

ANARCHISTS SAY that capitalism can not be reformed away. We say it must be overthrown through a revolution. Many people however believe that the failure of the Russian revolution of 1917 shows revolutions just replace one set of rulers with another. The failures of the revolutions in Nicaragua, Iran and Cuba to fundamentally change life for the workers of these countries seems to point to the same thing. So why all this talk of revolution?

A revolution essentially is a sudden upheaval in society which fundamentally alters the way that society operates or who that society is run by. It occurs when the mass of the people desire change that their rulers are unwilling or unable to grant. It can not be the result of the action of a small group of plotters.

History is full of revolutions. Capitalism gained dominance over feudalism through revolutions, particularly the French revolution of 1789. Revolutions in countries like Cuba, Nicaragua and Iran since the second world war have had major effects on a global scale.

Of course none of these were anarchist revolutions. They all resulted in the substitution of one ruling class for another. They failed to bring about classless societies.

**MISSING FACTOR**

What was missing was an independent working class fighting for its own class interests. Instead working class militancy was harnessed by radical

**Thinking about Anarchism**



**Revolution**

nationalists in a fight for 'national liberation'. In power these radical nationalists crushed the working class at home while seeking terms with imperialism abroad.

In the case of Nicaragua and Cuba at least the radical nationalists in power used socialist jargon as a cover for their policies. Cuba went so far as to nationalise the economy. A successful socialist revolution however involves more than nationalisation and left wing jargon.

In the course of a revolution the working class spontaneously throws up organs through which it tries to re-organise society. These organs however are normally made subservient to the new state within a short period of time. Normally there is some resistance to this but such resistance is brutally crushed. In 1917 the Bolshevik state apparatus crushed the Soviets and factory committees, in Iran the radical nationalists around Khomeini performed the same function.

This could only occur because the vast majority of the workers

accepted the necessity of state rule. This is why anarchists emphasise the importance of smashing the state rather than using it's apparatus to introduce socialism. There is no more utopian idea then the idea of a minority introducing socialism through the state apparatus.

Anarchists believe that a successful revolution which introduces socialism must for the first time in history involve a huge subjective factor. This subjective factor is a large proportion of the working class holding anarchist politics. This does not mean the WSM must be the largest faction or even that anarchist groups must be the largest faction. It does mean that workers must see the introduction of socialism as something that is their task, and that the state has only a counter-revolutionary role to play.

**BATTLE OF IDEAS**

This will not just happen spontaneously. Some anarchists make the mistake of thinking politics will become irrelevant once workers seize the factories. They

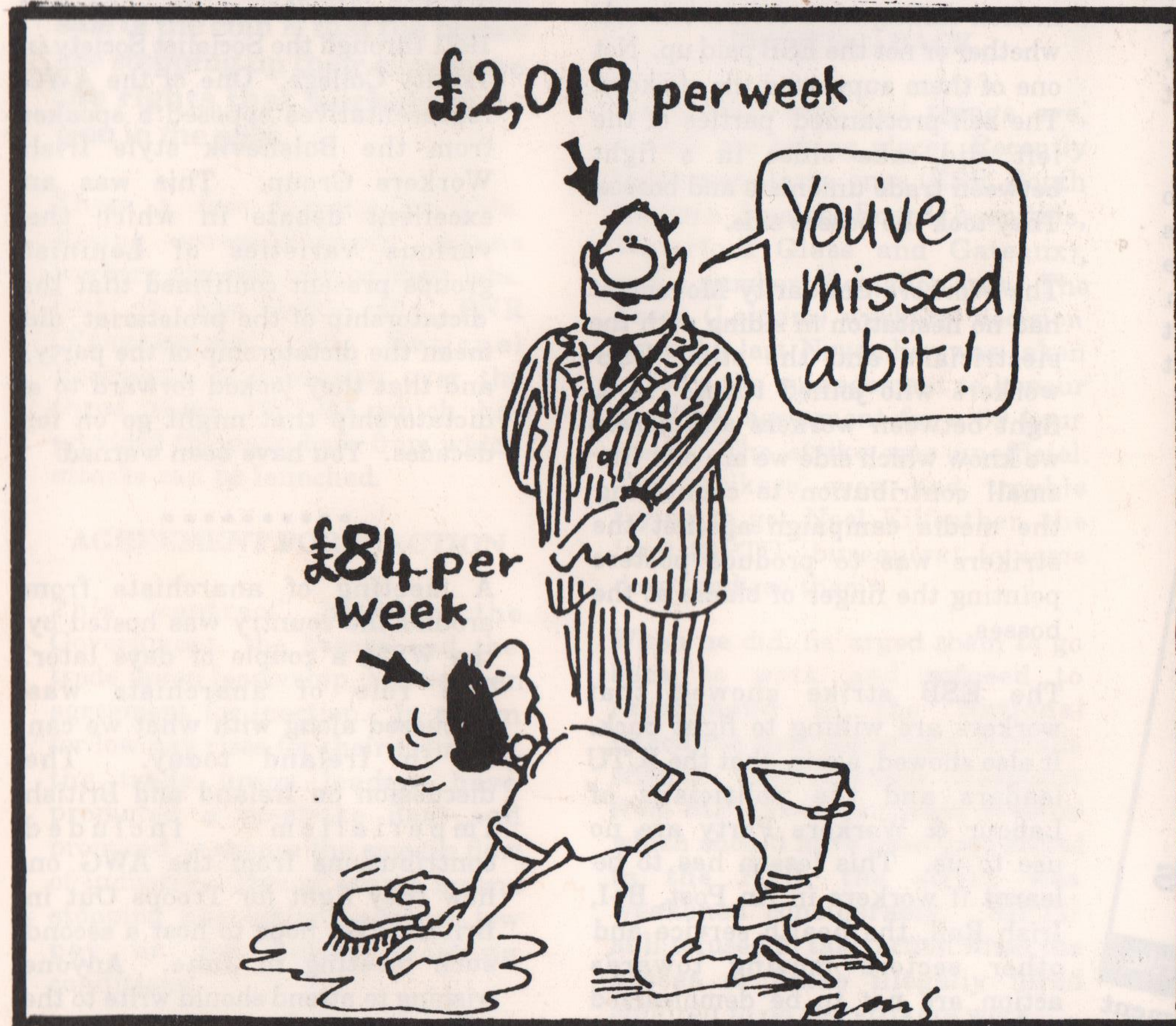
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**WORKERS SOLIDARITY**

MAGAZINE OF THE WORKERS SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT NUMBER 32

75p



**WITHOUT WORKERS  
WITHOUT BOSSES**  
the world would be a mess,  
**WITHOUT BOSSES**  
it would be better

**IRISH ANARCHIST MAGAZINE**

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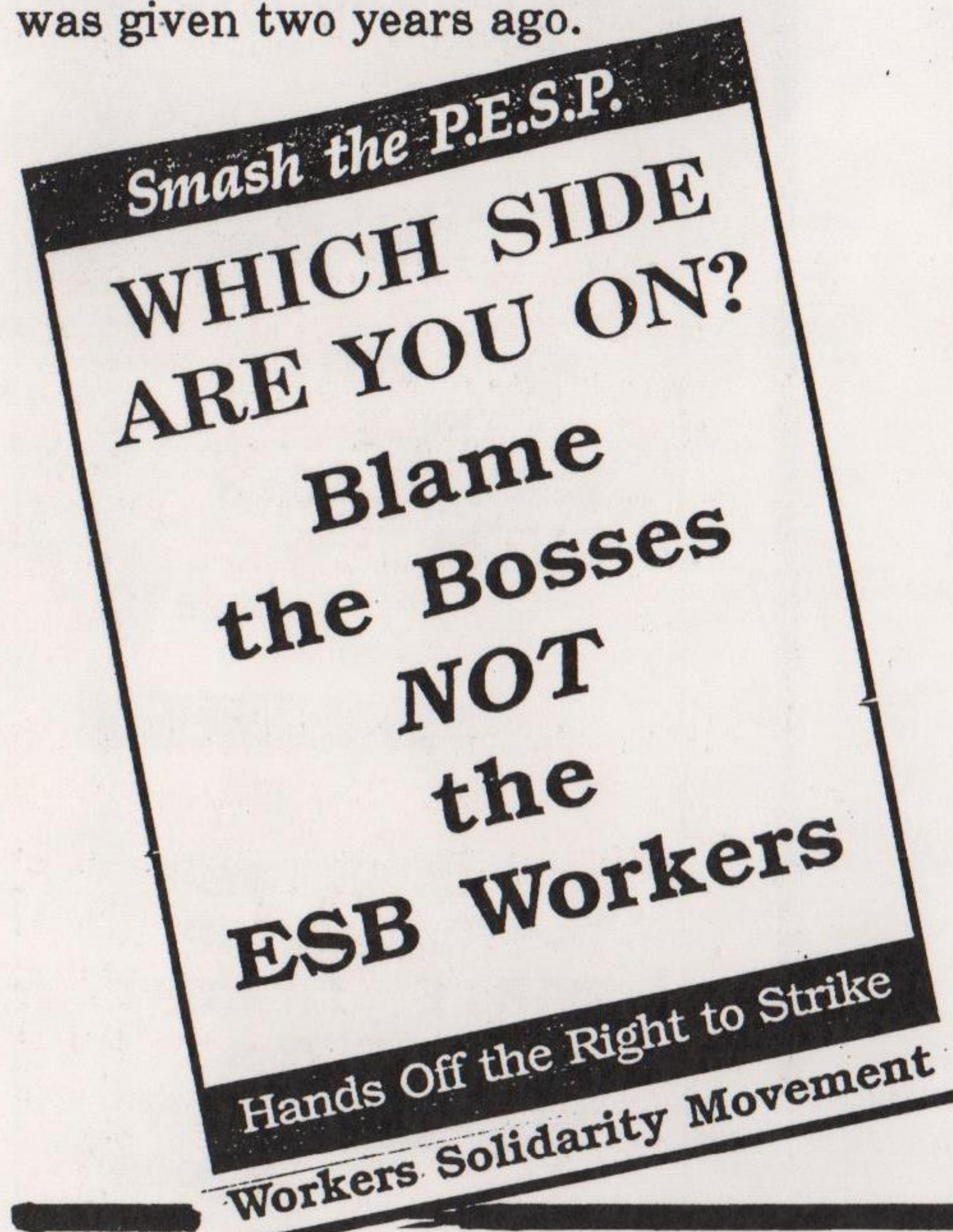
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EVERY NEWSPAPER poured abuse on the ESB strikers. They were accused of selfishness, sabotage, blackmail and holding the country to ransom. The only thing they were not accused of was ritual child murder during a full moon!

This was to be expected. The bosses' press looks after its own. We can hardly expect them to be sympathetic to workers who fight for higher wages.

And that is the reason they didn't go out of their way to tell their readers why there was a strike. The electricians' action was in response to ESB management refusing to pay for productivity that was given two years ago.



