

6480  
W

# IN THIS ISSUE

**YUGOSLAV REFUGEES - OPEN THE DOOR**  
...page 2

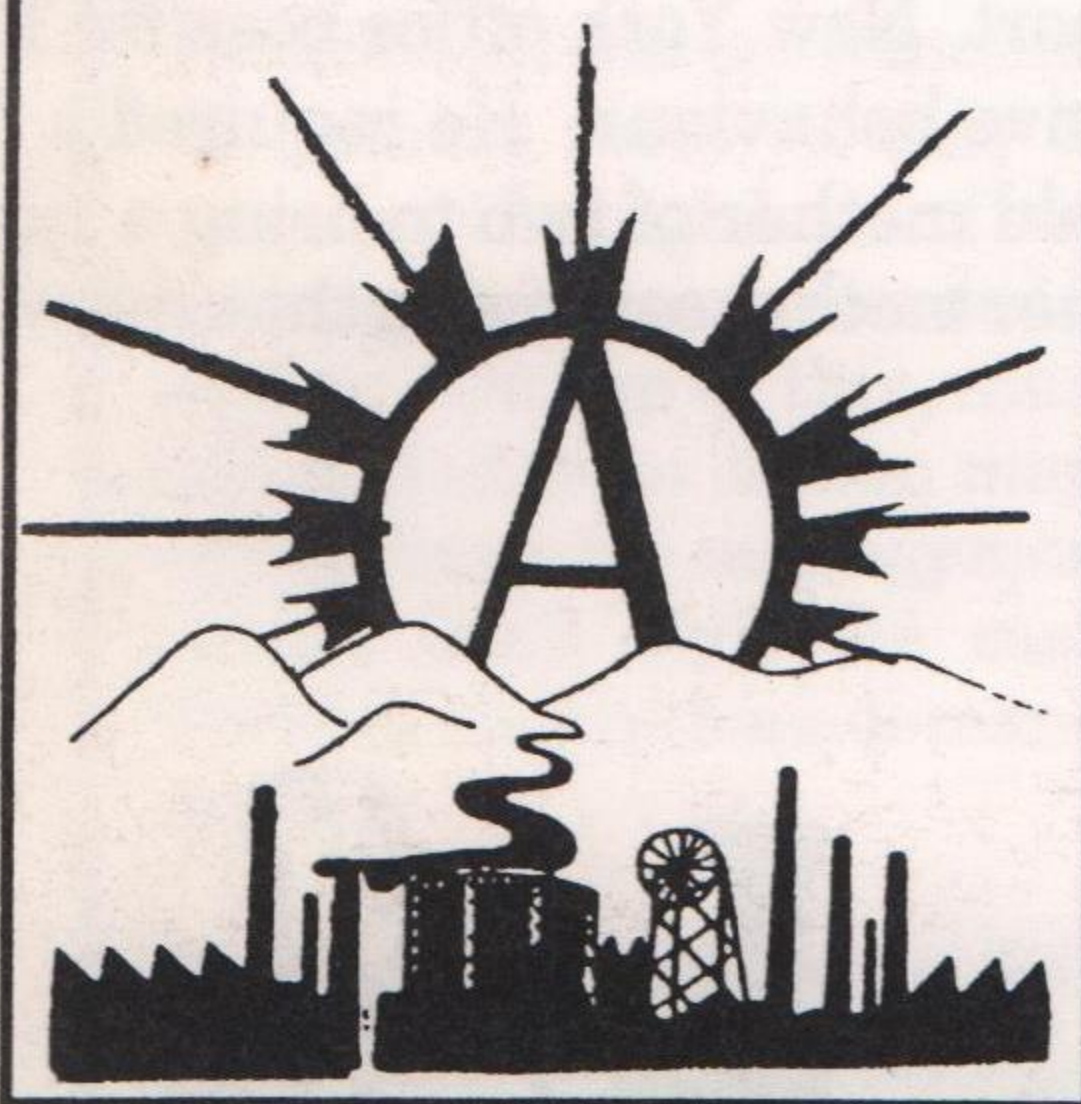
**WHY WOMEN GET A RAW DEAL**  
...page 5

**TERRORISING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD**  
...page 14

**SOCIALISM & FREEDOM**  
...page 20

**WHAT HAPPENED IN THE POSTAL DISPUTE?**  
...page 8

**GREEN POLICIES OR GREEN POLITICS**  
...page 12



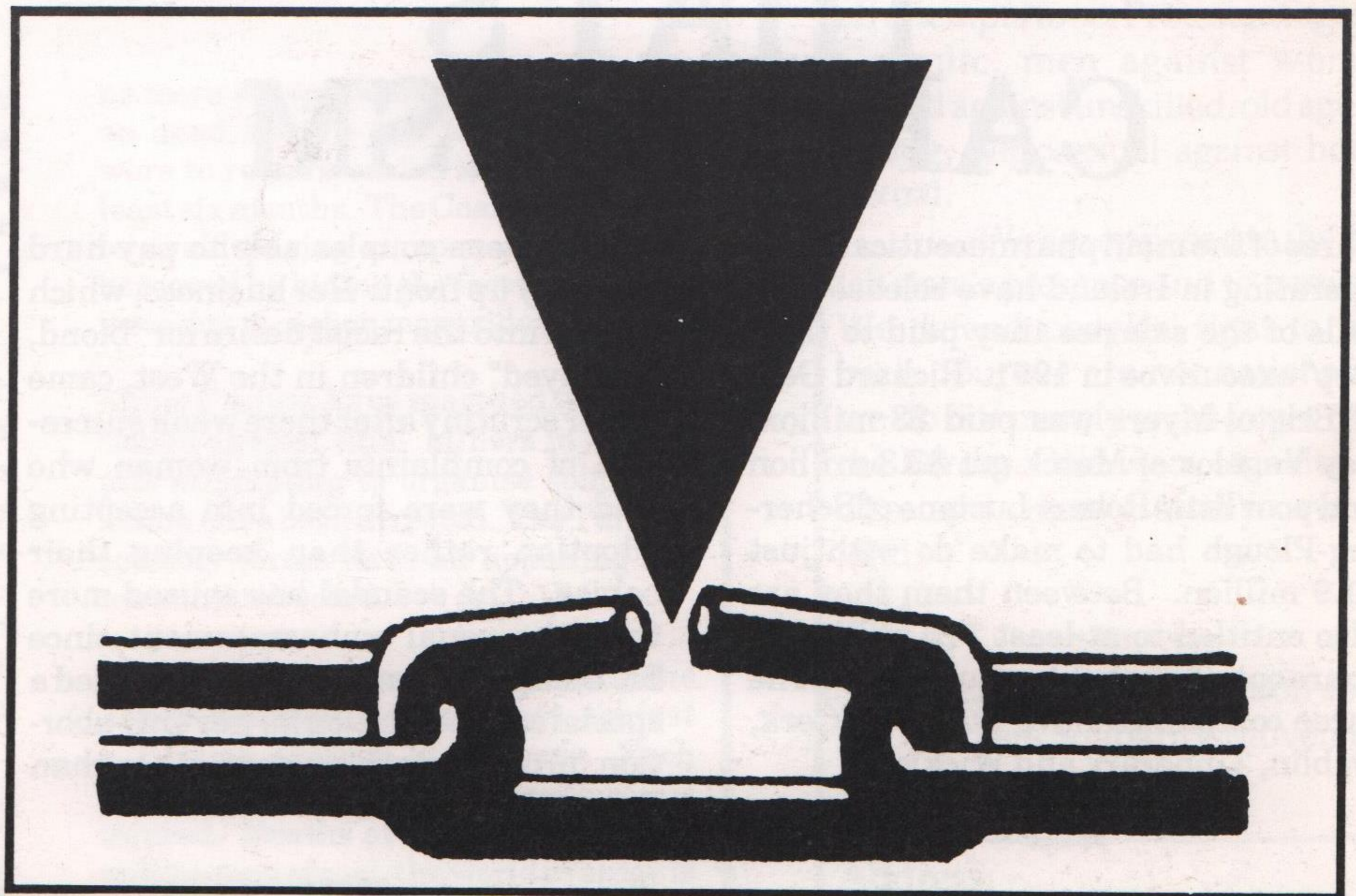
# WORKERS SOLIDARITY

MAGAZINE OF THE WORKERS SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT  
ISSUE NO. 36

75p outside Ireland  
AUTUMN 1992

# SEX, CLASS, and Womens Rights

...see page 10



IRISH ANARCHIST MAGAZINE



**THE SUFFERING in Bosnia is undeniable. It is sickening. Tens of thousands have been tortured, raped and murdered. Nazi-style "ethnic cleansing" has turned two million Bosnians, Croats and Serbs into refugees within their own country. The partition of the former Yugoslavia has unleashed a tidal wave of nationalist terror.**

As the Yugoslav economy went into crisis the Stalinist rulers turned to nationalism, scapegoating people of a different race or religion for the problems created by these same Stalinist bosses. They are all doing it, the Serbian ruling class are just the most efficient at stirring up blind hatred.

