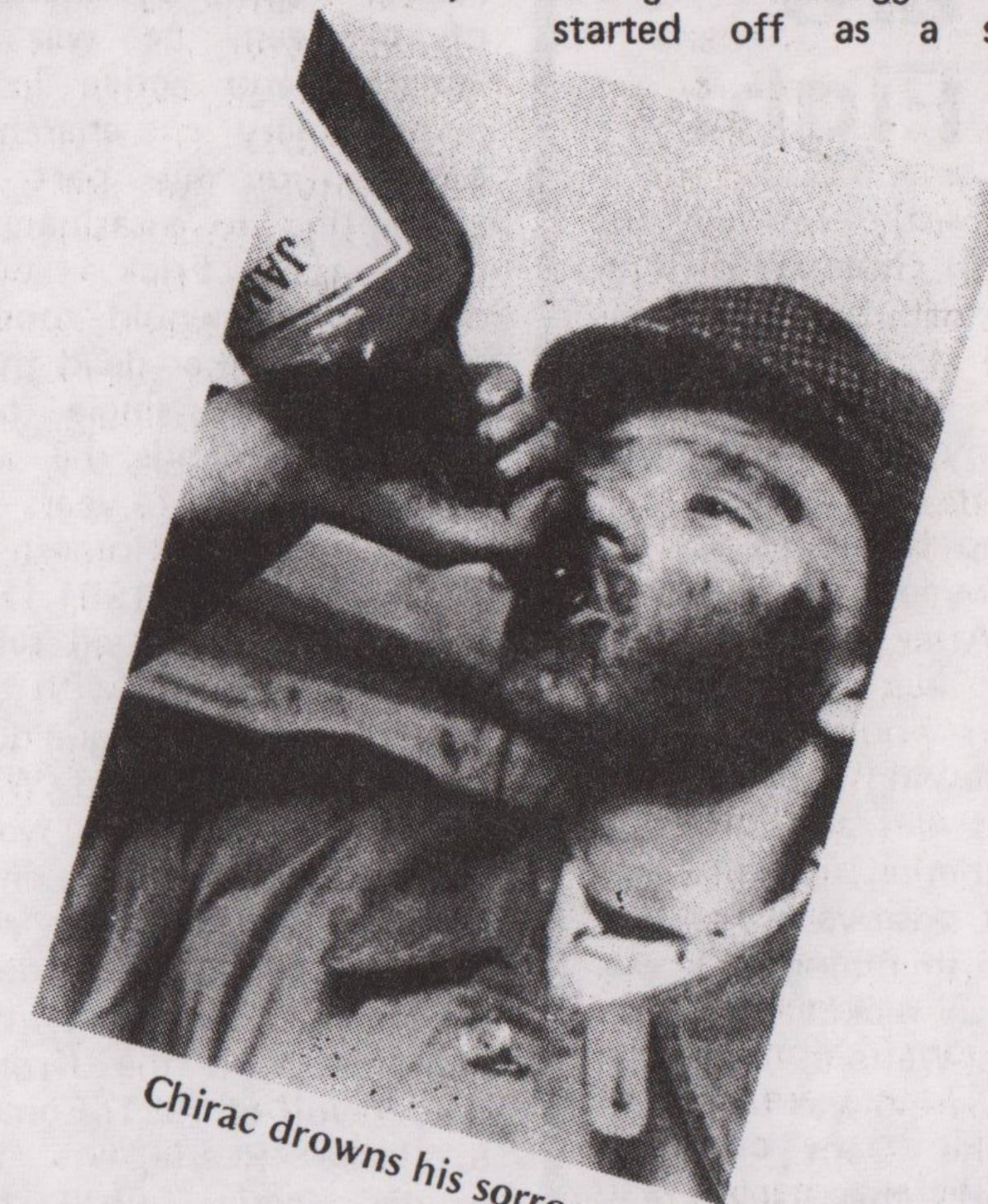
LESSONS

The French students' magnificent victory is an example to all of us. They

showed us how, with determination and organisation, even the most right wing governments can be forced to back down.

They have shown how strikes and mass demonstrations can achieve more in a week than negotiations and public relations campaigns can in years.