# For Starters

The politicians in Leinster House didn't make this point either. All of them, Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, PDs, Labour, Greens, Workers Party and Independents voted for a motion calling for a return to work whether or not the ESB paid up. Not one of them supported the strikers. The self-proclaimed 'parties of the left' did take sides in a fight between trade unionists and bosses. They took the bosses side.

The Workers Solidarity Movement had no hesitation in siding with the electricians and the other ESB workers who joined them. In a fight between workers and bosses we know which side we are on. Our small contribution to countering the media campaign against the strikers was to produce posters pointing the finger of blame at the bosses.

The ESB strike showed that workers are willing to fight back. It also showed, again, that the ICTU leaders and the politicians of Labour & Workers Party are no use to us. This lesson has to be learnt if workers in An Post, B+I, Irish Rail, the health service and other sectors moving towards action are not to be demoralised and sold out.

Two members of the British Anarchist Workers Group (AWG) were in Dublin recently at the invitation of the WSM. Student members of the WSM organised a debate on the Kronstadt uprising of 1921 through the Socialist Society in Trinity College. One of the AWG representatives opposed a speaker from the Bolshevik style Irish Workers Group. This was an excellent debate in which the various varieties of Leninist groups present confirmed that the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' did mean the dictatorship of the party, and that they looked forward to a dictatorship that might go on for decades. You have been warned!

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A meeting of anarchists from around the country was hosted by the WSM a couple of days later. The role of anarchists was discussed along with what we can do in Ireland today. The discussion on Ireland and British Imperialism included contributions from the AWG on how they fight for Troops Out in Britain. We hope to host a second such meeting in June. Anyone wishing to attend should write to the WSM, P.O.Box 1528, Dublin 8.

Western governments, including our own, give 'aid' to less developed countries. It sounds good... until you find that in the period 1983-90 the poorer countries paid £98,000 million to the rich countries and their banks in debt and interest payments. This is after taking account of new loans and all aid. It is a drain of £1,400,000 per hour.



Four men - Michael Smurfit, Larry Goodman, Tony O'Reilly and Ben Dunne - have between them personal wealth of over £350 million. This does not include wealth owned by their companies, it is their personal loot. Meanwhile a single unemployed person gets just £45 a week to live on.

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Geoff Muntz, a former prisons minister in Australia's Queensland state, has been jailed for a year for fraud while in office. He is the fourth member of Sir Joh Bjelke-Peterson's law & order government to be jailed.

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Irish Catholic bishops are forever telling us that they don't interfere in politics, that they don't take sides. We never believed them. Pope John Paul has proved us right. In his new encyclical 'The Century' Catholics are urged to renounce

# THAT'S CAPITALISM

# Striking Back

THE LAST FEW years have seen a sharp decline in the amount of strikes and militant action by the working class. 1989 was the year with the least industrial action in the history of the 26 county state. The other side of the coin is that the bosses are stepping up their attacks on the rights that workers have won in the past.

steer workers towards a Labour Court solution. But you can only bargain from a position of power, and seeing as strikes are "not allowed", any Labour Court recommendation can be ignored by the bosses.

## FIGHTING BACK

No matter how bad things are, strikes are taking place. Recently there were large ones (ESB, South Eastern Health Board hospitals, Waterford Glass and Gateaux), and a number of smaller ones. The Frese (Leitrim) workers' decision to strike last November was taken to force the management to honour the PNR agreement for a 39 hour week. The strike was unofficial. The strikers even had trouble trying to get Noel Kilfeather, the local SIPTU bureaucrat to come down and see them.

When he did, he urged them to go back to work and refused to recommend to the National Executive that the strike be made official. With this lack of support from SIPTU over a simple demand which should have been guaranteed in the PNR, the strike was weakened considerably. SIPTU still refused to take action when the bosses of Frese illegally hired children to do the strikers work.

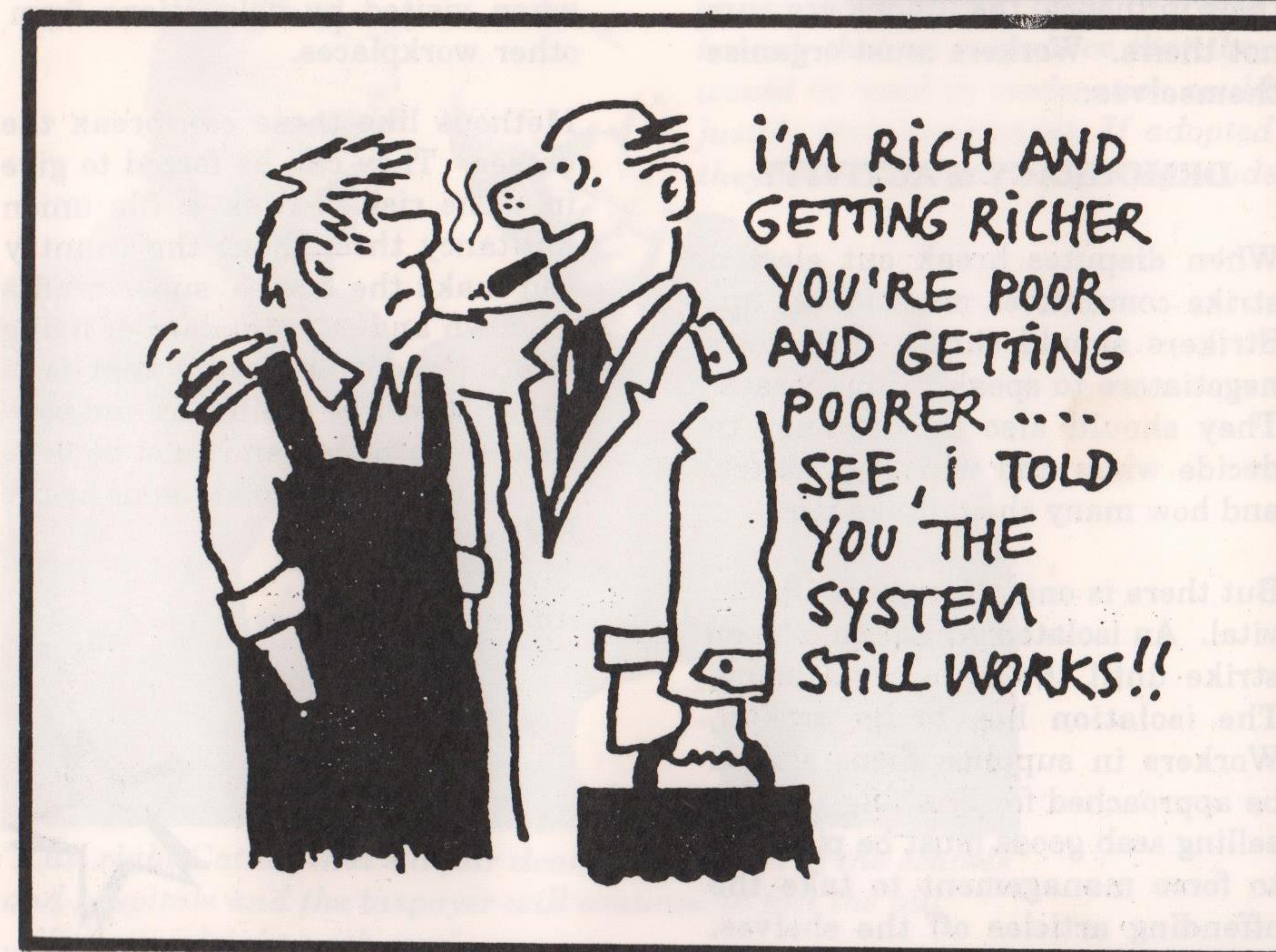
There a few reasons for this. Rising unemployment means workers are less sure of their jobs. But it has been the PNR (Programme for National Recovery), in operation over the three years 1987-90 which has provided the main base from which attacks can be launched.

## AGREEMENT FOR INACTION

This "contract" between the Government, the bosses and the trade union leadership, has been an agreement for inaction. In return for low pay rises for their members, the trade union leaders have promoted a no-strike deal and promised to ensure the smooth flow of industry. This of course means stopping any actions against low pay or for better working conditions.

Instead the trade union leaders

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# Castlereagh falls out with God

CASTLEREAGH, the Belfast suburb that is home to DUP deputy leader Peter Robinson, saw loyalist bigots lose a local referendum. The Council in the mainly Protestant area balloted residents on the issue of Sunday opening of parks and leisure facilities. 13,065 voted for Sunday opening and only 2,316 voted to keep the park gates chained.

Loyalist and fundamentalist bigots ran a major campaign in favour of closure. DUP councillors were out on the doorsteps. Yet they were beaten by a huge majority in an area they thought was their natural base.

The fundamentalists are hopping mad. The Deputy Lord Mayor of Belfast, Rev. Eric Smyth of the DUP and Free Presbyterian Church, has called on God to deal with the councillors who decided to allow a referendum. "They are answerable to almighty God and someday they will have to give account to him"

While voting to let children go for a swim or play in the park on a Sunday is hardly an earthshattering act, it proves once again that there is no 'iron law' binding working class Protestants their 'leaders'. What we need is a movement that is anti-sectarian and anti-imperialist, secular and socialist, against injustice and for liberty. We need a mass anarchist movement that can unite our class in the fight for a new Ireland, a Workers Republic.



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In the end the strikers had to accept Labour Court intervention. The bosses who had sacked them for going on strike were forced, *in principle*, to take them back. This has still not happened which shows that Labour Court rulings are in no way binding.

Liffey Meats also went out in November, for union recognition and against terrible working conditions. These nine young women from Cavan had their application for an "all-out" picket deferred three times because "ICTU leaders were unavailable" to pass it. Obviously the union leaders did not want the strike as it would strain the cosy relationship they have developed with their boss friends.

**MINIMAL RIGHTS**

The strikes mentioned above show the trend of strikes at the moment. They are often small and isolated. They are also 'defensive' in that they only want to achieve or hold on to what should be minimal basic rights. They are also connected by the unions' lack of desire to do their job, which is to get fully behind the strikers and give them as much support as possible. This makes any strike very difficult to progress, especially in a business with few employees.

The PNR has been renewed for the next three years under a new name. This time it is called the PESP (Programme for Economic and Social Progress). The union leaders have agreed to continue to do the bosses job for them. They will stop strikes, send workers to Labour Court, and hamper any solidarity that strikers need in order for their struggles to have a better chance of being successful.

**CHAMPAGNE WITH CHARLIE**

Along with the PESP has come the new Industrial Relations Act. This is a draconian anti-union bill, banning secondary action and making it more difficult to strike, among other things. Meanwhile our Union representatives drink champagne with Charlie and Bertie and celebrate a job well done.



It is in everyone's interest (apart from the bosses!) that future strikes are more successful. A rise in wages in one workplace means that other workers have an example to point to when looking for their own increases. But you can't just sit back and hope for better things. The union leaders are holding workers back. We need to break their influence, the unions are ours not theirs. Workers must organise themselves.