The world's big governments are all claiming to be shocked at what is happening. They are liars. Are we really expected to believe that they didn't know about the concentration camps until an ITV camera crew sent out pictures from one of them? Bullshit. Are we expected to believe that the Americans, Russians, French and British with all their spies, diplomats and satellites that are capable of reading a car number plate from space did not know of the camps where 110,000 were being imprisoned, tortured and murdered!

A UN document issued last May reported on the camps. It was not publicised until August when it could no

# For Starters

longer be hidden. Their 'concern' has seen Italy and Austria close their borders to refugees. Hungary has sent them back. Germany is demanding visas but won't explain how people fleeing for their lives can obtain visas when armies of killers stand between them and the embassy. Visas can not be obtained. It is a sick joke to ask for them.

Britain has taken just 1,300 people. Ireland will only take 200. Each and every one of the European governments want these starving, hunted, terrified people to stay where they are. It is just like World War 11 when they closed their doors to Jewish escapees from Nazi Germany. DeValera's government refused to provide sanctuary to more than a few dozen families. Albert Reynolds's gang is doing exactly the same cruel and callous thing in the 1990s.

These people will not act in the interests of ordinary people, whether in Ireland or Yugoslavia. UN or EC intervention is no answer. These are same powers that mass murdered their way through the Gulf War, bombing military and civilian targets without distinction. They are the ones who called for the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and then stood by while the Iraqi re-

gime savagely suppressed the rebellions in the South and in Kurdistan. They are the same ones who encouraged the Serbian and Croat bosses in their nationalist carve up, and agreed to a 'cantonisation' of Bosnia.

It is not all bad news. There is a peace movement in Serbia which opposes the slaughter. Not everyone has been pulled into the jingoist madness of hating and killing other working class people because it suits the interests of the ruling class. When we look for a long term answer, we look to working class people in Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia learning that they have more in common than divides them. We look forward to the day when enough of them see the need to get rid of the governments and nationalist hatemongers in the region.

Right now, in Ireland, we need to say loudly and clearly that the refugees are welcome here. No restrictions, no quotas. Nobody should be condemned to live in fear; being shelled, being tortured, being starved. Nobody should be abandoned to die in the hellhole that was once Yugoslavia. Every refugee, whether Bosnian or Serb or Croat, should be welcome here.

## THAT'S CAPITALISM

Three of the main pharmaceutical firms operating in Ireland have released details of the salaries they paid to their "top" executives in 1991. Richard Gelb of Bristol-Myers was paid \$3 million, Roy Vagelos of Merck got \$3.3 million and poor little Robert Luciano of Schering-Plough had to make do with just \$1.9 million. Between them they are also entitled to at least \$16 million in share options payable at any stage. The three companies have plants in Cork, Dublin, Tipperary and Wicklow.

\*\*\*\*\*

A Polish Mother Superior, Sr. Beniga, has recently been implicated in facilitating illegal adoptions between her "home" for pregnant unmarried women

and Western couples able to pay hard currency up front. Her business, which tapped into the racist desire for "blond, blue-eyed" children in the West, came under scrutiny after there was a succession of complaints from women who said they were forced into accepting adoption rather than keeping their babies. The scandal has caused more than the usual embarrassment since Sr. Beniga was only recently awarded a special commendation for her anti-abortion 'pro-life' work by none other than Pope John Paul II.

\*\*\*\*\*

The United States has started building a wall along its border with Mexico. Made of heavy steel, it is 10 feet high.

Allegations that the wall bears any resemblance to its dismantled cousin in Berlin have been denied by US officials who have called it "just a strong fence".

\*\*\*\*\*

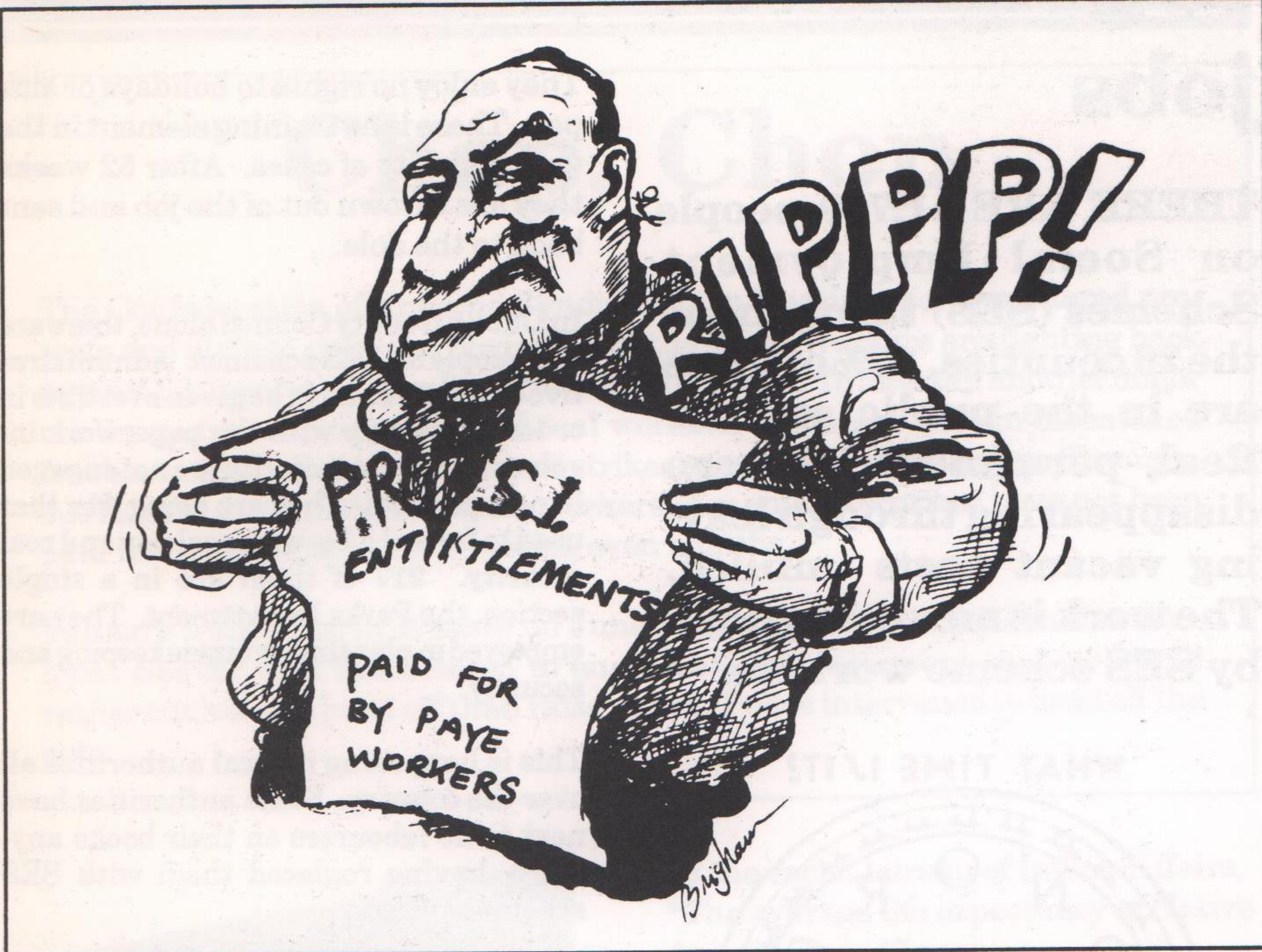
The American National Association of Working Women, '9 to 5', has given a "Downright Unbelievable" award to an Eastport, New York office boss for his offensive behaviour. He required a 37 year old mother of two to bring a note from her mother certifying that she was sick.





# A pain the mouth

# Gay Bashing Bigots



**CUTS, CUTS, CUTS.** When the government needs a few quid they don't go after their rich pals like Smurfit, Goodman or Dunne. It's the workers and the poor who are always expected to suffer cuts in their living standards. A little publicised rip-off is the PRSI changes.