They have shown how quickly people's ideas can change in struggle. What started off as a single



Chirac drowns his sorrows

Joe King



issue campaign about education became one against police violence. Many also have come out against the governments' racism and generally anti-working class measures. They have shown how quickly the struggles of one section of society can begin to bring into play the potential power of the working class. It was fear that workers would join the student's fight that finally made the government give in.

FUTURE

While many are pinning all their hopes on getting a Mitterand government back into power — the main student union UNEF-ID is pushing this line — there is a minority who have been radicalised by the events and who can remember the way the last "Socialist" administration played up to the racists and forced cut-backs on the workers. These are open to anarchist ideas. It is the growth of this minority that may ensure that next time the government is not just shaken, it may even be brought down.

AIDS

DON'T DIE OF IGNORANCE

with the condom. Use rubber. Ask your chemist. The contraceptive pill.

AIDS. Anyone who misuses If you ever do, never share syringes, mixing bowls, or the virus straight into extremely dangerous.

DON'T INJECT.

If you go to you about a disease, a test virus, you be

IF YOU THINK YOU ARE INFECTED

BETTER DEAD THAN IN BED, SAY BISHOPS

The use of condoms is unacceptable, Irish Catholic bishops' statement. The only problem with AIDS is that it doesn't kill fast enough, Jerry Falwell, leader of the American Moral Majority.

AIDS AND THE political and public health implications surrounding it is now an issue in Ireland. Since the Department of Health eventually got around to working on a series of leaflets about the disease, the Catholic bishops threw in their tuppence-worth. They have come out strongly against the use of condoms as a protection. They would sooner see people die than enjoy sex outside marriage.

AIDS is a disease which raises questions: what is it, and how is it transmitted? It also raises questions of a very political nature since the disease is used by the "moral majorities" to shore up their petty, irrational arguments against sexual freedom and homosexuality.

WHAT IS IT?

AIDS, the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, is a disease affecting the body's immune system, caused by a virus named HIV. Your body's immune system fights off infections and helps to maintain your health. Once the immune system is disrupted the body becomes very suscept-

ible to all infections, and ultimately the person concerned dies.

The disease is caused by a virus which can only be transmitted between one person and another in body fluids, i.e. semen and blood, there is no known way of contacting the disease other than coming into contact with the body fluids of an infected person. Routine social contact with an infected person does not lead to one getting AIDS, nor does drinking from the same cup nor living in the same house or street.

DEATH

AIDS is a serious health problem given its lethal consequences. Thirteen people

have been diagnosed as having AIDS in the 26 counties (8 of whom have died) and 3,000 other cases have been diagnosed in the 27 European countries compiling a register. Of the 20,000 people in Britain found to have antibodies to the virus in their blood, 465 went on to develop AIDS and by July of last year 234 of them had died. Recognising the severity of the disease does not mean it cannot be tackled, or that we are all going to die. "Epidemics" have happened before and will, unfortunately, do so again.

Measures can be taken to check the spread of the

disease. Firstly the hypocrisy surrounding the discussion of sex has to be tackled. An explicit, detailed series of leaflets should be produced explaining "safe sex" practices. The use of condoms should be promoted actively. On a larger international scale, research into AIDS ought to be co-ordinated and results not withheld from other researchers.

Exposure to the AIDS virus on just one occasion may be sufficient to cause infection. Once infected, a person may develop AIDS — or the virus may remain dormant in the body for years. It is currently a matter of speculation among researchers

as to how many of the people infected will eventually develop AIDS. Studies give estimates from 10% to 50%. What is known, however, is that not all people infected with the virus will develop AIDS.

DRUG ABUSE

One of the groups at greatest risk of being exposed to the virus are those who inject drugs. The common practice of sharing needles, which are rarely sterile, increases the risk. To deal with this problem the priority must be on the maintenance of these peoples' health, and eliminating the possibility of transmission of the virus.

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AIDS

(continued from page 5)

There is only one realistic, effective way to do this. That is to make clean, sterile needles freely available. This does not imply approval of drug abuse, rather it is a necessary step in preventing the spread of the virus and will thus save lives.