**DEMOCRACY & ACTIVITY**

When disputes break out elected strike committees must be set up. Strikers should choose their own negotiators to speak to the bosses. They should also be the ones to decide when and where to picket, and how many should take part.

But there is one other thing that is vital. An isolated group could be on strike until the cows come home. The isolation has to be broken. Workers in supplier firms should be approached for blacking. Shops selling scab goods must be picketed to force management to take the offending articles off the shelves.

Nothing and nobody should get in or out of a job that's on strike.

**MAKING THE BOSS BACK DOWN**

If there are scabs to be stopped, and to keep everyone involved, mass pickets should be organised. These will also build morale, especially when visited by delegations from other workplaces.

Methods like these can break the bosses. They can be forced to give in. The rise in rank & file union militancy throughout the country can make the bosses' super-profits go down and our standard of living rise. Nobody is saying that it is easy. It will be a difficult and slow battle. But it can and must be done to halt the attacks made on us by the bosses.

Andrew Blackmore



**THE CAMPAIGN to Separate Church and State** have been busy. They've been taking a court case against the government for employing Chaplains in Vocational schools. The 26 county Constitution prohibits the state from 'endowing' religion. Though we wouldn't place much faith in the courts or De Valera's Constitution ourselves we got to admit that they've got a point, paying for these 30 priests and ministers is costing the taxpayer £800,000-£1,000,000. However this is only the tip of the iceberg!

The Catholic church in Ireland has always been massively supported by the State and allowed a huge say in the running of the country. This article will attempt to cover the facts of church power in Ireland and the long history of State support beginning hundreds of years before the establishment of the 26 county state.

**RELIGIOUS BELIEF**

Firstly it must be made clear that we see religion as a personal matter. Everyone should be free to worship as they want and hold whatever beliefs they want. We condemn totally any attacks on an individual's religious freedom.

Equally we are opposed to anyone telling us how to run our lives,



"...all right Cathal that's a fair deal, you hold on to the schools and hospitals and the taxpayer will continue to foot the bill ...if that's alright with you".

Church power in the South...  
**Home Rule or Rome Rule?**

including religious leaders. This article will hopefully show how organised religion works with State and bosses to oppress all whatever their personal religious beliefs. Within the Irish 26 counties we are referring of course to the Catholic church ...and now a brief history lesson.

**A BIT OF HISTORY**

In 1951 Noel Browne, Minister for Health in the "inter-party" coalition government, introduced his "Mother and Child Scheme". This was a proposal for free gynaecological care for pregnant women and a comprehensive health programme for children up to 16.

Following their Autumn meeting in Maynooth the Catholic bishops sent a letter to the government.

*"The powers taken by the State in the proposed Mother and Child health service are in direct opposition to the rights of the family and of the individual and are liable to very great abuse. Their character is such that no assurance that they would be used in moderation could justify their enactment. If adopted they would constitute a ready-made*

*instrument for totalitarian aggression"(!)*

Such was the power of the bishops (helped by other conservatives and with the strong support of many wealthy doctors fearing for their practices) that this tripe was sufficient to send Labour and Clann na Poblachta tripping over each other to catch up with Fine Gael in the "No" lobby. Noel Browne was forced to resign.

**THE CHURCH AS CAPITALISTS**

The church's fear of "totalitarian aggression" (i.e. communism) is of little surprise when you consider it's material base in society. Recently (1987) the church's total assets in Dublin alone amounted to £100 million, with an estimated income of £7.5 million per year.

According to the *Irish Independent* (31/01/83) it owned 234 churches, 713 schools, 473 houses and 100 community centres in Dublin. In 1979 in the midst of appalling poverty they spent £2.5 million on the pope's visit.

Needless to say the ordinary members of this company (i.e. the vast majority of Irish people) have no shares, and voting rights lie in the hands of a non-elected board of management: the Bishops.

As well as it's direct wealth, it has a massive amount of control in State institutions. They control 3,300 out of the country's 3,500 primary schools despite the fact that all the staff wages and 90% of building costs are paid by the State. They also control 67% of secondary schools and own Maynooth College. They have a majority on the boards of most orphanages, 'reform schools' and hospitals. This allows

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them to veto even legal operations such as sterilisations in most hospitals.

**KEEPING IN WITH THE IN-CROWD**

The Catholic church has always known which side it's bread was buttered on. It worked hand in glove with British imperialism (while engaging in a little nationalist posturing to maintain it's credibility with the masses) and after 1921 worked to prop up the weak Irish ruling class. They opposed the first stirring of radical democracy and egalitarian republicanism of the United Irishmen at the end of the Eighteenth century.

In 1795 the English authorities began to recognise their usefulness and helped build Maynooth seminary to replace the one in Paris destroyed by "Godless French revolutionaries". The cornerstone laid by the Lord Lieutenant in 1795 was the rock on which the clerical elite was to build it's power over the next 200 years.

In 1799 the bishops met at Maynooth

to vote their support for the Act of Union. In 1845 Robert Peel (the English Prime Minister) trebled the annual grant for Maynooth and gave them a large sum to expand the college. During the famine Bishops hardly commented on the mass starvation gripping the country while grain exports to England continued to grow.

**KITTY O'SHEA**

They opposed the Fenians and even constitutional nationalists like Parnell, whom they hounded out of politics after his affair with Kitty O'Shea. The Catholic hierarchy was in the front-line in condemning the locked-out workers in 1913. Priests and lay Catholic activists physically prevented children of the strikers being sent on holiday to trade union families in "Godless" England during the dispute.

The 1916 proclamation represented the views of the more radical wing of the Irish bourgeoisie & intellectuals and had a vague aspiration to "cherish all the children of the nation equally". After 1921 the Free State government and the weak Irish ruling class fell back into the arms

of the church. The bishops condemned the anti-treaty side in the civil war, recognised the "legitimate government" and attacked republicans for "causing criminal damage".

After the war both pro- (Cumann na Gael/Fine Gael) and anti- (Fianna Fáil) treaty sides were in the palm of it's hand. In 1923 the Censorship of Films Act was passed, 1924 saw the Intoxicating Liquor Act, in 1925 divorce was outlawed and in 1929 the Censorship of Publications Board was established.

In 1937 De Valera's Constitution was passed with the bishops being consulted on every syllable. Among its articles was:

*"The State recognises the special position of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church as the guardian of the faith professed by the majority of citizens".* (This was not repealed until 1972).

Fine Gael did not allow themselves to be outdone in abject grovelling. In 1947 Costelloe, head of the new coalition government, wrote to the pope:

*"on the occasion of our assumption of office.....my colleagues and myself desire to repose at the feet of your holiness the assurance of our filial loyalty and our devotion to your August person".*

**A NEW IRELAND?**

The 1960s and 70s saw an upturn in the Irish economy with international investment. This led to an increase in the number of women working outside the home, and combined with the emergence of the Irish womens' movement, led to a slight weakening of the church's position. In 1979 Fianna Fáil actually went against the hierarchy to bring in limited availability of condoms.

But the 1980s saw a series of defeats for liberal reforms. In 1980 Noel Browne, once again, got the thin end of the stick when not one T.D. would support his divorce bill. In 1983 the Constitution was amended to "uphold the right to life of the unborn". In 1985 a "Lenten Pastoral" forbade Catholic hospitals carrying out sterilisations. In 1986 an amendment to the

Constitution allowing divorce in very limited circumstances was defeated.

However there are some definite signs of a weakening of the ideological power of the church in Ireland. There has been a decrease in both church attendance and "vocations to the priesthood" since the 1970s. For example there has been a 9% drop in Mass attendance between 1974 and 1989, attendance at confession has declined from 47% to 18% (according to a recent survey by Rev. Michael Mac Grail - *Irish Times* 2/3/1991). The recent election of a "liberal" woman President (Mary Robinson) and the Fianna Fáil attempt to widen the availability of condoms would also seem to confirm this.

**IS THERE A WAY OUT?**

Though we must acknowledge that liberals such as the Campaign to Separate Church and State have the right idea, we don't think that their methods will work. We stand for the complete separation of Church and State. Yes, I know somebody will point out that we oppose the State as well. This is a tactical question, just as our opposition to the wages system doesn't stop us looking for higher wages.

In the short-term we have to fight against clerical control of hospitals, schools, community centres and youth clubs. We also fight against the laws which place restrictions on peoples' personal lives. The WSM is in favour of campaigning for the best possible secular laws in the areas of divorce, contraception, abortion, sterilisation, adoption and gay & lesbian rights.

We fully realise that there are limits to what can be achieved under the present system, but that should stop nobody seeking to win those limited goals that are immediately possible.

A victory in any one of these struggles exposes the wide powers of the church and shows whose side it is on. It creates the possibility of involving more people in future struggles. The long-term alternative we offer of a new free, self-managed world where people

control their own lives will be one in which the mystical and authoritarian ideas of most religions will probably attract little support.

Des McCarron

**Laughing all the way to the Bank**

**ALTHOUGH** workers have been getting a bad deal out of the PNR and now the PESP in terms of pay the same can hardly be said for Irish bosses. In 1989-90 many executives got increases of 20% according to a recent Irish Management Institute survey.

Others got less, having to make do with 13%. At the same time workers were getting 2.5% under the terms of the PNR. In addition many of these executives were able to make use of various tax fiddles through being paid into overseas bank accounts or receiving company shares rather than cash. In addition 93% of executives have a company car.

The biggest winners were probably banking executives who received pay increases of 65% from 1985 to 1989. The workers in the banks, needless to say, got a hell of a lot less. In addition in 1988 the major banks introduced "yellow-pack" staff so that school leavers had their starting wages dropped to £6,750.

The IBOA, a non-ICTU union, which represents banking workers is now looking for a 6% rise this year. The same executives fresh from their 65% increases are raging about this threat to the PESP and claiming the banks cannot afford such an increase. Similarly the directors of Waterford-Wedgewood who tried to savagely cut pay and conditions at Waterford glass last year were paid £1.49 million between six of them in 1989.

These figures expose the "we're all in this together, tightening our belts" crap that the bosses come out with. Workers and bosses have no common interests and it's up to workers to fight for every penny they can get. The bosses inability to pay clearly never extends to their own salaries. The way forward is clearly to break the PESP and for workers to demand the pay increases they need not what the bosses claim they can afford.