- Free dental treatment is no more. You pay your PRSI for four years and still have to 'contribute' 30% of the cost.
- You lose your entitlement to even this if you are out of work for over five years. This leaves you only the Health Board dental system which is overstretched and has massive waiting lists. You would be lucky to get even emergency treatment.
- If you are on £25,000 or more a year you lose all entitlement, regardless of how much PRSI you have paid.
- If you are unemployed for more than four years you will not be entitled to Disability Benefit. This means that long-term unemployed people who fall ill will have to rely on Supplementary Welfare Allowance, a discretionary carry-over from the Poor Laws.
- As of last July 20th anyone getting more than £12,000 in redundancy will not qualify for Unemployment Benefit for nine weeks after losing their job.

This is, effectively, an extra tax on the last few pounds that a person may ever earn.

- The full rate of Deserted Wives Benefit will only be paid to women earning under £12,000 a year. This is regardless of how many children or what expenses they have.

This is just the start of Minister McCreevy's plans for a "self-financing social insurance scheme". What has happened so far is only a taste of what is to come. In August it was announced that the government is considering taxing some benefits, benefits we have already paid for with our PRSI! We are supposed to believe the real scandal is that such a large proportion of tax revenues is being spent on social welfare, not that one in five is unemployed and one in three is existing below the official poverty line. Needless to say they are not talking of taxing their friends, the millionaires and the multinationals.

And it's not just Fianna Fáil and the PDs who want to bail out the rich at the expense of the poor. Left Labour TD Emmet Stagg has proposed to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Employment that a 'Workfare' scheme be started. This is where the unemployed have to work for their dole, providing cheap labour for the bosses.

**THE VATICAN** has said it's alright. The Pope says yes. Catholics can bully gay men and lesbians. A document released by the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith says that "gays and lesbians suffer from an objective disorder and it is not wrong to discriminate against them".

"Discrimination on the basis of homosexual tendencies is not unjust" it states, in certain circumstances including the employment of teachers, athletics coaches and the fostering and adoption of children. The vast majority of Irish national schools are controlled by the Catholic Church. This encourages Boards of Management to harass gay and lesbian teachers.



Quick off the mark were the Irish National Teachers Organisation whose Assistant General Secretary, John Carr, said the INTO would not tolerate any discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. Members of all the other teaching unions, ASTI, TUI and IFUT, should make it very clear that they are of one mind on this issue of workers' rights.

Interestingly, this document was released in the same week that the ITV **World in Action** programme publicised cases where the Catholic Church covered up for priests who sexually abused children. It seems that they object strongly to same-sex relations between consenting adults but will aid and abet priests who molest and rape young children.



# Identify?

**"To be governed is to be watched, inspected, spied on, regulated, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, ruled, censored by persons who have neither wisdom or virtue"**

Proudhon

Whatever about their wisdom or virtue the Irish government seems to be hell-bent on tightening up on inspection, regulation and spying procedures. Already the first batch of new plastic, bar-coded identity cards have been issued to 16 to 20 year olds. It is planned that everyone will be issued with one in the near future.

The usual nonsense is already being trotted out of the Department of Social Welfare. The system will enable one to get welfare payments from a hole in the wall machine (no more "signing on"; we doubt it). Of course this will wipe out "welfare fraud" (no word about the millions of pounds of state money with which Michael Smurfit and Larry Goodman have lined their pockets).

Lets get down to brass tacks. The new I.D. card is about knowing where people are, what they're doing, how much they're worth. It's about control and regulation and the state sticking it's nose into our private lives. Proudhon's words ring even truer today than when they were written 150 years ago.

## As unemployment heads for 300,000

# Trade Union leaders help to get rid of jobs

**THERE ARE 11,700 people on Social Employment Schemes (SES) throughout the 26 counties. 30% of these are in the public service. Real, permanent jobs are disappearing through leaving vacant posts unfilled. The work is now being done by SES scheme workers.**

On SES a single person gets £72 per week, or £103.50 if they have an adult dependant. £12 is paid for each child dependant. They work a half week and are free to take up any job for the other half... except that there aren't any other jobs.

They enjoy no rights to holidays or sick pay. There is no training element in the vast majority of cases. After 52 weeks they are thrown out of the job and sent back to the dole.

In Dublin County Council alone, there are 460 people on SES schemes. Administrative staff have had to be given overtime in order to keep up with the paperwork involved. The vast majority are not engaged in new projects. They are doing jobs that used to be real jobs, with real pay and real security. 217 of them are in a single section, the Parks Department. They are employed in planting, groundskeeping and security.

This is happening in local authorities all over the country. Some authorities have next to no labourers on their books anymore, having replaced them with SES scheme workers.

This was not something that management sneaked in by the back door. All SES schemes have to be agreed by the relevant trade union officials. This means they have been collaborating in the replacement of permanent jobs by temporary, cheap labour schemes. This is the reality of their PESP 'social partnership' deal with the bosses and government.

Union activists should insist that this is discussed at branch committee meetings and that all SES workers in ongoing jobs are offered permanent positions with trade union rates of pay.

WHAT TIME IS IT?



# It's a crap job

IT SEEMS that bosses are still not happy with the ludicrously unsafe staffing levels on ships. A new navigational aid to keep up 24 hour productivity has been installed on three ships owned by Hapag-Lloyd, the large German ship owners. A transparent toilet, giving panoramic views of both port and starboard, has been installed on their bridges. The new toilet will allow the present requirement of at least two people on look-out at any time to be cut to one.

This will mean that the crew will now be cut to 13 on the 30,000 ton container ships. German unions have said that they fear for safety with just one person on duty at night on the long Atlantic crossings. Perhaps the problem was better summed up by an experienced ship's pilot in a letter of protest to the German Transport Minister. He wrote "to me this is an expression of utter contempt for human beings. It seems productivity must be kept up even when shitting".

Information from *Transport Worker* (Britain)

# Low wages!

A survey carried out by the ICTU showed that young people working in summer jobs this year received just £61.85 for an average 36.6 hours (males) and £54.38 for an average 36.2 hours (females).

# The voice of 'civilisation'

*"We might execute a 12 year old. It depends on the case"*

John Holmes, US District Attorney, quoted in the *Observer* on August 9th.



# The not very 'natural' oppression of women

*Think positively -  
It'll give you more time  
to look after the kids!*



**WE ARE NOW** eight years from the year 2,000. Approximately 14,000 years ago the first agricultural communities, and with them human civilisation, were founded. Humanity is 600 generations old.

We hold the position of 'most successful species' because, unlike animals, we have been able to modify our environment to suit our needs. To early humans nature was a powerful and frightening force, the bringer of plagues, storms and droughts. Nowadays we control our environment to such an extent that nature is no longer a demon spirit or an instrument of the wrath of god. In much of the world nature is way down on our list of worries, it is more likely to fear us. As the capability to control the world around us has increased from the first primitive farmers to the high-technology multinationals, the way we perceive the world around us has also changed. So has the way we perceive each other.

One thing, however, that has remained constant throughout this time is that in the majority of societies half our species (women) has been held in an inferior position to the other half (men). Why is this the case? The answer to this question should explain two things. It should explain why today with all our equal rights legislation women are still second class citizens, and secondly it should indicate the mechanisms and tactics we have to use to achieve womens' liberation. If we know what the problem is, we can find a solution.

## CIVILISATION DAWNS

Early humans were hunter/gatherers living in nomadic communities, living from hand to mouth. The discovery of agriculture led to huge changes in the organisation of humanity. Agriculture was the point at which civilisation began. This is because there are a number of ways in which an agricultural community is different from a hunter/gatherer clan. Communities remain in the same spot. Agriculture can support more people than hunting/gathering so communities get larger. Farming leads to the development of new technology. New skills lead to a greater division of labour. Individuals spe-

*continued on page 6*



cialise in certain types of work, be it tool making, leatherwork or defence.

However the key difference is that farmed land becomes a valuable resource. Land provides a surplus, that is land provides more food than is necessary for day to day survival. More importantly, land will provide this resource in the future, for the next generation. None of this is true of the herd of wild animals pursued by the hunter-gatherer. The concept of ownership developed.

So civilisation began when man began to acquire wealth in the form of land, food and animals. If a rich man wants to ensure that his offspring alone inherit his wealth, he must be sure that his wife is only mating with him. Thus, he has to be in a position of control over her. He needs to portray this as part of the 'natural order'. To accommodate this need society, through the use of religion, developed a rationale to justify the inferior position of woman.