MORAL POLICE

AIDS came along at quite an opportune time for the "moral police" — the bishops and bigots who want to impose their authoritarian values on everybody else. All their old arguments about no sexual relationships outside or before marriage, anti-gay prejudices, etc. were losing currency among large numbers of people in most parts of the world, including this country, prior to the advent of AIDS. With rather adept misrep-

The Southern government's anti-AIDS campaign, which was to have started last month, has been postponed until after the election. Saving lives isn't half as important as saving a few votes.

resentation and lies about the facts of AIDS, they have tried to take advantage of people's genuine fear of the disease and turn this fear in a hysterical manner against ideas of sexual freedom and choice. Now they are saying that people should die rather than use condoms.

REALISTIC

The hysteria induced is also very useful in fanning anti-gay prejudice. As anarchists we oppose all restrictions on a person's right to decide their own sexual preferences; the *Children, Church & Home* view of women's role; and all the other reactionary ideas that these people espouse. Their arguments that the only way to stop the spread of AIDS is a return to the days of no sex and no discussion about sex are wrong. Firstly, in terms of curtailing individual free-

dom. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, their ideas are a recipe for disaster. "Epidemics", especially of sexually transmitted diseases, flourish in conditions of backward social morality. What is needed to stop the spread of AIDS is increasing openness in discussion of sex and in the treatment of the disease. This means a realistic, explicit information campaign based on FACTS rather than conservative moral exhortions.

Mike Scully

Fare Fight

The recently formed unemployed branch of the Irish Distributive & Administrative Trade Union (which is open to any unemployed person) have started to campaign for free or cheap bus fares for the unemployed in off-peak times. After a branch meeting it was agreed that members would leaflet dole offices asking people to get involved and also to lobby T.D.'s coming up to election time. If positive action was not forthcoming it was agreed to picket the Dept. of Social Welfare.

A meeting was then held with the Dept., and as expected, they said they could not afford anything at the moment as they had to balance the books! As usual the government expects people on less than £37 a week to spend at least £7 of that on bus fares just to visit Manpower (sic). For most people being on the dole is depressing and even more so if you haven't even got the money to get a bus into town or to visit a friend or relative.

Its obvious that this government, (or any other government) doesn't give a damn for the unemployed and that mass unemployment will be with us for the foreseeable future, so now is the time for unwaged workers to get organised and fight back in whatever way possible. For more information contact Maurice Sheehan, I.D.A.T.U., 9 Cav-

REVIEW

THE ABC OF ANARCHISM

by Alexander Berkman
£2.00

Alexander Berkman was no mere theorist. All his life he was an active anarchist militant. Born in Russia, by the age of fifteen he was being expelled from school for membership of a group which met to read radical books. By the age of nineteen, he was in America and active in a revolutionary anarchist group. For his part in attempting to assassinate a boss — H.C. Frick — who declared he would sooner see every striker dead than accede to a single one of their demands, he was sentenced to 17 years in jail, during the Homestead Steel Strike of 1901. His second American jail sentence was for work with the No Conscription League during the First World War. Following this, he went to Russia, but, while initially supportive, he was sickened by Bolshevik duplicity and especially the events around the Kronstadt Revolt of 1921. Forced to leave Russia, he remained active until his death by his own hand, at the age of 66 in 1936.

In the ABC of Anarchism, Berkman set out to write an introductory text which anyone could understand. He succeeded in this. It is a very clear and honest account of all the main ideas of communist anarchism. He debunks the myths about anarchism being chaos and disorder, explaining it instead as "the most rational and practical conception of social life in freedom and harmony". He explains the anarchist attitude to violence, the necessity of a revolutionary approach, the role of the battle of ideas — and mixes this with concrete ideas for organising in the here

endish Row, Dublin 1. Tel. 746321.

Mick Mooney

and now, and for general preparation for the Social Revolution. His emphasis throughout is not so much on the barricades as on the massive re-constructive task with which successful revolutionaries are faced.

While he occasionally gets carried away — claiming for instance, that capitalists have nothing to lose from the revolution — this book can be recommended to anyone who wants a true account of anarchist ideas. Get it now from the Workers Solidarity book service.

Myles Kennedy



WSM MEETINGS

Want to find out more about WSM? Part of each branch meeting is given over to a discussion and readers are welcome to attend.

DUBLIN:

Every Tuesday at 8 pm in the Resource Centre, Crow Street (off Dame Street).

February 3rd

Can the Northern State be reformed?

February 10th

Is Russia Socialist?

February 17th

Is neutrality important?

February 24th

A fresh look at Lenin

CORK:

Every Thursday at 8 pm in the Quay Co-op, 24 Sullivan's Quay.