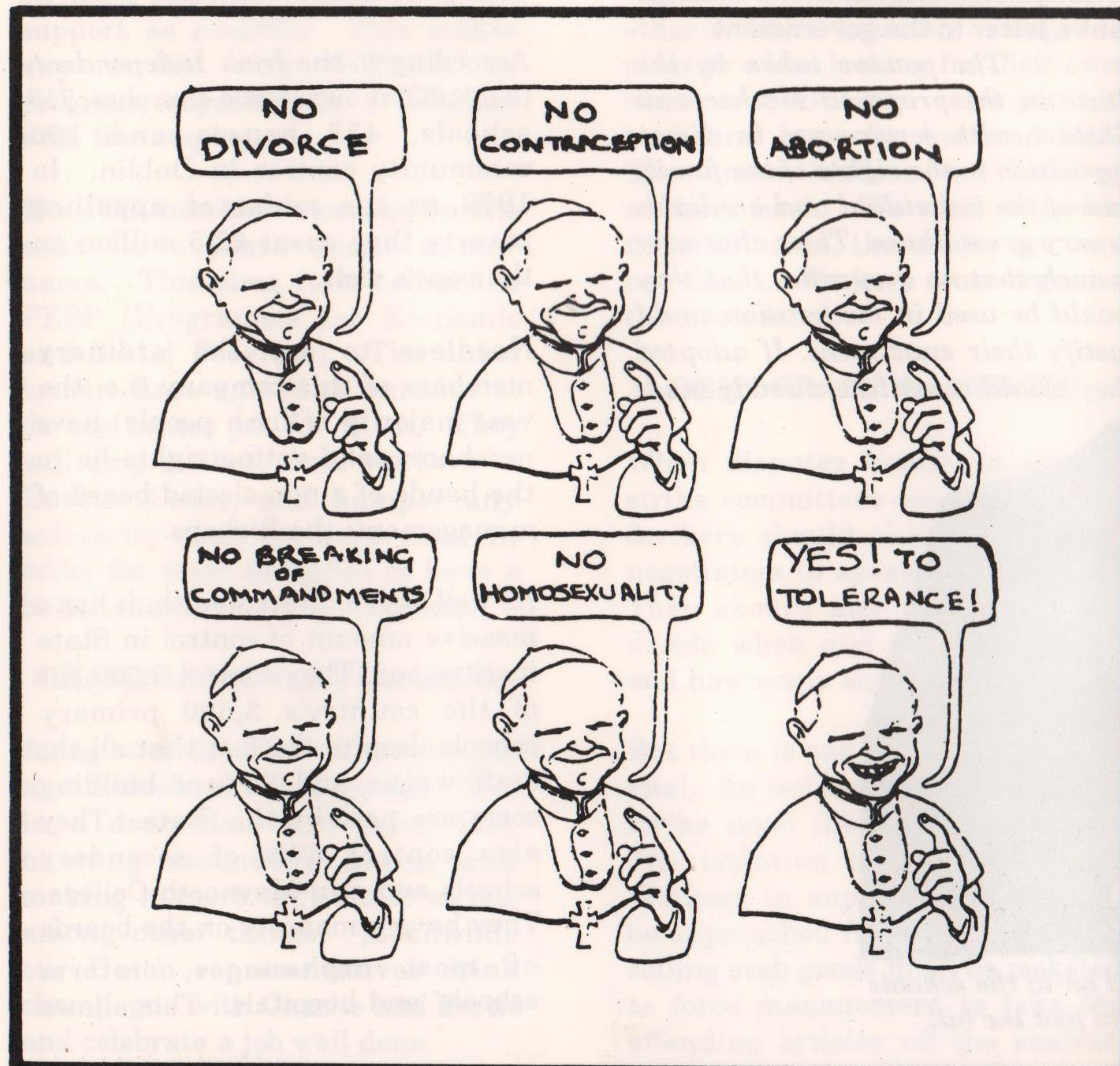


**What a Trade-Off!**

Despite attacks on jobs, conditions and wages; in the first three months of this year the Department of Labour registered just 14 strikes.

These added up to just 10,200 days 'lost'. This show of weakness by the trade unions has allowed the bosses and government to feel they can get away with almost anything.

Despite trade unionists being 'social partners' on the road to 'economic and social development' unemployment has risen by 19,000 (8%) over the last year. We may have the lowest inflation rate in the EC but we have the highest unemployment. Some trade off for wage restraint!



Industrial Relations Act... Codes of Practice... Industrial Relations Act...

# Break this Law

Injunctions against unions are usually granted within 24 hours.

My client wishes to apply for an inju -

Granted!



**A BAN on strikes in 'essential services'. That was the call from the bosses and conservative politicians in the wake of the ESB workers dispute. The PDs and the Greens made reference to treating the ESB workers 'like the army', TDs from the main parties talked of a ban on strikes in 'essential services', making them more difficult to have, or compensating workers who lost their right to strike.**

The union leaders, far from telling these characters where to get off, offered to restrain their own members through a 'voluntary' code of practice. Phil Flynn, joint General Secretary of the white collar union IMPACT, told his conference that he welcomed the fact that codes were being prepared by the Labour Relations Commission.

To back up this 'voluntary' code the Labour Relations Commission (LRC) is considering removing for

immunity from prosecution enjoyed under the 1906 Trades Disputes Act. This would allow bosses, or others, to sue unions or individual strikers for loss of income or service caused by a strike if the "correct procedures" had not been complied with.

These procedures are probably the extension of the 'cooling-off' period to one month (i.e. plenty of time for management to arrange strike breaking), compulsory arbitration before a strike can legally take place and enforcement of a 'minimum level of service' - decided by the boss and politically appointed agencies like the LRC - during a strike.

## THE LIST

The essential services that are being talked about by the government and the ICTU include the ESB, hospitals, buses, trains, fire brigade, water pumping, sewage, refuse collection, An Post and Telecom. If they get away with this attack on the hard fought for

right to strike, the list will grow.

Workers in every job, not just the essential services, do not strike for the hell of it. They go without wages and often get into debt. It is insulting to talk of 'cooling-off'. It would be a lot more honest to admit this is a way for the boss to buy more time for plans to beat the workers.

## NOBLE RECORD

To talk of a statutory level of cover during a dispute is even worse. It suggests that nurses would leave patients to die, ESB workers would cut the power to hospitals or ambulance drivers refuse to attend an accident scene. Trade unionists have a very noble record of providing a high level of emergency cover during strikes in truly essential services. They do it without being asked and they do it without pay.

These proposals to further muzzle workers are in addition to last year's Industrial Relations Act. This was voted in by the Dáil without even a whimper from the ICTU. They had given a commitment to new legislation in the Programme for National Recovery.

## COPYING THATCHER

The biggest changes are in respect of secret ballots, secondary picketing and cases involving individual workers. The first is almost a word for word copy of the anti-union laws passed in Britain when Thatcher ruled the roost.

Section 14 forces a secret ballot to be held for all forms of industrial action, including overtime bans and working to (the bosses') rule. Every person who may be effected by the action has to be given an 'equal entitlement' to vote. Seven days notice of any action has to be given to the boss. If these rules are not followed the boss will be free to get an injunction and the union could even have its negotiation licence taken away.

The point is to delay action for as long as possible, widen the grounds upon which an injunction can be obtained and discourage workers from taking the most effective action. In most situations quick action brings the best results. Now it is not legal to stage an immediate walk out even in a unsafe work situation.

Not only must you give a weeks notice but the balloting regulations are such that it is made harder to take a vote at a meeting. This is where it is best done. Everyone can hear both sides of the case and ask questions before voting whether to strike. Now an injunction could be granted on the basis that anyone not present did not have an 'equal entitlement'. Another step towards compulsory postal ballots.

## SYMPATHY ACTION ...NOT ALLOWED

If you decide to go out on strike, you will want the strike to be effective. This means hitting the employer hard, making sure that all business is halted. To do this it is necessary to stop your employer moving production or distribution elsewhere.

There were always restrictions on secondary picketing, these have been extended under the new law. Pickets will only be allowed at the "place where another employer who has *directly assisted* yours carries on his business".

It is not stated what 'directly assisted' means in law. Knowing the record of Irish judges we can say with certainty that they will take a very narrow view of this clause. Recently an injunction was granted in the River Valley dispute to prevent the SIPTU strikers calling on other workers to black the company's products because such a call interfered with River Valley's commercial contracts. (Yet one more example of the impartiality of the law!).

## INDIVIDUAL CASES

No industrial action involving one worker is permitted unless long drawn out procedures have been complied with. Even in a case of unfair dismissal workers still have to go through all the procedures

before taking action. This can take up to six months.

Speedy action is the way to get a fellow worker reinstated. Waiting half a year is a great way to ensure that nothing happens.

No legal definition of an individual case is given in the Act, so once again it will be up to judges to decide. However, as trade unionists we should not be concerned with definitions. We have always held the "*an injury to one is the concern of all*". So-called individual cases can be used to change conditions, set precedents and victimise shop stewards.

## GOVERNMENT TO WRITE UNION RULE BOOKS

The unions have been given two years to change their rule books to comply with the new law. Failure to do so could result in the loss of legal immunity. If the union membership decide they want to keep their rules the way they are and reject the new ones, the union Executive is given the power to change the rules anyway.

If they decide to respect the democratic wishes of their members and keep the old rule book, the union's negotiation licence can be withdrawn. This is blatant interference by the state in the internal affairs of our unions.

## BREAK THE LAW

The Industrial Relations Act is an anti-union law. If we don't put up a fight against both it and the proposed 'codes of practice' the bosses will walk all over us. The British trade union leaders did nothing to stop the Thatcher laws. Now anti-union legislation is well established there. We don't want that to happen here.

Speakers should be invited into section and branch meetings to put the case against the Industrial Relations Act, motions against it should be passed at all levels of the union movement. We should oppose the attempts to change the rule books. When workers come into conflict with the Act we must build real support for them. We should make the law unworkable.

Joe King

Can I take it from this that there have been certain legal amendments to the right to picket?



The legal right to picket is now almost exclusively limited to the employee's own place of work.

# If voting could change the system, it would be illegal

**IT'S LOCAL ELECTION time and as usual politicians of all parties will be promising us wonderful things. It's probable that this election will also show an increased vote for the Labour Party. Yet it is fair enough to ask "what difference will it make".**

We are used to being promised the sun, moon and stars in elections only to receive cuts, cuts and cuts. Is this just because all politicians are liars or are there deeper reasons? Abstention from elections has been an anarchist tactic from the time of Bakunin. In this article we look at some of the reasons anarchists advocate abstention/spoilt votes.

The right to the vote was part of the hard won struggles of workers (and suffragettes!) over the last couple of hundred years. Obviously it is preferable to live in a parliamentary democracy rather than a dictatorship. Even the most flawed democracies are forced to concede rights that dictatorships do not, such as relative independence for trade unions, the right to limited demonstrations, a certain amount of free speech, etc.

However it is clear that none of these are absolutes, as anti-trade union legislation, Section 31 and the refusal to allow nationalist marches into Belfast city centre adequately demonstrate. The amount of freedom is set by how much the bosses need to give to keep the system flowing, plus the amount that is forced from them through the struggle of workers.

The real purpose of parliament is not to ensure the country is run according to the wishes of all the people, cherishing all their views

equally. Parliament instead provides a democratic facade beyond which the real business of managing capitalism goes on.