### GOD'S CHOSEN RULERS

Rulers have always been good at rationalising unfair practices, take for example the idea of the 'divine right of kings'. Popular for centuries, the church and state argued that kings and queens were appointed by God. The status quo was natural and good, any opposition to it was evil and doomed to eternal hell. These days kings don't have much power, which is why not many people rush to describe Charles and Di as God's cho-

sen rulers.

In much the same way, it was necessary to have women inferior to men to ensure inheritance rights. In order to keep women in this position a whole mythology of women as second class humans was developed. It was the accumulation of a surplus and the desire of a minority to monopolise it that led to the class division of society and to the oppression of women.

Now we've established the motive and the cover story, but of what relevance is the status of women in early history to their status today. As capitalism evolved it built on the existing model of the family, adapting it to suit its own interests. Assurance of inheritance rights isn't as necessary today, however the family provides other services which capitalism does require. Initially, when the industrial revolution first began men, women and children were drafted wholesale into the factories.

### DEATH IS NOT ALWAYS ECONOMIC

Quickly, however, the bosses realised that this was not the most economic way to run the system. The labour force was weak and the children who were to be next generation of workers were dying in the mills and mines. The solution was to be found in the family.

Before the rise of capitalism society was based around a system of slaves/serfs and kings or lords. The problem with slaves or serfs is that the owner must provide food, basic health care and

subsistence in old age, i.e. maintain the slave at a cost for those times when he or she is not productive. A much more cost-efficient way to keep a workforce is through the nuclear family. In this scenario, it is up to the family to provide itself with food, shelter, healthcare, look after the elderly and young (who will provide the next crop of workers). Within this family unit it is normally the woman who fulfils the functions of housekeeper, nurse, childminder and cook.

There are two knock-on effects of women staying at home minding the family. Firstly they are not financially independent. They do not earn any money and are dependant on income received from their partners. Because nobody gets paid for rearing a family its status as an occupation is at the bottom of the ladder and because women are financially dependant on their husbands it means they, in the past, have had little input into the major decisions affecting the family.

### ISOLATION

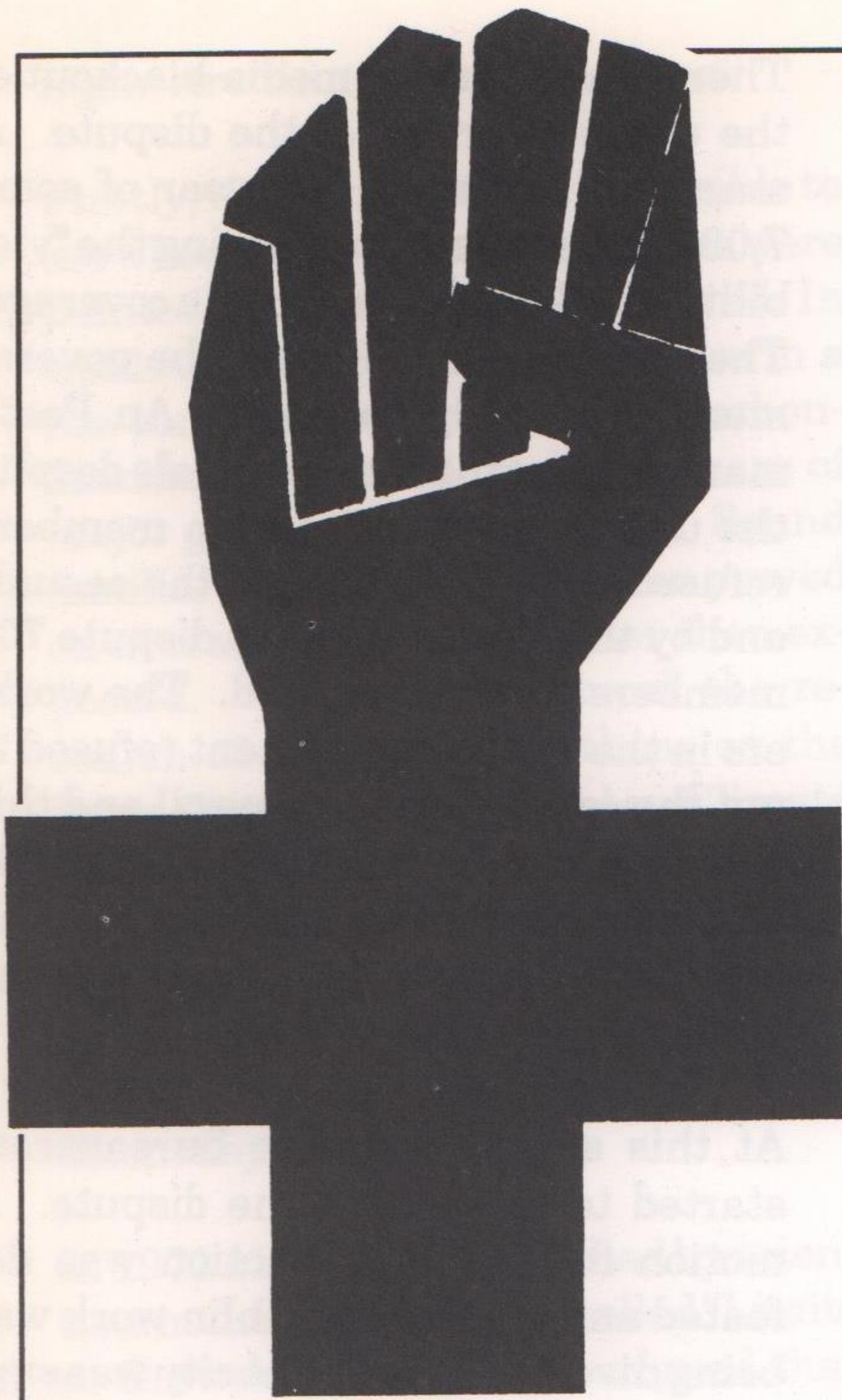
This led to women having no input into the decisions affecting society. A woman's place was in the home. A second effect of women's position in the family is that they are often isolated from each other and from society in general. Unlike a paid worker they have little opportunity of meeting and sharing experiences with others in the same situation on a daily basis, and to do something about it. They, on their own, have little power to change the conditions they find themselves in.

Today the family is a trap for women as much as it was for women at the beginning of the industrial revolution. Women are paid on average 2/3 of the wage that men are paid, so within any partnership it obviously makes more sense for the woman to undertake responsibility for the care of children. It is for this reason, common sense rather than sexism, that the vast majority of part-time workers are women, juggling two jobs at the same time.

Having said that, why is it that women are among the lower paid in society? Is it necessary for capitalism to exploit women workers to this degree? The simple answer to that is sometimes it is, sometimes it isn't.







The only important difference between a male and female worker is that the female has the potential to get pregnant, that is the potential to want maternity leave and need creche facilities. In other words they are slightly more expensive to employ than men. So when women are asked (illegally!) at job interviews if they intend to marry, such discrimination has a material basis. An employer isn't interested in the good of society at large but in obtaining the cheapest most reliable workforce possible.

### DISPOSABLE WORKERS

Historically women have been encouraged to work and have been accommodated when it suited capitalism. When there was either a shortage of male labour due to war as during the 1st and 2nd World Wars or an expansion of industry as at the dawn of the industrial revolution or during the "boom" years of the 1960s. When times are tough, when recession sets in, women are encouraged back into the family.

The conclusion for most socialists is that womens' liberation can only be lastingly obtained with the overthrow of capitalism. This is not to say that reforms should not be fought for at the moment, but to recognise that some of the gains may be short-term ones which can be withdrawn.

This conclusion isn't accepted by everyone concerned with womens' liberation, and certainly is rejected by large sections of the feminist movement. A good example of the alternative analysis can be seen in the following extract from the British Survey of Social Attitudes (a survey carried out regularly by an independent body).

### WHO MINDS THE CHILDREN

It found that the provision of childcare was one of the impediments preventing women from working. Their conclusion was that *"in the absence of changes in mens' attitudes, or working hours outside the home or in their contribution within the family it seems unlikely that even a greater availability of childcare outside the home would alter domestic arrangements greatly. Without these changes, it is conceivable that many useful forms of work flexibility - that might be offered to women such as job sharing, career breaks, special sick leave or term-time working - might reinforce rather than mitigate the formidable level of occupational segregation based on gender, to women's longer-term disadvantage."*

The authors of the survey note that as long as responsibility for childcare rests with the women they will remain trapped in the family. They also point out that concessions to women in the world of work often result in women being pigeon-holed into less well paid jobs. This already happens in regard to part-time workers who are paid a lower hourly wage than full-time workers. They point out that men have to square up to their responsibility as fathers. The key they emphasise is a change in mens' attitudes.