February 12th

Will Nicaragua survive?

February 26th

1968: Revolt in Paris

DAY SCHOOL ON ANARCHISM

Saturday Feb 14th, 11 am, Quay Co-op. More information from Cork WSM c/o Quay Co-op.

DUNNE IT AGAIN

THE DUNNES Stores anti-apartheid strikers are still unable to go back to work. On January 1st the government's new restrictions on fruit and vegetable imports from South Africa came into effect. Ben Dunne had always said that their jobs were still there.

When they turned up for work they were presented with new conditions of employment that were totally unacceptable. None of the other workers in Dunnes were asked to sign them, only the strikers. In effect they have been sacked.

NOT A SURPRISE

This does not come as a great surprise. We argued throughout the strike that a defeat would give Ben Dunne the confidence to go on the offensive against the union.

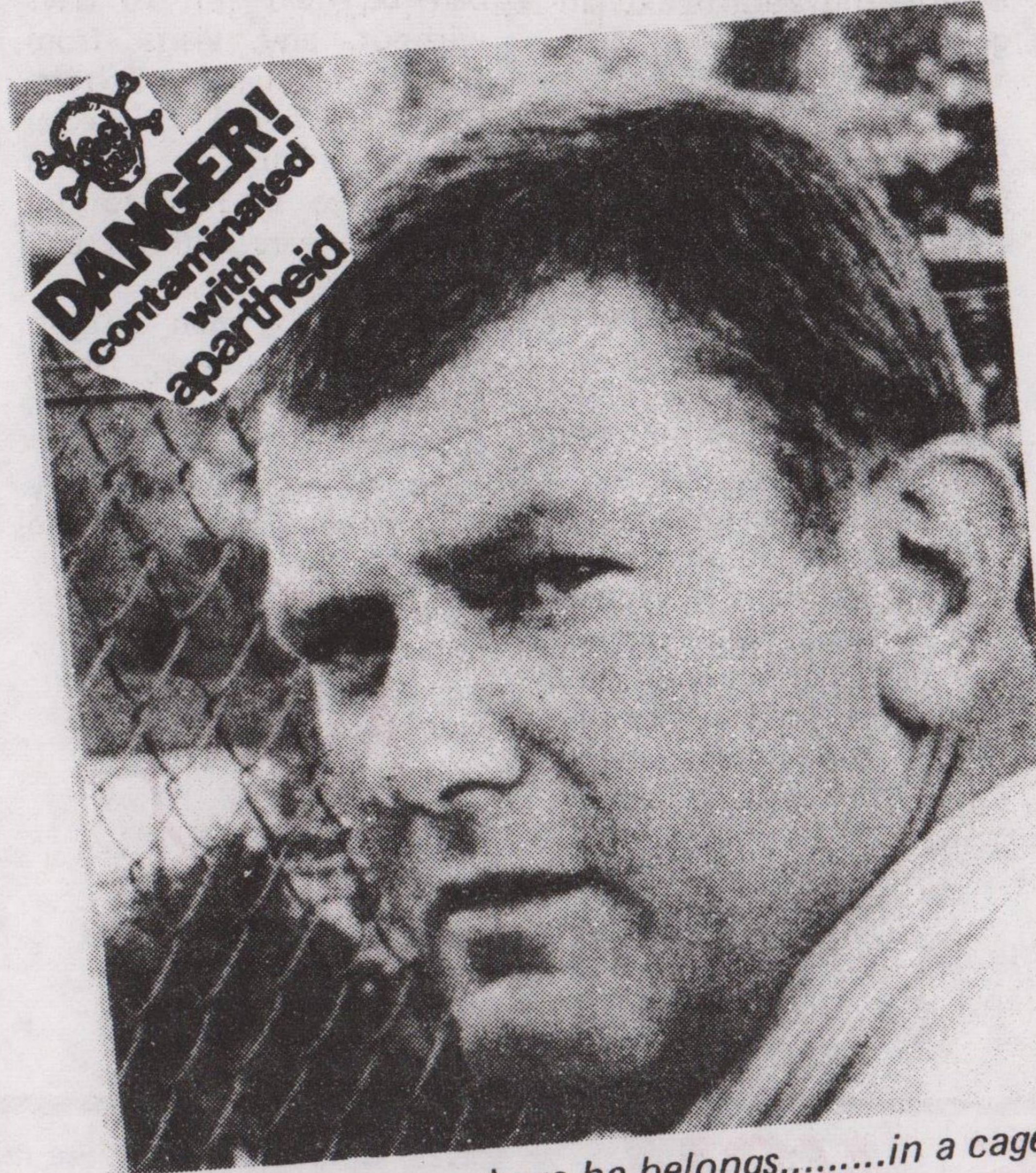
It need not have happened. There was a possibility of winning, though we recognise it would not have been easy. But that possibility was not even considered by IDATU (the union) leadership. They refused to attempt to spread the strike to other Dunnes shops, and on December 24th 1985 ordered the lifting of the picket in Henry Street. The union General