The Goodman affair and the bailing out of Insurance Corporation of Ireland a few years back demonstrate how the real decisions are made in the boardrooms of the large industrial concerns. In the unlikely event of a government being elected which goes "too far" in the eyes of the bosses they are quick to use any means necessary to remove it.

## BEHIND THE FACADE

The best known example of this is perhaps the removal of the democratically elected Allende government in Chile in 1972. They had attempted to bring in a limited package of reforms and nationalise some of the larger American industries. The result was a military coup backed by the CIA.

The workers in Chile were politically disarmed by their reliance on a small group of elected deputies to liberate them. There was little organised resistance to the military and in the immediate aftermath over 30,000 militants were executed and 1,000,000 fled into exile.

In practise however capitalism seldom finds need for such methods, their complete control of the media and the reliance of the political parties on big business for funds is enough of a check. Organisations like the Irish and British Labour Parties spend most of their time trying to prove they can manage capitalism just as well as the Tories or Fianna Fáil.

They argue their policies are a way

of avoiding strikes and any other form of class strife. They say their politics of class collaboration are more efficient to capitalism than a hard headed class strife approach of lock-outs and union busting.

To the bosses this is often a good argument, sometimes it is worth handing out a few crumbs in return for industrial peace. At other times when a serious crisis necessitates a driving down of wages or living standards they can always either force this government to implement the cuts, precipitate a general election or - in extreme cases - turn to a police states.

## P.E.S.P. LOGIC

This sort of logic has nothing to do with socialism. Indeed the current

Fianna Fáil/PD government has been successfully pursuing the same logic through the Programme for Economic and Social Progress and before that the PNR. These deals mean the union bureaucrats actively stopping and sabotaging strikes in return for pay increases below the rate of inflation. So in a comparative 'boom' period of the Irish economy when company profits doubled Irish workers made real losses with regards to wages and employment and lost ground as regards the social wage (health care, education, etc).

The Labour and Workers Parties may have objected to parts of the PESP but they supported the idea of 'social partnership' as it is part of their strategy for government as well.

There are times of course when more radical reformist governments are elected (in other countries if not as yet in Ireland). These included Spain in 1936 and the post war British Labour government. The function of these governments however was to lead the working class away from the road to social revolution, to suggest the same gains could be made through parliament.

When put to the test however in the Spanish case by the fascist coup the government preferred negotiation with the fascists to arming the working class. In Spain the initial resistance to fascism was carried out by the militant workers of the anarchist C.N.T. who seized arms or attacked fascist barracks with dynamite and shotguns.

A similar example is seen throughout Europe in the immediate aftermath of the Russian revolution as the reformists in one country after another stood on the basis that electing them would prevent revolution. Vote for us and save capitalism. Unfortunately at such times such parties often gain mass support, this is why it is vital anarchists take up the arguments around reformism rather than assuming such ideas will just fade away with the revolution.

## GOOD LEADERS?

These arguments are common to most revolutionary socialists, but anarchists have another and more fundamental reason for opposing the parliamentary process. This process involves the mass of the working class relying on a few representatives to enter parliament and do battle on their behalf. Their sole involvement is one of voting every few years and perhaps canvassing and supporting the

party through paper sales or whatever. A reliance on a physical leader or leaders from Neil Kinnock to Mary Robinson to sort out the situation for us.

Anarchists do not believe any real socialist / anarchist society can come about through the good actions of a few individuals. From the beginnings of the anarchist movement around the 'International Working Mens' (sic) Association (better known as the 'First International') over a century ago, we have argued that the liberation of the working class can only be achieved through the action of the working class.

At the time this argument was with the Marxists, now with the collapse of many major Marxist parties in the wake of the collapse of Eastern Europe it is mainly with reformists. The process of bringing about an anarchist society will either be carried through by the mass of the workers or it will not happen.

This idea is obviously the complete opposite to the parliamentary idea. We do not seek a few leaders, good, bad or indifferent to sort out the mess that is capitalism. Indeed we argue constantly against any ideas that make it seem such elites are necessary.

Parliamentary politics relies on voting for people because they are going to do the job (or some of it) for you. Even the best intentioned individual on receiving a position of power finds a divergence of interests with those she/he represents. This is as much true of revolutionaries and union bureaucrats as it is of ministers and prime ministers.

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There are only two clinics in the whole of Dublin to provide counselling before and after a HIV virus test (and these are mainly founded through charity) and only one needle exchange programme (the virus spreads through the exchange of unsterilised needles between heroin users) despite the massive problem of intravenous drug use in the city.

CONDOMS FOR ALL

Condoms, if used properly, can greatly reduce the danger of contracting the virus. However as the ACTUP press statement puts it "while politicians perform acrobatics over a theoretical age for access to condoms, in many areas condoms are still completely unavailable - regardless of age".

Condoms should be freely available not just in shops but through vending machines in pubs, clubs, toilets and colleges, anywhere where sexually active people are likely to meet. The same applies to other prophylactics such as dental dams (for oral sex) which are virtually unheard of in Catholic Ireland.

COOKING THE BOOKS

For people with HIV and AIDS there are virtually no services. Some in Dublin are actually homeless conveniently dying on the streets where the government can ignore them. The services necessary like money for specialised diets, monitoring of the health of HIV positive people and AIDS sufferers are only provided in dribs and drabs if at all. Even then it is on the

To contact ACT-UP write to P.O.Box 3102, Dublin 1.

merits of each particular case as decided by the health board.

The situation in Mountjoy prison is so unbearable that many HIV positive prisoners have slashed their wrists to get out of the segregation unit.

Yet Doc. Walsh is more concerned with looking after the statistics than the victims. Because of the way the official figures are divided it is possible to conceal such things as the very high heterosexual incidence of the disease in Ireland. Only 14 heterosexuals officially have the disease but most I.V. drug users are heterosexual and many of the drug users might have picked up the virus through sex.

On the other hand two gay hemophiliacs have been refused compensation though they almost certainly picked up the virus through contaminated blood.

We believe that ACTUP's tactics of direct action are positive. They portray people with HIV and AIDS not as victims but as people who can fight back and create problems for those in power. Also there is a limit to what can be achieved by lobbying, as voluntary groups such as the AIDS Alliance have discovered.

In America ACTUP gained a lot of publicity by being involved in occupations of conferences, hospitals and public buildings to protest lack of services and the withholding of new drugs. They even succeeded in shutting down the Stock Exchange during an action.

However the actions of one small group however radical, will not on their own, change the society we live in. The most they can do is raise awareness. The danger of AIDS is something which affects all of us as are the draconian measures thrown out in the name of AIDS prevention. The only way to fight back effectively is to mobilise those who can really change society and have most to gain from doing so - the working class.

For example health workers could fight for an adequate level of services for people with HIV and AIDS. Unions could take action against companies with compulsory AIDS testing for workers. This is the kind of action which will be most effective in helping AIDS sufferers and preventing the bigots from using the disease to scapegoat members of the working class who happen to be gay or drug addicts.

Our rulers have tried to place the blame on the working class for this disease just as they always blame us for the periodic crises in capitalism itself. Gays, drug users and "promiscuous" heterosexuals (i.e. sexually active outside the strict conception of the nuclear family).

We must respond by fighting victimisation and show that the rapid spread of AIDS is entirely due to the inaction of governments and the unwillingness of capitalist controlled science to develop cures unless it can turn a quick buck (most drugs developed so far extend your life for a while so you can buy more e.g. AZT but there hasn't been as much research on drugs which could prevent or cure AIDS).

In 1987 the ICTU adopted a radical document on Lesbian and Gay Rights which covered negotiating procedures on compulsory AIDS testing among other things. However the leadership in the unions will only pay lip-service to the issues unless workers take up the struggle. We must win full services for all people with HIV and AIDS as well as a full decriminalisation of homosexuality and free condoms on demand for all.

Labouring for what?

FEW GENUINE socialists would claim the Irish Labour Party has any sort of glorious socialist past, outside of Connolly's involvement in setting it up. It's record is one of abstention from real struggles, attacks on the left and, in coalition, attacks on Irish workers. Many of its supporters believe Labour can come to power in Ireland in the long term through an alliance with the Workers Party.

This article takes a brief look at the British Labour Party. It demonstrates how the same problems arise in an organisation which has been able to form majority governments. We are looking at the history of the British Labour Party because it is to this organisation that many socialists in the Irish Labour Party look for inspiration.

In Ireland this is a curious thing as we have been at the receiving end of over fifty years of the bipartisan politics of Tory and Labour

governments alike. It was a Labour government that sent troops into the six counties and re-introduced internment.

The support of Labour MP's for British withdrawal has always been on the basis of "bring our boys home". This is on the basis of what's good for Britain rather than in support of the right of Ireland to self-determination. Even this is a feature that has been unique to Labour being in opposition. Leaving this aside, what has been the tradition of the Labour Party in Britain?