However what was not mentioned is that no matter how attitudes change, men are as powerless as individuals in regard to their working conditions as women are. With all the goodwill in the world they cannot change their employer/employee relationship, they cannot adjust their working hours to suit childcare just as women cannot. A more fundamental conclusion would be that society at the moment, capitalism, does not want to accommodate any of the problems of childcare preferring to leave it up to the individual to make their own arrangements as best as they can.

### CONTROL OF OUR BODIES

It is for this reason that the issue of womens' ability to control their own fertility is key in obtaining womens' liberation. That is the fight for abortion rights, for freely available contraceptives, for 24 hour quality childcare.

Women will remain as second class citizens as long as they are relegated to an inferior position in the work force. They are now in that position because to the bosses they are an unstable workforce, likely to want pregnancy leave, likely to come in late if a child is sick, likely to require a creche or want to work part time. It is because men in society are seen as the breadwinners that they have slightly more secure, slightly more dependable jobs.

## Anarchist Discussions

The Workers Solidarity Movement holds open discussion meetings in Dublin on the second Wednesday of each month. They take place in the Ha'penny Inn (at the Ha'penny Bridge), Wellington Quay at 8pm. A short talk is followed by questions and discussion. All *Workers Solidarity* readers are welcome.

**September 9th:** *The fight for abortion rights*

**October 14th:** *A beginners guide to anarchism*

**November 11th:** *'Social Partnership' - changing the system from within?*

It's a vicious circle, because men are in reality better paid, it makes more sense within the family to assign the role of main earner to the male and the role of carer to the female. The only way to permanently get out of this circle is to change the system. In a society organised to make profits for a few, women loose out. In a society organised to satisfy needs, womens' fertility would no longer be a limiting factor.

### INTO THE MAINSTREAM

Women can of course win gains at the moment. In Ireland women are no longer forced to stop working upon marriage (though lack of childcare can make it impossible to continue). Attitudes have changed considerably in the last thirty years. Most importantly, the position of women is now an issue. Whereas before it was only addressed by the few socialist or womens' groups, now it's taken up in the mainstream media, in chat shows and newspaper articles. However, any of our new freedoms are very much dependant on the economic conditions of the day. So, while in the booming 1960s American women won limited access to abortion, now in recession those rights are being pushed back inch by inch.

When the reality is weighed up, equal education & job opportunities and equal pay are limited without free 24 hour nurseries and free contraception & abortion on demand. While a small minority of women can buy control of their own fertility, for the majority family and childcare is still - as it has always been - the largest problem faced by women workers. In this argument capitalism won't concede, it must be defeated.

*Aileen O'Carroll*



## fighting casualisation in An Post

# What happened in the An Post dispute

**THE ONGOING economic slump has seen the ruling class trying to make us pay for their crisis. The employers wish for a free hand to introduce wage cuts and speedups while the government cuts deeper into the social wage. They don't quite have it all their way however as the unions, although greatly weakened, can still fight back - particularly in the public service.**

One weapon the employers have used in the last few years to weaken workplace organisation and to drive wages down is casualisation. This normally involves replacing full time jobs with pensions, sick pay and holiday rights with part time-workers who are commonly employed on a week-to-week basis and have few rights. Another part of the same process is the hiring of workers on individual contracts and/or as contractors. Both of these greatly weaken the existing workplace and union organisation. Both result in large savings for the employers as wages are cut and there is no longer any need to cover sick pay, holidays or pensions.

### CASUALISATION

The An Post dispute which ended in June should be seen in the context of a fight against casualisation by a well organised workforce. The origins of the dispute go back to March 1990 when the Communication Workers Union (CWU) National Executive agreed with An Post's plan to introduce casual workers. An emergency motion at the CWU conference, however, instructed the Executive to oppose the introduction of casuals. This did not prevent the Executive from agreeing to allow casuals into the Central Sorting Office (CSO) in Dublin's Sheriff Street. This move was prevented by the CWU branch there.

The bosses' press proceeded to attack the postal workers for earning "huge

amounts" of money and stopping the creation of new jobs. In reality the An Post "viability plan" called for the destruction of 1500 full-time jobs, some of which would be replaced with casual workers. The relatively high earnings some postal workers were taking home were a result of working weekends and double shifts. High perhaps relative to the generally rotten wages those of us with poorly paid jobs get but probably well below what Chief Executive John Hynes would spend on a night out. The union members wanted this overtime to be replaced with 400 full time jobs.

The alternative favoured by An Post was to employ casual workers under far worse conditions than the permanent workforce. Casual workers were to have no job security, they would be employed on a week-to-week basis. They would also be expected to be completely flexible in terms of working hours so that they would not know from week to week when they would be working, or even if they would be working.

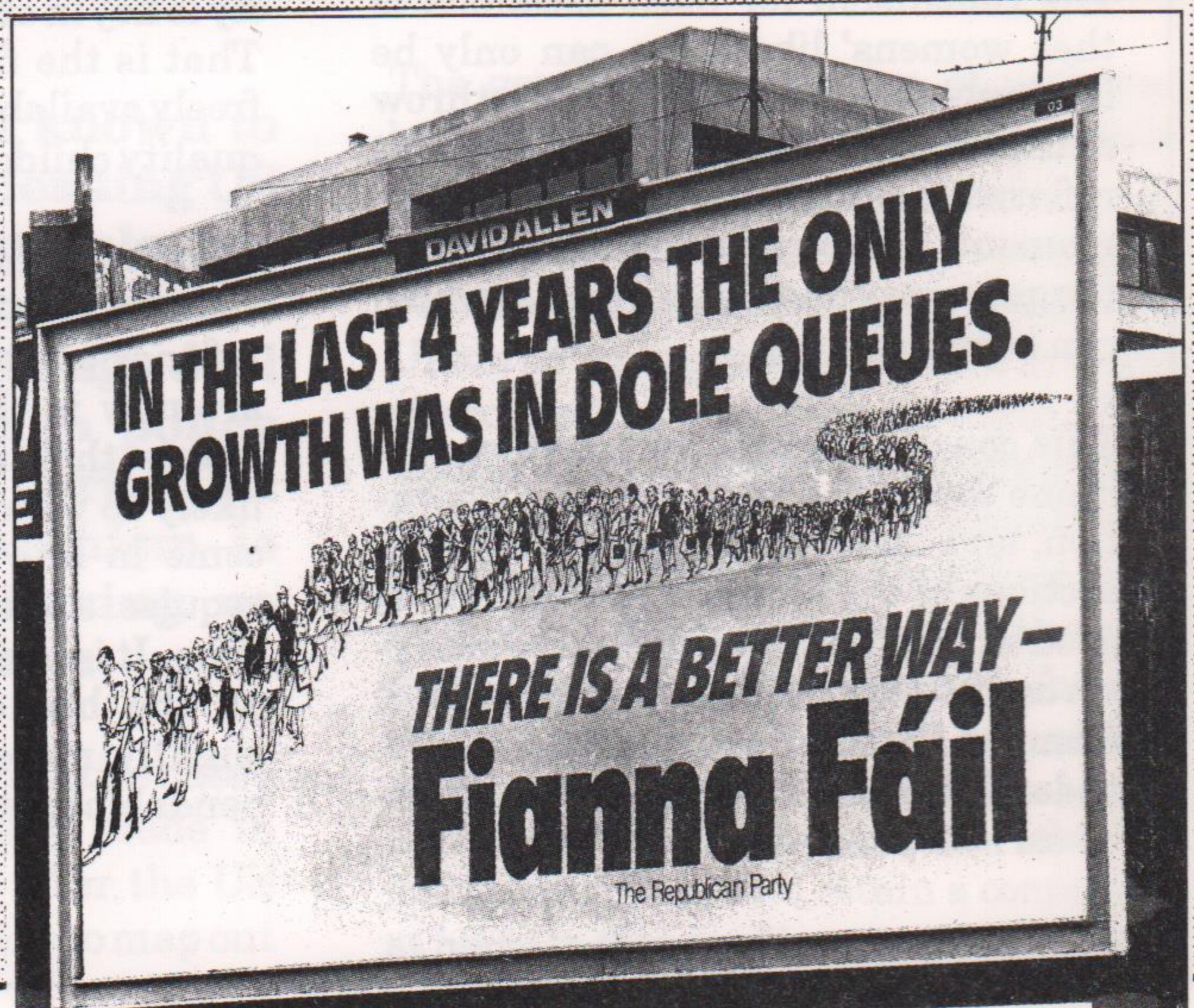
There was a virtual media blackout of the union's version of the dispute. A march in February last year of some 7,000 postal workers opposing the "viability plan" received no media coverage. The dispute started when the government gave the go ahead to An Post's management to take on casuals despite the union's position. Union members refused to work alongside the casuals and by the third day of the dispute 700 members were suspended. The workers in the wages department refused to put the casuals on the payroll and this was used as an excuse to cut 1,600 Dublin workers off the payroll. Eventually 1,800 were to be suspended and 2,500 taken off the payroll.