Secretary, John Mitchell, gave an interview to the *Irish Press* in September 1985 which claimed that "...we are dealing with a company that will never give in". Such public defeatism would hardly bring Ben Dunne to his knees.

Instead the emphasis was

put on getting the government to act. Forced to make some concession to the massive support for the strikers they brought in a ban on imports of some foodstuffs.

Of course it was full of loopholes, the first exemption licence was given to the



Ben Dunne where he belongs.....in a cage.

biggest fruit importer in the country, F.I. It did nothing about all the other imports (£14 million in the first eleven months of last year) nor Irish exports to the racist regime (£25 million in the same period). And it did absolutely nothing to get back the jobs of the eleven strikers in Henry Street and one in Crumlin.

We salute these courageous workers who have been fighting since July 1984 against having to handle the produce of apartheid. Their long struggle is positive proof that the spirit of solidarity lives on.

That their heroism should lead to having to ask a Rights Commissioner to look into a case of unfair dismissal only emphasises the importance of what *Workers Solidarity* said 12 months ago. "...workers can rely on nobody who is outside their control. The fight has to continue for genuine democracy and rank and file control of the unions. In the here and now that means going with the officials when they are with us, and having the shopfloor organisations and confidence to go without them when they are against us".

Alan MacSimoin



Graceless Pat

Next time you're looking for Sunday dinner (or any other meal) ignore the radio ads and avoid Pat Grace's Famous Fried Chicken. Not content with the kind of profits which allowed him throw £100,000 towards the F.A.I. a few years back, he's now trying to boot out his experienced staff and employ cheap off-the-cards labour.

In October 1986, he introduced a system of three days on the cards, two off without any negotiation. Liz McCouley, manageress of the Phibsboro outlet, and 10 years with the company, wasn't happy with the mixture of checks and cash in her pay packet. When she complained to wages manager Dave Moriarty, he became immediately abus-

ive.

So, on the 4th of November, for the crime of wanting her wages paid in the legal way, Liz was sacked. Half an hour later, Keri Nichols was sacked from the Rathmines outlet. The reason? She was a friend of Liz's. Since then, six other women, also union members, have been sacked for being supportive of Liz and Keri.

The eight women, members of the ITGWU, have been picketing the Phibsboro outlet since December 10th and claim to have reduced business by 85%. Official union backing was withdrawn after 3 hours on two pretexts: 1) a 'similar' dispute was lost with McDonalds, 2) 8 people can't mount a decent picket.

The union officials who did this are the same ones who have just launched a campaign to recruit low-paid and part-time workers. It appears they want the extra members but aren't too willing to help them fight, maybe they only want the membership fees. Despite the union officials' deceit, the eight have kept a picket on the Phibsboro outlet for over 12 hours a day, 7 days a week. Their mood is very determined. Liz comments "If you see this place without a picket, you'll know we've got what we want". Their demands are simply for their jobs back or adequate compensation. Give them some encouragement if you're passing, or, better still, join them for a while on the picket line.

Richard Bermingham

CNT

continued from back page
the six have been arriving from trade unions, political organisations and individual workers both in Spain and abroad.

Irish workers should not let their voices go unheard. Write, or even better get your union to write, to the Spanish Embassy, 17a Merlyn Park, Dublin 4 expressing concern about this case. Further information can be obtained from the Vitoria Six Solidarity Committee, P.O. Box 102, Hull, England; or directly from the CNT, Calle Segundo 15, 28010 Madrid, Spain.

An injury to one is the concern of all.