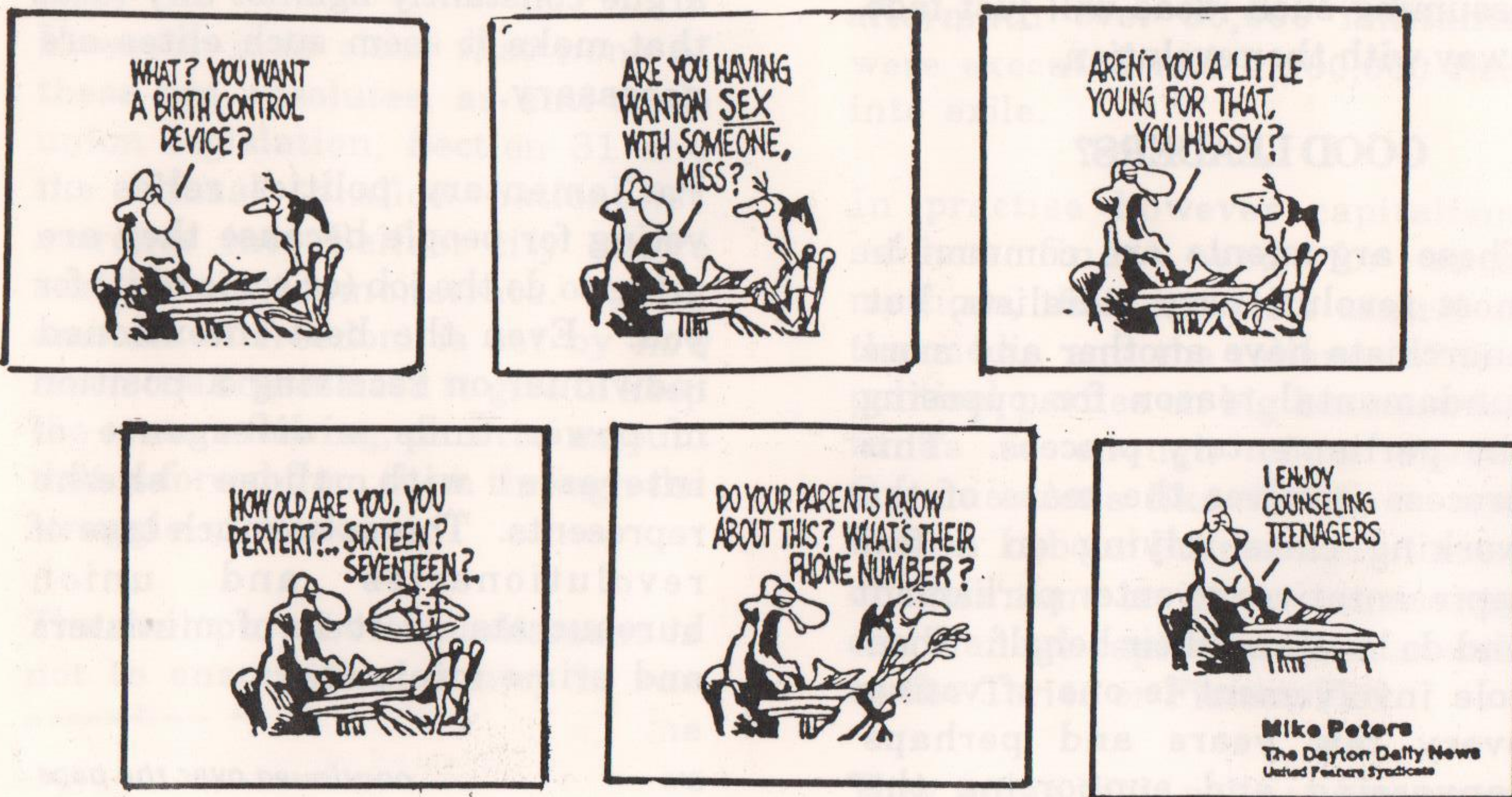
CLASS COLLABORATION

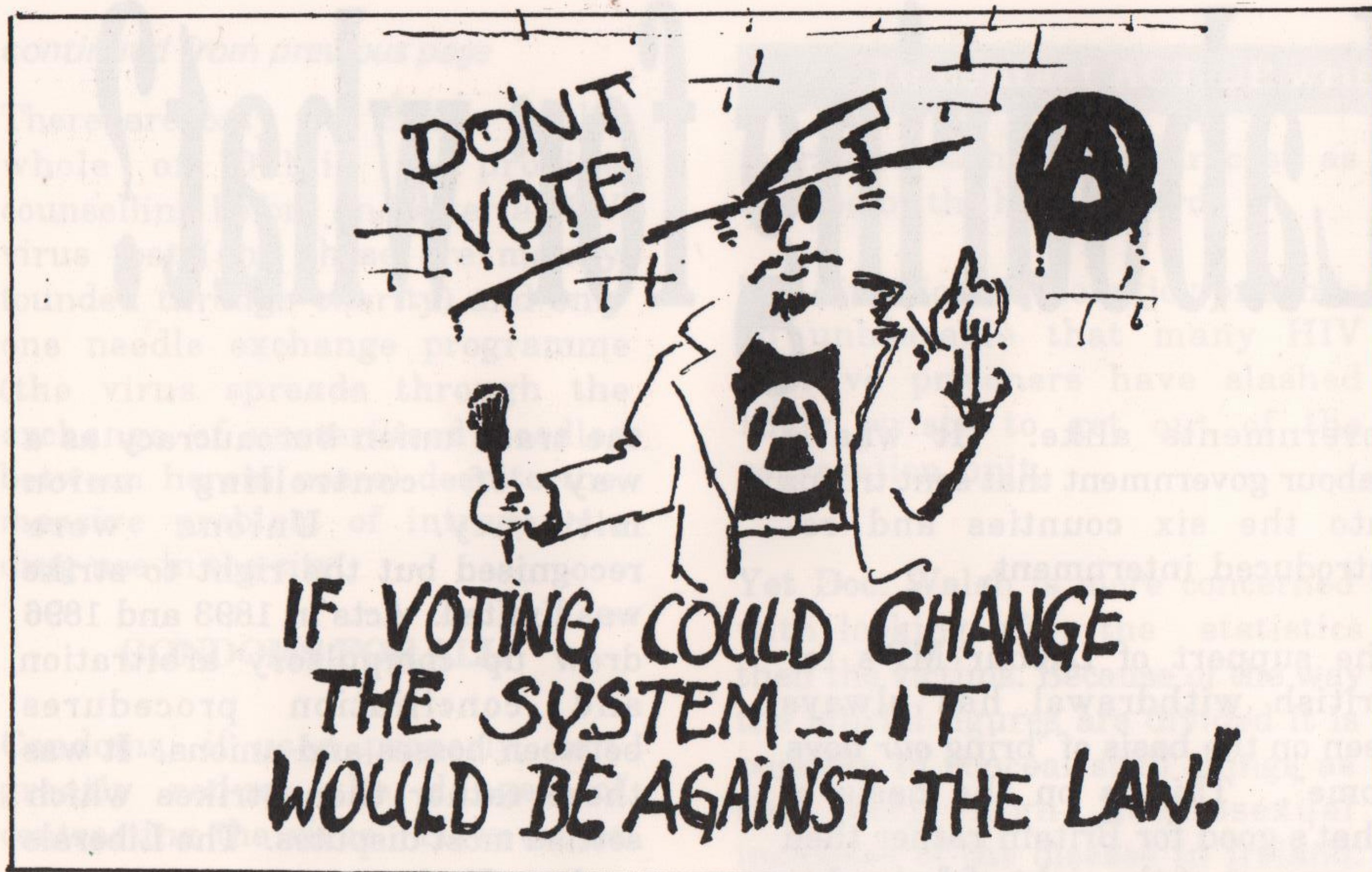
From late in the last century the British ruling class sought to form a relationship between the state and

the trade union bureaucracy as a way of controlling union militancy. Unions were recognised but the right to strike was limited. Acts in 1893 and 1896 drew up compulsory arbitration and conciliation procedures between bosses and unions. It was these rather than strikes which settled most disputes. The Liberals under Gladstone in the 1890's appointed trade union bureaucrats as factory inspectors, justices of the peace, etc. so that the well behaved bureaucrat could look forward to a retirement post in the Civil Service.

The convergence of interests between the bureaucrats and the state led the bureaucrats to see the state as a neutral organ (rather

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This brings us to the question of how should anarchists tackle the parliamentary system. How do we convince everyone not to vote? Perhaps we should put all our energy into anti-election campaigns.

In fact this is not seen as a major activity by most anarchists at all. Our aim is not to have elections where only 10% vote, for such a thing would be meaningless in itself. In the U.S.A. only about 30% vote in most elections and it is possible that up to 50% of the population is not even registered to vote. Only a fool however would claim this meant the U.S. was more anarchist than Ireland. If that 10% or 30% is still electing the government it might as well be 99%.

Our aim is to change society by winning the working class to the ideas and tactics of anarchism. This will involve the overthrow of the economic system (capitalism) we live under and its replacement with socialism under workers' self-management. Not voting may just be a sign of despair ("What's the point?"), we want workers actively struggling for the alternative.

Our anti-electoralism is designed to say two things. Firstly that parliament is not the real seat of power in society. Secondly that the task of bringing in anarchism is for the working class, not some small group of TD's.

We will gain support for anarchist

ideas not just through abstract propaganda but also by our involvement *as anarchists* in workers' struggles and demonstrating how anarchism provides the best tools for winning day to day reforms.

#### REFORMIST WORKERS

Most of the active militants in the working class support reformist parties, this is an obvious fact. This has led many revolutionary groups to adopt slogans at election times telling workers to "vote Labour with no illusions" or "vote Labour but build a socialist alternative". We don't.

The problems with both these slogans are they still reflect the idea that change should be brought about by the small elites. They are normally defended by saying this is putting the reformist parties to the test so that they can be exposed to their supporters. This is a nonsense, as a brief look at any of the Irish left reformist organisations shows.

The reformist organisations have failed the 'test' on dozens of occasions. Workers vote for these organisations not because they believe they will introduce socialism but because they are seen to offer the best of the bad deal that is capitalism.

This is also presented as an argument for voting for the reformist parties. Is it not ultra-left to refuse to support these parties while they may be slightly better than Fianna Fail or Fine Gael?

Two answers exist to this.

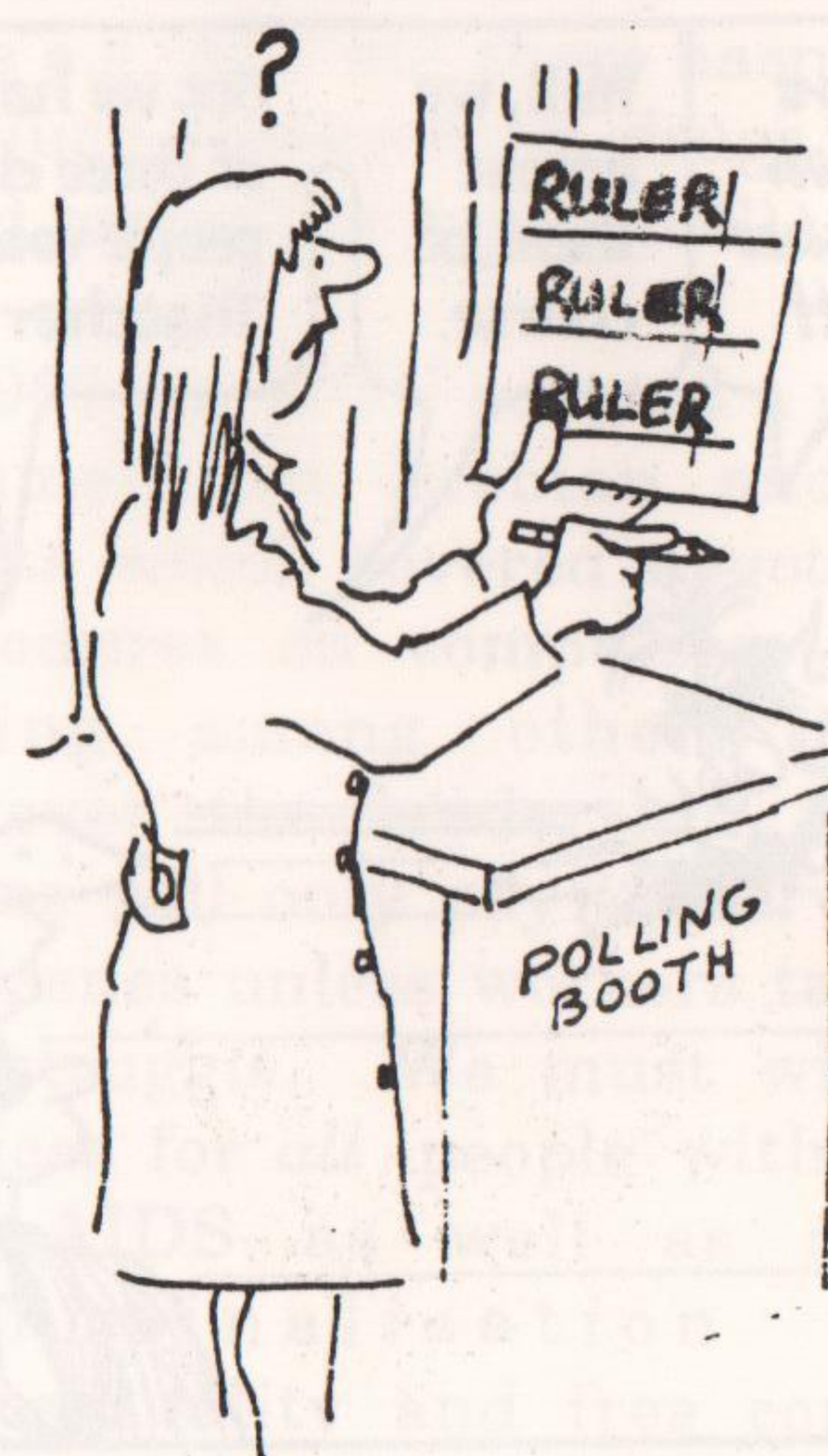
The first is that as the real decision making takes place in industry and not in parliament these organisations even in majority government can only do what capitalism allows them. Their only argument is to organise capitalism more "humanly". We want to smash capitalism, not give it a human face. The sight of a "socialist government" implementing cuts and breaking strikes damages the credibility of socialism in the eyes of workers, as did the existence of the "socialist" police states of eastern Europe.