At this stage the union bureaucrats started to undermine the dispute. A motion for full strike action was defeated and news that Dublin work was being diverted outside the city was suppressed. The union bureaucrats relied on public opinion and legal action through the courts to win the dispute. Although public support for the postal workers was important it would only have had a major impact on the dispute if it had generated solidarity action in related industries like Telecom. The bosses courts, as might be expected, gave the union a useless decision.

The Dublin Outdoor Branch, however, decided to get suspended members to attend for work in Sheriff Street. On May 1st. this resulted in a virtual occupation of the CSO which forced An Post to withdraw the casual workers. May 27th saw a lunchtime march of 5,000 workers to the Dáil. An Post was also under pressure by the approach of the

**An Post's "Viability Plan" was made public in May 1991. Its proposals included •Scrapping of 1,500 jobs, mainly in Dublin; •Large-scale contract, part-time and casual working; •Closing 550 sub-Post Offices, mainly in rural areas; •The loss of one in five of all delivery jobs; •Breaking union strength in the CSO by moving to**

**a new mechanised depot outside the city centre; •Reduction of jobs in the Sorter grade in the CSO; •Contracting out transport of mail to private hauliers.**





## Tories pick on six county single parents

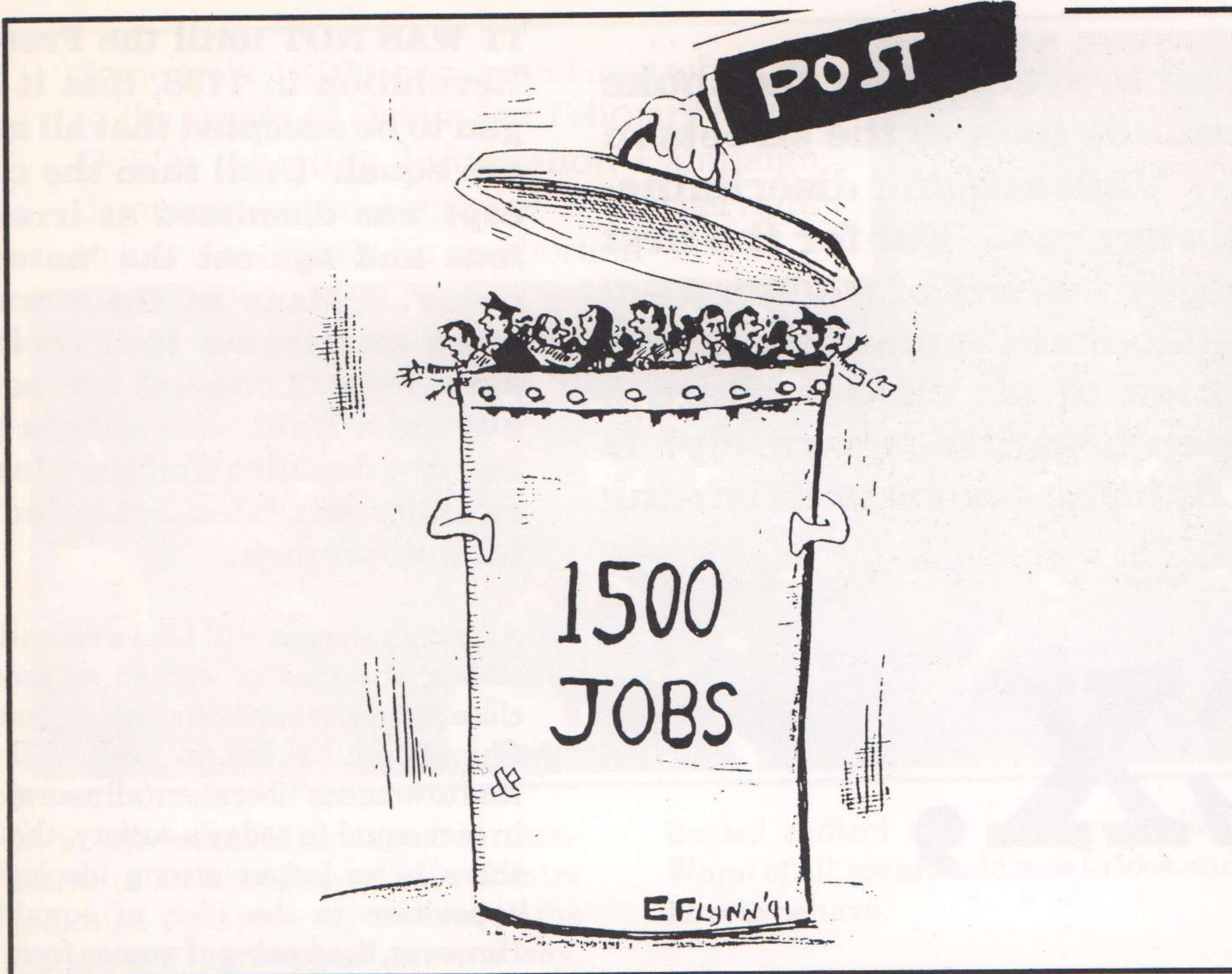
APRIL 1993 will see the Child Support Act come into effect in the six counties. It will make single mothers on Income Support and other Benefits name the father of their children. This is regardless of whether the mother wants anything to do with the him or whether he can afford maintenance. The DSS will then chase the father and claim maintenance from him, which will be pocketed by the Treasury. The children will get nothing.

The so-called Child Support Act will leave some children even deeper in poverty. There are 35,000 lone parents in the six counties. Their buying power has fallen by 11% since 1979, this is going to make things worse.

Mothers who refuse to name the father "without good cause" will suffer a 20% deduction (fine) from their benefit. It has already been ruled that threats or fear of violence are not sufficient "good cause". You will have to show a real "risk of harm or undue distress" to the satisfaction of the DSS.

Single parents work hard to pay their bills and being up their children. They should be as entitled as anyone else to a living wage, privacy, independence and respect. This Act is a small-minded and mean way of taking a few more pounds from the most needy. It is also an attempt to divide claimants into the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor. The more the government can create an image of 'undeserving' claimants, the easier it will be to get away with cutbacks.

Already the DSS are pressing some single mothers to give details of 'absent fathers', and threatening cuts in Benefits. This is illegal. The Act does not come into force until next April. Don't co-operate. Take a friend with you to the interview and get the interviewer's name. Report any threats made. Further information/assistance is available from your local Unemployed Centre.



Maastricht Referendum, the smooth functioning of which would require a full postal service. The union Executive and management reached a 'compromise'. A national ballot voted to accept the settlement by 6 to 1.

### NOT A VICTORY

The settlement, although appearing to be a compromise, in reality strongly favoured An Post. An Post agreed to create 140 permanent jobs but these are subject to a let out clause which targets these jobs for future redundancies. The ratio of casual to permanent jobs was not fixed leaving An Post to set this as they wish. In addition, although improvements were won in the casuals' contracts, they will still be subject to "suitability and availability of work". This means casual workers can be dismissed easily and so activists among the casual workers can easily be victimised.

This settlement will be little more than a temporary lull for management to regain its breath. An Post still intend to carry on with the "viability plan" which will involve job losses and making the workers pay for modernisation. Postal workers were hit financially by the dispute which saw many of them lose six weeks pay. Five members of the CWU Outdoor Branch committee were forced to resign in order to argue against accepting the deal, otherwise they would have been forced by the policy of "collective responsibility" to argue for accepting the deal.

On the other hand, the dispute did demonstrate a high level of solidarity

amongst postal workers. The fact that support was solid in those branches where members were suspended and the high turn out of postal workers on the march to the Dáil demonstrate this. Some of the casual workers supported the CWU position and, importantly, collections took place among Telecom workers. This solidarity could be built on to win the next stage of the dispute and defeat the An Post plan.