Gene Murphy

ANARCHISTS JAILED

Readers of *Workers Solidarity* will remember that in January of last year the French multinational tyre company sacked union activist Michael Murray at their Ballymena plant. The reason given was his anarchist beliefs. Opposition within the workforce was not to be tolerated.

In Vitoria, in the Basque country, Michelin have gone a lot further in their attempts to smash union militancy, and they have had help from the 'socialist' authorities of Sapin.

LOCK-OUT

Since the death of Franco, Michelin's attempts to bring in new harsh working conditions have been opposed by the workforce. 1980 saw a peak in this drawn-out conflict with a series of weekly strikes followed by a lock-out and bitter clashes between strikers and the police.

In May of that year the assistant to Michelin's Personnel Manager, Jesus Cassanova, was shot at in the street by five unknown gunmen and barely escaped

with his life. A month later another manager, Luis Hergueta, met his death under similar circumstances.

The conflict at the factory continued, defused only by the decision of the UGT (the Socialist Party trade union) and the CCOO (the Communist Party one) to accept arbitration in exchange for a return to work.

C.N.T.

But these were not the only unions in Michelin. The Spanish anarchist union the CNT, had maintained a consistent opposition to any sell-out of workers' interests, and as a result had grown both in size and influence.

By 1983 the CNT was predominant on the works committee in the factory and enjoyed massive support in the assemblies of the workforce. Needless to say, the bosses weren't standing idly by while this was going on.

ARRESTED

It can hardly be a coincidence that in late November 1984, just days after

the CNT opposition to management's plans had received further approval from the workers' assembly, six prominent CNT militants were arrested in the early hours of the morning and detained under Spain's notorious Anti-Terrorist Law.

Under this law suspects can be held for 10 days without any visits from friends, family or solicitors. Cases are heard in special courts which can order a suspect to be held for up to four years without any trial.

These six men (Argos, Sanchez, Guerrero, Abad, Collado and Alvarado) are faced with charges of petrol bombing, armed robbery and assault. Five of them



are charged with the attempted murder of Jesus Cassanova.

"CONFESSIONS"

The only evidence against the six are the 'confessions' signed while in police custody. All have said their 'confessions' were extracted under torture (none were well enough to speak at the first court hearing in December 1984).

Some of the charges have had to be dropped, such as the killing of Luis Hergueta which had already been claimed by the Basque separatist ETA. But the remaining charges carry sentences of between 15 and 21 years in prison. The frame-up is clearly an attempt to weaken the influence of the CNT by labelling it as terrorist.

SOLIDARITY

When the six were first detained 4,000 workers in Vitoria went on strike in protest, paralysing Michelin and Rio Tinto Zinc (where Argos was employed). In spite of police violence thousands took to the streets in a show of solidarity. Messages of support for

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JOIN THE WSM

The world's wealth is produced by us — the working class. We ought to enjoy its benefits.

The WORKERS SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT wants to abolish the existing system of capitalism, where the bosses get the profits and the workers get the blame. We want to build a new society based on workers' direct control and socialism. Not the farce called "socialism" practiced in Russia, Cuba and other police states!

We want a completely different type of system — one without bosses or bureaucrats. A society run in a truly democratic way through workers councils, assemblies and delegates, a society run by working people in their own interests. We want to abolish all authoritarian relationships and replace them with control from the bottom up instead of from the top down.

We oppose coercive authority, and believe the only limit on the freedom of the individual should be that they don't encroach on the freedom of others.

The WSM is not made up of idle dreamers. We are active in many fields of practicable struggle: for better wages and union democracy, for women's rights, for jobs.

The WSM also fights against divisions in the working class. We oppose all attempts to set men against women workers, skilled against unskilled, old against young, Protestant against Catholic.

As we want a society managed by working people them-

selves, we organise in a like manner. We do not set ourselves up as all-knowing leaders. We argue for strikes to run by an elected strike committee and general meetings of the workers, not by the full-time official. Local issues should be taken up by a democratic tenants' associations, not by a couple of self-appointed "community leaders". Our unions should be run by regular workplace and branch meetings open to all the members, not by a handful of over-powerful bureaucrats.

The role of the WSM is to support struggles that improve the conditions of working people, to show that the roots of our problems lie in capitalism, to popularise rank and file activity and organisation, and to explain the anarchist idea.

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