Secondly, it is a question of energy. The sort of effort that is spent supporting (critically or otherwise) reformist organisation is energy taken away from the struggles for improved working conditions, better wages etc. Elections do not take place in a vacuum in which nothing else takes place in society for a number of months.

A strike or demonstration of thousands of workers has more chance of effecting real change than 20 Labour or Workers party TD's. In times of mass unrest energy pumped into reformist parties will be energy used to undermine the revolution. As so many Chilean socialists found, revolutionaries supporting such organisations are likely to find they are literally digging their own grave.

#### EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE

There are occasions where anarchists might support individuals standing in elections.



This is when such people stand on a single issue and abstentionist basis. At times this may be an effective way of showing mass support for something when faced with a massive hype against it from the capitalist press. Other forms of demonstrating support may be difficult due to large scale intimidation, victimisation of activists, etc.

One example of such an occasion in the Irish context was the H-Block hunger strikes of 1981 for political status. The election of Bobby Sands as MP for Fermanagh/South Tyrone and the election of two more H-Block prisoners as TD's south of the border demonstrated a mass support for the hunger strikers. It undermined government and press claims that they had the support of only a tiny minority.

Such support must be on the basis of giving workers the confidence to openly come out and demonstrate, strike, etc. It is a tactic towards such mobilisations not an end in itself.

Problems exist with this, commonly the individual elected

may take up her/his seat despite pre-election promises of abstention if elected. Even in the hunger strike case where those on hunger strikes could not take up their seats the danger of such tactics is obvious. The vote was seen by Sinn Fein as proof that a turn towards electoral politics was the correct direction for anti-imperialism to take.

The potential of a mass campaign at the time of the hunger strikes based on strikes North and South of the border was thus lost. The decision to support a single issue candidate would have to involve hard arguments on the subsequent direction of the campaign and could not be taken lightly.

Another instance where anarchists would not urge a abstention from the bosses electoral process is in the case of referendums. The WSM was involved (and indeed still is) in the Divorce Action Group. Despite the severe limitations of the 1986 referendum we still canvassed for a YES vote.

In the 1983 anti-abortion referendum anarchists advocated a

NO vote. Of course we don't accept the conclusions of either referendum as final. We still fight for the right to divorce and a woman's right to control her fertility up to and including free, safe abortion on demand. Such things are democratic rights in themselves, something no majority should have a veto over.

What do we say to people in the reformist parties? They can not (and should not) be ignored. We say look at the record of your party in government or to the Workers Party when you supported the 1981 minority Fianna Fail government.

Look at what your party stands for. Look at the record of your party in the trade union bureaucracy. Look at the historical role reformist parties have played in other countries. Reformism has had it's test and failed one hundred times. Leave it, find out more about anarchism and join the fight for working class self-emancipation.

Andrew Flood



# Acting Up

**ON WEDNESDAY March 20th the office of Doctor James Walsh - the national co-ordinator in charge of implementing government policy on AIDS - was occupied by ACTUP to protest at the lack of government action on AIDS.**

ACTUP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) is a direct action group which originated in America and has grown rapidly over the last few years. They have been to the forefront in protesting AIDS inaction by the American government and the continuing victimisation of lesbians & gays and AIDS sufferers.

This was the second action by ACTUP in this country, the first being a colourful protest outside the four-courts when the Virgin

Megastore was on trial for the heinous crime of selling a condom to an innocent special branch man.

#### 'IGNORE IT'

By February of this year 1044 Irish people had been diagnosed as HIV positive and there have been 190 cases of full blown AIDS. The World Health Organisation estimates over 10,000 people could die of AIDS in Ireland over the next 10 years. The governments attitude could best be described as "ignore it and sure it might go away".



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# REVIEW

## IRELAND AND BRITISH IMPERIALISM (Workers Solidarity Movement) £0.80p

The pamphlet is composed of articles published in past copies of *Workers Solidarity* between 1985 and 1989. The articles deal with many important issues raised by the partition of Ireland.

Though written a few years ago they are still very relevant to today's situation.

The main articles include an explanation of why Ireland is partitioned, lessons of the Civil Rights Movement and an anarchist critique of the politics and tactics of Sinn Fein. The validity of the anarchist analysis is shown by the fact that the articles needed no alteration and are still as appropriate today as when they were written.

The historical articles are an interesting read as well as providing good historical lessons. "When the red flag flew in Munster" is about the sharp rise in socialist activity that took place in Ireland in the early 20's. The Limerick Soviet is mentioned, as well as the famous "Munster Soviets" in which thousands of workers ejected the bosses and seized their workplaces.

Another article describes in detail past examples of Catholic and Protestant workers fighting together in strike action against their common bosses.

In all there are ten articles, packed with analysis and information. It costs £1.00 (inc. postage) and can be ordered from the Workers Solidarity Bookservice, PO Box 1528, Dublin 8.

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than one of class rule) and so look to parliament to further their interests. The Liberals regularly stood "labour candidates" from the ranks of the trade union officials but in 1900 the bureaucrats set up their own parliamentary organisation, the Labour Representation Committee (L.R.C.). The policy of this organisation which was to become the Labour Party was one of class collaboration. In 1906 when the Labour Party proper was formed it embraced "a readiness to cooperate with any party which for the time being may be engaged in promoting legislation in the direct interest of Labour".

### FABIAN SOCIALISM

The ideology behind the Labour Party was Fabianism. The Fabians were a group of intellectuals who were more interested in social work than socialism. They saw socialism being introduced very gradually through reforms and were antagonistic to any revolutionary ideas that arose.

The Fabian writer Sidney Webb drew up the Labour Constitution, including the much cited 'clause four' which committed it to securing equitable distribution of the "full fruits of industry" and "common ownership of the means of production on behalf of the workers". This ideology ruled out independent action by the working class and saw a slow evolution toward socialism as inevitable.

Another Fabian, Beatrice Webb, exposed the basis for this in "Our Partnership" when she said that the "myriads of deficient minds and deformed bodies" of the working class were incapable of acting constructively. In the "Impossibilities of Anarchism" she derided the anarchist call for the self activity of the working class as the means for introducing socialism. Instead all kinds of deals and tricks were necessary, involving "the gravest violations of principles" and "compromise at every step". The Constitution came into effect in 1918 at the close of the first world war

This war was to be the first international test of Labour parties all over the world. They all failed, they voted with their parliaments for an imperialist war which was to see the slaughter of millions of workers. The left of the Labour Party put up some resistance on the grounds there was not sufficient cause for war but even the leader of the smaller Independent Labour Party said "A nation at war must be united". Prime Minister Lloyd George went so far as to refer to Labour as "the best policemen for the Syndicalist".

This proof of the Labour Party as a loyal opposition however meant it became acceptable to the bosses as a party capable of running the state in their interests. In order to reinforce this further a stricter separation from the Trades Union Congress was agreed, the TUC parliamentary committee being replaced with a general council. Later the first Labour government insisted Trade union bureaucrats who became ministers gave up their TU positions.

The first world war was to see another test of the Labour Party. In 1917 the workers rose in Russia, overthrowing first the Tzar and then the bourgeois government of Kerensky. Although the Bolsheviks were soon to crush independent working class activity, initially Russian workers were to take over and run the factories through their factory committees. Henderson, the Labour party leader of the time who visited Russia, described this as a disaster and complained that "the men are not content with asking for reasonable advances".

The Labour Party presented itself to British capitalism as its safeguard against revolution. The 1922 election manifesto ended with the headline "Against Revolution" and the explanation that "Labour's programme is the best bulwark against violent upheaval and class wars".

### A ROLE FOR LABOUR

Their support for the first world war and opposition to the Russian revolution was to guarantee a role for the Labour Party in the eyes of the British bosses over the next few

decades. This was the context of clause 4 of the constitution. It served to tie those in the party to working through parliament and provided left cover for the party in government. The Labour Party formed a government with the Liberals in 1923 and 1929.

In this period it was instrumental in defeating the 1926 general strike. At the time Ramsey McDonald, then leader of the party, said in the House of Commons "...with the discussion of general strikes and Bolshevism and all that kind of thing, I have nothing to do at all. I respect the constitution".

In the slump of the 30's Labour cut 20% off the unemployment benefit before a split in the cabinet saw McDonald doing a deal with the Tories and forming a majority government. Electoral disaster followed in 1932. In opposition the party became radicalised as membership increased by 25% and it adopted radical policies based on nationalisation of industry. Most of the lost vote was recovered in 1935 and again the Labour party turned to respectability and seeking alliances with the Liberals.

### ANOTHER WAR: SAME POLICIES

The second world war again allowed the Labour Party to gain respectability as it entered into the 'national government'. It played a major part in the creation of the ideology of a "people's war" which aided the government in making strikes illegal and keeping workers passive. In the course of the war there were some strikes as workers fought for their own interests above those of the ruling class. When miners struck in 1944 Bevin (a leader of the Labour left at the time) described it as "worse than if Hitler has bombed Sheffield".

The war also saw full employment and economic efficiency in the production of munitions. British workers asked if this was possible at a time of war, why not also in peacetime? The armed forces numbered millions, and they were asking the same question, some regiments were at the point of mutiny. It was clear they could not

be relied on to suppress any large scale workers' movement. In addition a massive programme of re-building was necessary for the British economy.