Some of the left, in particular 'Militant', have said the dispute shows that what is needed is a strong trade union leadership prepared to take on the bosses and the government. However we would argue that what the Left should be doing is building a confident rank and file movement in the workplaces which will take the running of disputes into its own hands rather than waiting for bureaucratic betrayal. The resignation of the Left from the Outdoor Branch committee demonstrates that even at the lowest levels of the union a relatively strong Left presence can be muzzled by the rule book. Socialists should run for these positions, but with the aim of winning arguments among the rank and file rather than seeing this as a way of transforming the unions. Dependence on the most left wing leaders is never as good as the self-activity of a confident membership.

Joe Black





Lavinia Kerwick showed great bravery when she spoke out about being raped, thousands took to the streets in support of "X" last February. Violence and discrimination against women are still very real. But for the first time since the early 1980s large numbers of women want to fight back. *Aileen O'Carroll* looks at some of the issues that have arisen. Can women of all classes share a common goal? Should women organise separately? Is there a connection between fighting sexism and fighting capitalism?

# SEX, CLASS and the Queen of England



IT WAS NOT until the French Revolution in 1798, that it began to be accepted that all men are equal. Until then the concept was dismissed as irreligious and against the 'natural order'. Many of the morals, rules and rights that society assumes as constant are actually quite fluid. It is only in the last few decades that the idea of equality has been extended to include women.

Although women still hold a secondary status, the idea of women as second class citizens is beginning to lose ground. Changing attitudes, in itself, will not lead to women's liberation (all men aren't in fact equal in today's society, though there is no longer strong ideological opposition to the idea of equality). However, the freeing of women from the chains of sexism empowers us to fight for women's liberation.

However having said all this, why is it that women aren't more active in politics, in community groups, in campaigning? What is it that is holding them back? Anarchists believe that the core problem facing women is class society. However, overlying that core is a layer of sexist ideas. This ideology serves to reinforce and justify women's inferior status. How does this operate? How does it manage to do this?

It's easy today to underestimate the effects of the conditioning that takes place. Conditioning that tells us, that in the very first place we don't have any right to compete on an equal basis. There is ample proof that this occurs, for example the findings of a recent survey on secondary school children indicated that girls had a much lower self-image than boys of a comparable age. Recent studies in American classrooms showed that when girls answered out of turn they were more likely to be told off, while boys were likely to be praised for showing intelligence or initiative. Given this it was not surprising that in later classes girls rarely spoke unless specifically asked a question while boys often spoke out or chatted with the teacher.

## RAPE AND 'GUILT'

Researchers into the area of sexual harassment have found that people have difficulty in knowing what type of behaviour amounts to harassment. Women feel unsure as to what are their rights are, unsure as to how much hassle they are expected by society to put up



Some of the 10,000 women and men who took to the streets of Dublin last February on the Dublin Abortion Information Campaign demonstration in support of "X" and her right to travel to Britain for an abortion



with. In a recent interview a representative of Dublin Rape Crisis Centre indicated that in her experiences all the women she saw felt guilt in some way, right down to an old age pensioner raped in her own home. Indeed, this is hardly surprising given the type of reporting of trials such as the Kennedy rape trial this year.

One in three of crimes against women arise from domestic violence. Yet these problems are given low priority. Rape Crisis Centres are constantly under threat of closure due to lack of funding. In the first four months of 1990, the Gardai received 1,568 calls for help in domestic violence situations (and all the experts accept that only a small number of such crimes are ever reported). The Womens' Aid refuges, run by volunteers, have only 16% of the space that is needed.

Workers in a Dublin refuge reported that between four and seven families are turned away on average, while approximately another 60 women phone seeking advice each week. Our low status in society is reflected not only by the level of violence against us, but by the complete disregard that is shown for the problem by the government and society at large.

### A CURFEW ON WOMEN

Though most rapes are committed by somebody known by the woman (92% of Irish rape victims knew their attackers), police propaganda is still aimed at frightening women into maintaining a self-imposed curfew at night. Even though the statistics indicate she is probably in more danger at home! We are forced to leave limited lives. We don't have freedom of movement even within our own communities. We are

denied control over our own bodies. Worst of all, we are told how to look and how to behave.

Women are constantly given cues that they are in some way inferior. This conditioning is a symptom of the position of women in society, not the cause but a symptom with far reaching affects. We learn what is the norm through what is seen as acceptable behaviour in the world around us. The media, be it TV, film industry or pop music occupy a very vocal and dominant position. Next time you watch MTV or go to the cinema try and count how many times you see women portrayed as individuals in their own right, rather than as appendages. You won't need more fingers to count on than you have on your own two hands.

Most womens' magazines are still concerned with beauty, fashion and home making. Articles about working women are almost exclusively aimed at professionals and executives. They don't reflect the the reality that most women experience. *Company* magazine (June 1991) asks "Are you scared of success? Career success can be dazzling and very exciting, yet it can go hand in hand with tremendous fear". The article argues that if we just didn't keep holding ourselves back, we could make it in the career world. The truth for most of us is that it is lack of childcare and job opportunities determines our position as low paid workers, not our lack of confidence.

### GLOBAL FORUM OF EGOISTS AND BOSSES

Unfortunately much of the womens' movement does exactly the same thing. Dublin recently hosted the 1992 Global Forum of Women. At £180 a head the

forum was dedicated to "visions of leadership". Those attending were all "political, artistic & scientific leaders or prominent in the international leadership of the womens' movement". The brochure advertising the conference proclaimed "the president of Nicaragua is a women".

So what! So is the Queen of England and Margaret Thatcher. I don't see things being much better for our 'sisters' over the water or for those in Nicaragua. The election of Mary Robinson didn't make any noticeable difference for the 'sisters' at home either.

The conclusion of the conference, the message they are sending to the low paid, the part-time workers and the unemployed is that what is needed is 40% representation of women at all levels. Overwhelmingly, the message to us was to get up on our bikes, to seize the opportunities, that the only thing stopping us was ourselves. Class didn't come into it.

A gap exists between what women are meant to be like and what we are, between what we are supposed to achieve and what it is possible for us to achieve. Failure on our part to live up to an ideal is attributed to some fault within us, rather than to the type of society we live in. It is for these reasons that women often find it more difficult to speak in public. We are often are less confident because by standing up we are reacting against a conditioning that tells us we should sit down.

### ORGANISING SEPARATELY?

Women are constantly conditioned to believe that we do not have a right to an opinion, to be politically active, to speak out. Sometimes the first step against

*continued over the page*



## SEX, CLASS and the Queen of England

*continued from page 11*

this conditioning is to organise separately from men. Partly this is because it is felt that men being more confident and more self-assured tend to dominate discussions. Or even more simply, some women feel that when men are present they are more likely to take a silent role and leave the arguing up to them.

Under these conditions women organising together is an exercise in empowerment. It's a positive response to the conditioning of society. Its role should be to make it possible for women to participate as equals with men. It should be seen as a temporary but necessary step, not as an end in itself.

However problems arise when this is taken further and when women begin to

campaign separately. This identifies men as the root of the problem, which they aren't. It also isolates men from the struggle, when it is obvious that in order to change society we must work alongside them.

Within many Unions and the British Labour Party there exist women-only conferences. A problem with this is that womens' issues are often referred to these conferences as a way of avoiding the issues and forgetting about them. Rape is a womens' issue - refer it to the womens' conference, contraception is a womens' issue - refer it to the womens' conference, etc.