### NATIONALISATION OR SOCIALISM

This set the scene for the massive Labour victory of 1945. An enormous segment of the British economy was nationalised including the Bank of England and the mines. Some 20% of the economy was taken over. This occurred, not as an attempt to build socialism, but rather as necessary steps in the re-building of British capitalism. The industries that were nationalised were those required to service the economy as a whole but which were too costly to attract private investment from individual bosses.

Even Churchill said the nationalisation of the Bank of England was not "any issue of principle". The compensation paid to the owners of these industries was re-invested in the profit making sphere, while the nationalised industries provided cheap goods and services to British industry. In this way the bosses had their cake and ate it!

### SOCIALISM OR STATE CONTROL?

The industries that were nationalised were not handed over to the workforce to manage. Rather they were run by boards which commonly included the old bosses. Stafford Cripps a "labour left" of the day said "I think it would be almost impossible to have worker controlled industry in Britain even if it were wholly desirable".

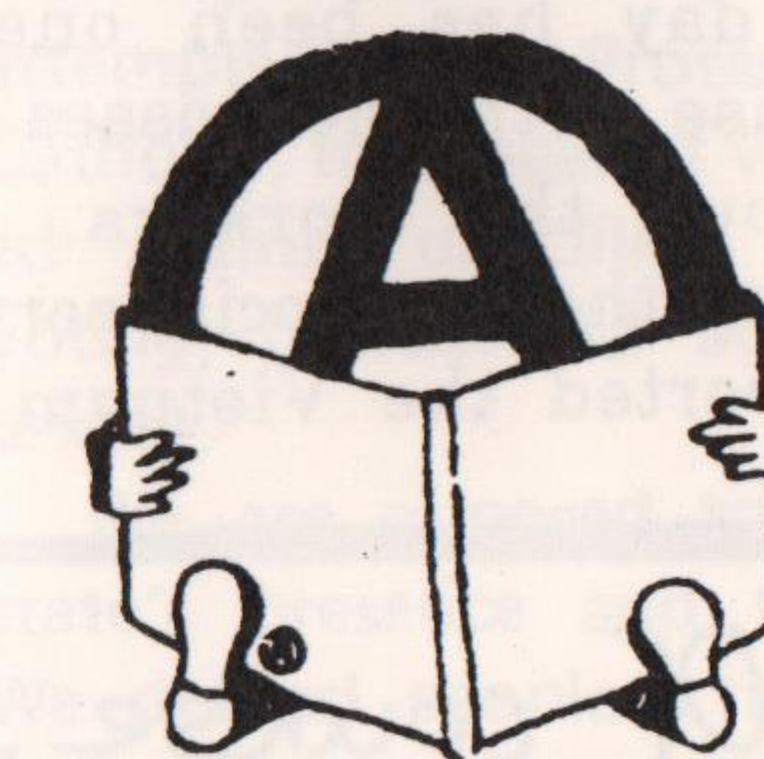
Anarchists reject the idea that nationalised industry is progressive for its own sake. Workers in such industries live under the same conditions as workers in the private sector. The purpose of nationalisation is always to bail out bosses in trouble, or provide cheap services for the bosses in general. It is never to give the workers any control of their workplace, pay or conditions.

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# BOOKS FOR ANARCHISTS

**ANARCHISM AND IRELAND** ...a brief introduction to anarchism with sections on the State, elections, the Dáil, how ideas change, socialism from below, democracy & freedom, the trade unions, unemployment, womens' freedom, and the national question. The second half of the pamphlet looks at anarchism as practiced with particular reference to Spain during the 1930s. £0.90

**ORGANISATIONAL PLATFORM OF THE LIBERTARIAN COMMUNISTS** by Makhno, Arshinov, Mett, Valevsky and Linsky. Written in 1926 by veterans of the Russian revolution who had seen freedom and workers' democracy replaced by a savage dictatorship. This was their attempt to tell of their experiences and explain the lessons they had learnt. They stressed the need for disciplined anarchist organisation, built on and relating to the working class. £1.50



**MANIFESTO OF LIBERTARIAN COMMUNISM** by Georges Fontenis. The capitalist system we oppose, the anarchist one we want, the politics and organisation we need to achieve our goal. £0.60

**THE KRONSTADT UPRISING** by Ida Mett. Seventy years ago Russia saw the first rising by workers against the new bureaucracy. The demands and actions of the workers and sailors are explained, as is the bloody response of the Bolsheviks. £1.75

Available post free from Workers Solidarity Bookservice, P.O.Box 1528, Dublin 8.

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At the same time the Labour government was carrying out more direct attacks on the working class. In 1947 an austerity program which included cuts in housebuilding was imposed. The largest proportion of Gross National Product of any western power was being spent on defence and in March 1946 peacetime conscription was implemented for the first time. In addition the government sent British troops to fight in the Korean war and was secretly developing its own atomic bomb.

The wartime ban on strikes was continued. By 1950 troops had been used 18 times to break strikes, up to 20,000 crossing picket lines at certain times. This, along with the fact that much of the funding behind the rebuilding of industry came from the Marshall plan, shows how the policies of this government had nothing to do with improving conditions for workers and everything to do with saving British capitalism.

ON AND ON

Indeed after the Labour defeat of 1951 the Tories continued working within the changes introduced by Labour. Labour's record to the present day has been one of compromise with the bosses and selling out the workers. In government they cut social services and supported the Vietnam war

(1964-1970). In government between 1974 and 1979 they imposed a real cut in workers wages through a 'social contract' in '75 and '76, (something no Tory government has succeeded in doing since 1945) and used troops (yet again!) to break strikes, this time of the firefighters and refuse collectors.

Even the left of the Labour Party around *Militant* and similar organisations showed itself on the wrong side of the barricades in the Poll tax riots. Left MP George Galloway ranted about "lunatics, anarchists and other extremists". The British *Militant* of April 6th, although condemning the cops for "lashing out at innocent bystanders", blamed "anarchists and quasi-Marxist sects" for "unprovoked attacks on the police".

*Militant* supporter Tommy Sheridan of the Anti-Poll Tax Federation said their inquiry would have no qualms about "informing the police" of the identity of rioters. The main Labour Party was much worse, Kinnock for instance talked of the rioters as "cowardly and vicious ...enemies of freedom" who should be "treated as criminals and punished".

NO PAST: NO FUTURE

There was no glorious period of Labour Party socialism, and never will be. It is a bosses' party which at times of crisis is every bit as willing to attack the working class

as the Tories. Some of the left in the Labour Party, unable to avoid it's rotten record, will put their hope in some future Labour government led by the 'left'. Their hopes are as futile as those who see a majority Labour government led by socialists bringing in socialism in Ireland.

Many of the leaders of the Labour Party including McDonald, Atlee and Kinnock were seen as on the left of the party at one time or another. McDonald had been the victim of press slander campaigns. Atlee in 1932 had said "the moment to strike at capitalism is the moment when the government is freshly elected and assured of it's support. The blow struck must be a fatal one".

Even Kinnock had defended miners violence in 1972 and voted against the Labour government of the 70's 84 times (Tony Benn voted against it twice), Kinnock even voted against the PTA twice. In power or in opposition all these individuals however are exposed as something less than socialist (to put it mildly). This is not because they were secretly right wingers all along. It is because the election of a Labour government and its ability to retain power relies on it demonstrating to British bosses that it too can manage capitalism for them.

In any case their concept of socialism, in so far as they still have one, is large scale nationalisation carried out on behalf of the workers. This is a far cry from the anarchists who see socialism as something that can only be brought about through the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism by an organised and independent working class.

The anarchist concept of socialism includes changing the basis of production so that it satisfies the needs of the mass of the people and is under the democratic control of the workers. We want to see a maximisation of freedom for the individual. We want a completely new form of society. Today's Labour Party merely wants to administer a more parental style of capitalism.

Aileen O'Carroll

# THAT'S CAPITALISM

The 26 county government are among the leading low pay employers in the country. 6,000 clerical assistants in the Civil Service take home less than £150 per week. 84% of them are women. It takes them six years to reach the wage that staff doing similar work (in a grade called 'paperkeeper') take home in year one, despite paperkeepers needing lower skill and educational requirements. It just happens that most paperkeepers are men. Equal pay 1991 style?

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The Vehicle Licencing Authority in Wales has banned car registration plates with the numnber 666 because "it is the number of the devil". The

government department maintains that this is the number of the Beast and therefore unlucky.

\*\*\*\*\*

The latest figures show that over half a million workers, 60% of all PAYE taxpayers, had total incomes of less than £10,000 in 1989. Only 6% of those on PAYE earned over £25,000. Executive directors at the Bank of Ireland averaged £224,000 each, while at AIB they got over £250,000 per head.



# Revolution

continued from previous page

think that the various Leninist and reformist left theories will become instantly irrelevant. In actual fact this is the period when politics will become relevant as never before. It is a period where millions of workers will be looking for a political direction.

In the past revolutions have been led to disaster because the ideas that led the working class were reformist or authoritarian. Once in power such parties brutally crushed working class activity. This is as true of the reformists in the German revolution of 1919 as it is of the Bolsheviks in 1917-21. Anarchist organisation must be capable of debating and defeating such ideas as they arise.

### CRYSTAL BALL

Not being crystal ball gazers we can not predict when the next opportunity for revolution will occur. In Ireland at least it would appear to be many years away. We do know such opportunities will arise however, they are a product of the inability of capitalism to meet the needs of all the people.

Capitalism may have changed and developed over the years but this has not changed.

This does not mean we do nothing until such an opportunity arises. Now is the time for us to develop and spread anarchist ideas. We need to build strong anarchist organisation(s), not just in Ireland but internationally. Indeed it is likely that revolution will arrive on the agenda in Ireland due to the success of revolutions elsewhere. We ensure the continued relevancy of our ideas by involvement in the struggles of fellow workers and demonstrating the usefulness of anarchist politics and tactics.

This is the purpose of the WSM. We are in the process of building an organisation capable of asserting anarchist ideas. We are developing these ideas while being involved in struggles at all levels of society. We are building international links with anarchists in other countries. If you too wish to see this rotten system smashed and replaced with anarchism then get in contact and get involved.

Joe Black

# GET IN TOUCH

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

The Workers Solidarity Movement is an anarchist organisation that fights for a 32 county Workers Republic.

We stand for a socialism that is based on freedom and real democracy, a society based on workplace and community councils.

This kind of socialism has nothing to do with the state capitalism that is practiced in Russia, Cuba and other police states.

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

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As part of our fight for anarchism we are involved in the struggles for higher wages, for trade union democracy, for women's rights, for jobs.

We oppose all divisions in the working class. We fight against all attempts to set Protestant against Catholic, men against women, skilled against unskilled, old against young, heterosexual against homosexual.

We are opposed to the British state's presence and to partition. We defend people's right to fight back. But we are not nationalists, we do not want to merely get rid of the border. We want to unite our class and create a totally new Ireland.

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I want more information about the WSM.

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