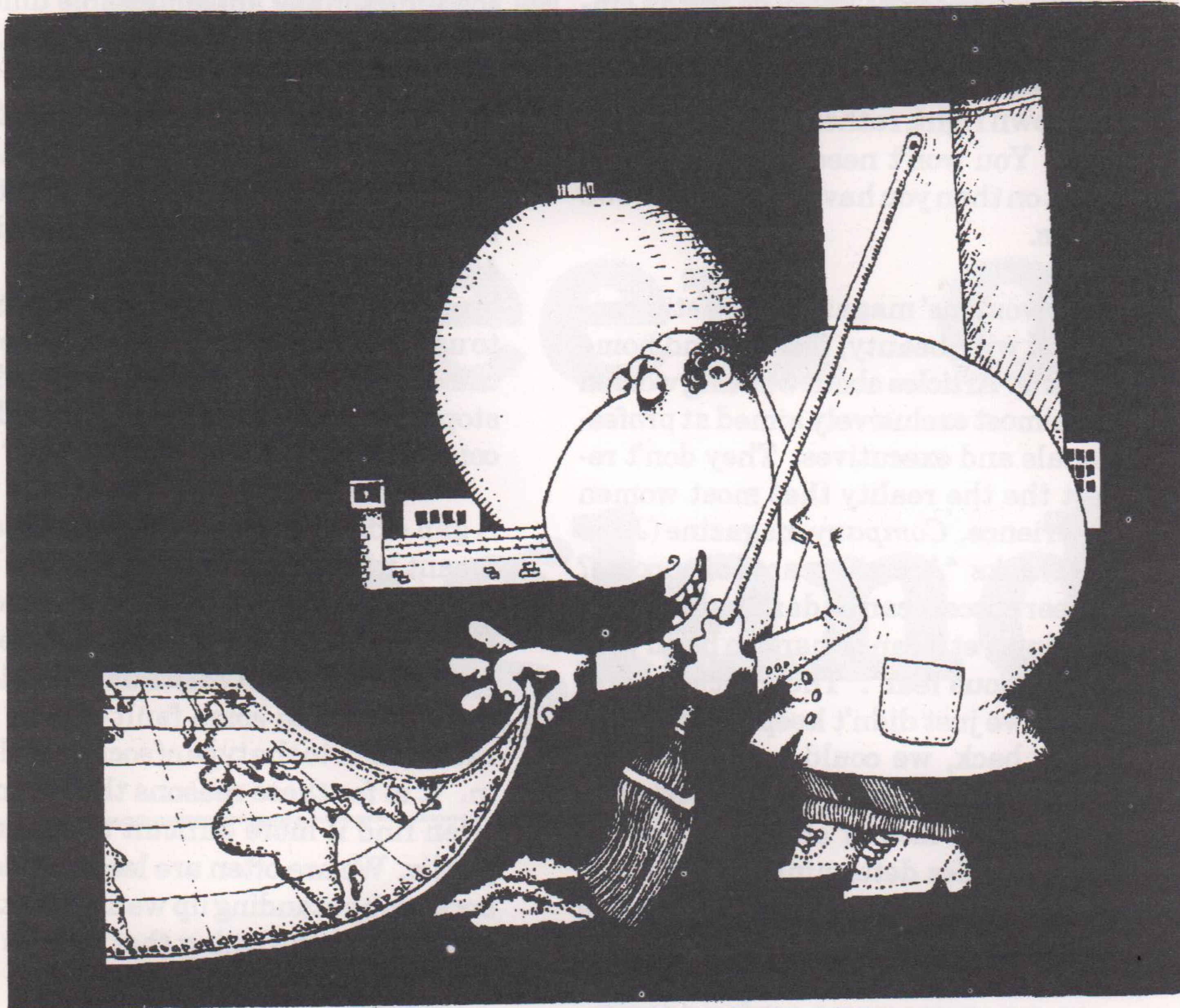
In these instances men are rarely confronted with these issues, rarely have to deal with them and are let off the hook. Therefore while we defend the right of women to meet separately we also think it vital in any organisation, in any campaign, that women present their arguments to the entire body of people

and win those arguments and fight as a whole. Tactically, this is the only way to widen and then win the fight for womens' liberation.

Things are better for us today. A lot of the institutionalised oppression, such as marriage bars and property laws has been removed. Often equal pay legislation and quota systems have been put in their place. Yet while things may have changed on paper, we are still left with class society. As long as this remains, the majority of us will not have equal access to the workplace or much else. As long as we are denied economic equality, society will continue making up morals and inventing so-called 'natural laws', as a way of justifying its treatment of us. By tackling the symptom, sexism in society, we will be in a better position to tackle the root cause. By tackling capitalism we will be fighting for womens' liberation.

*Aileen O'Carroll*

## Does 'saving the planet' mean an end to industry, progress and development?



**THE EARTH SUMMIT** took place in Rio last June. In spite of the enormous cost (\$123 million) and publicity (8,749 media people). The final results were two weak treaties and the agreement of some "principles" on

the environment. Even this was too much for America who refused to sign the Bio-Diversity Treaty, fearing for their biotechnology industry. In Rio itself an estimated 700 "street children" have been murdered

since January (according to the Centre for the Mobilisation of Marginalised Populations) in an attempt to beautify the city.

Once again the capitalists proved unwilling to tackle the problems of underdevelopment and environmental degradation. Given their past record this doesn't come as much of a surprise. However there are serious problems and it would be wrong for socialists and anarchists to down-play them. For example, according to the World Bank's World Development Report for 1992 well over one billion people in the so-called developing nations suffer from water-borne diseases and more than 3.5 million children a year die from diarrhoea alone. Despite the collapse of Stalinism arms spending has increased from \$680 billion in 1972 to an estimated \$800 billion this year. The rainforests are being cut down at a rate of 170,000 square kilometres per year with an estimated loss of 50-100 forest species every day.

### THE EVE OF DESTRUCTION?

Things are clearly pretty bad. Many would point to pollution, soil degradation, de-forestation and species loss and say we are experiencing a devastating crisis. Some even say that the end is



nigh. Are things really this bad?

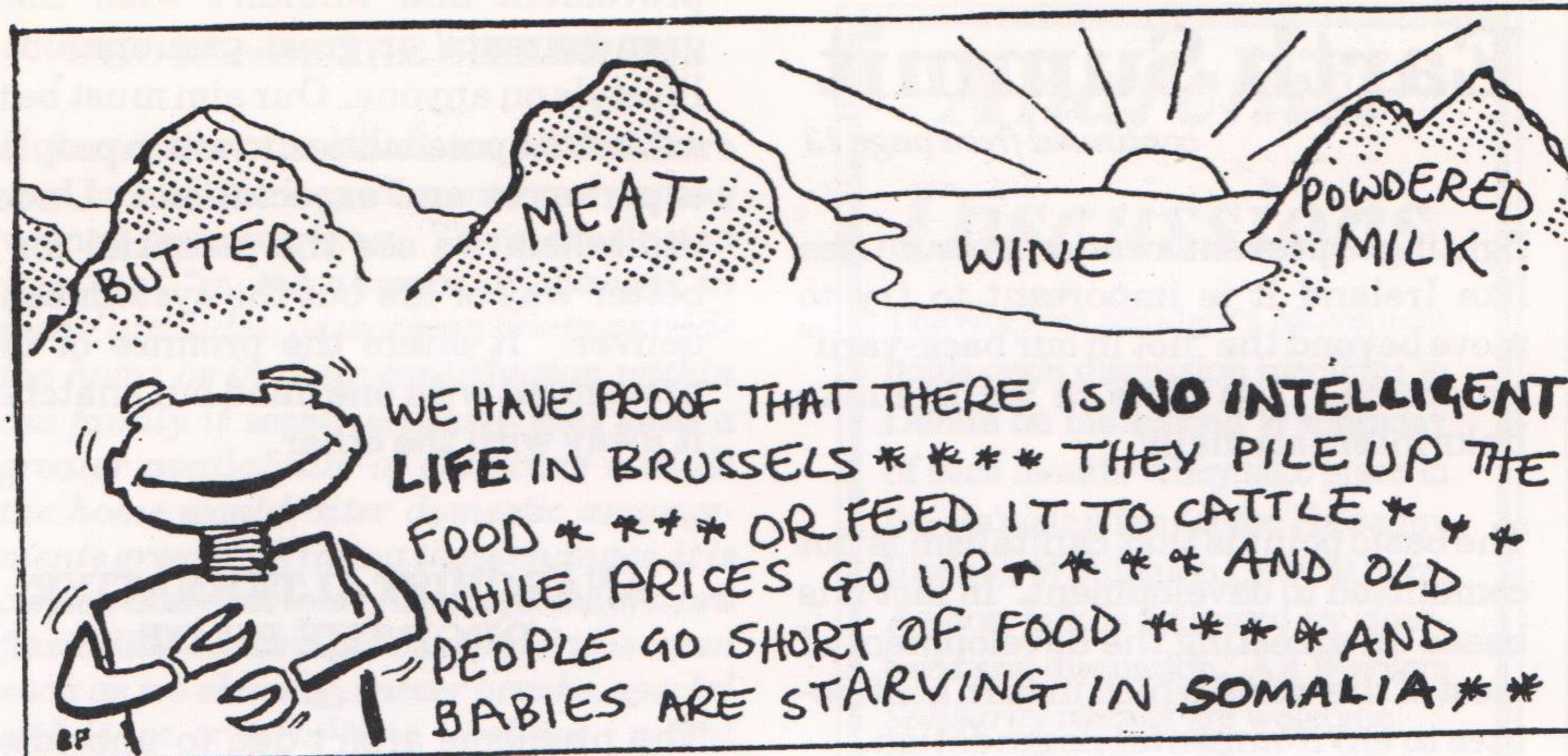
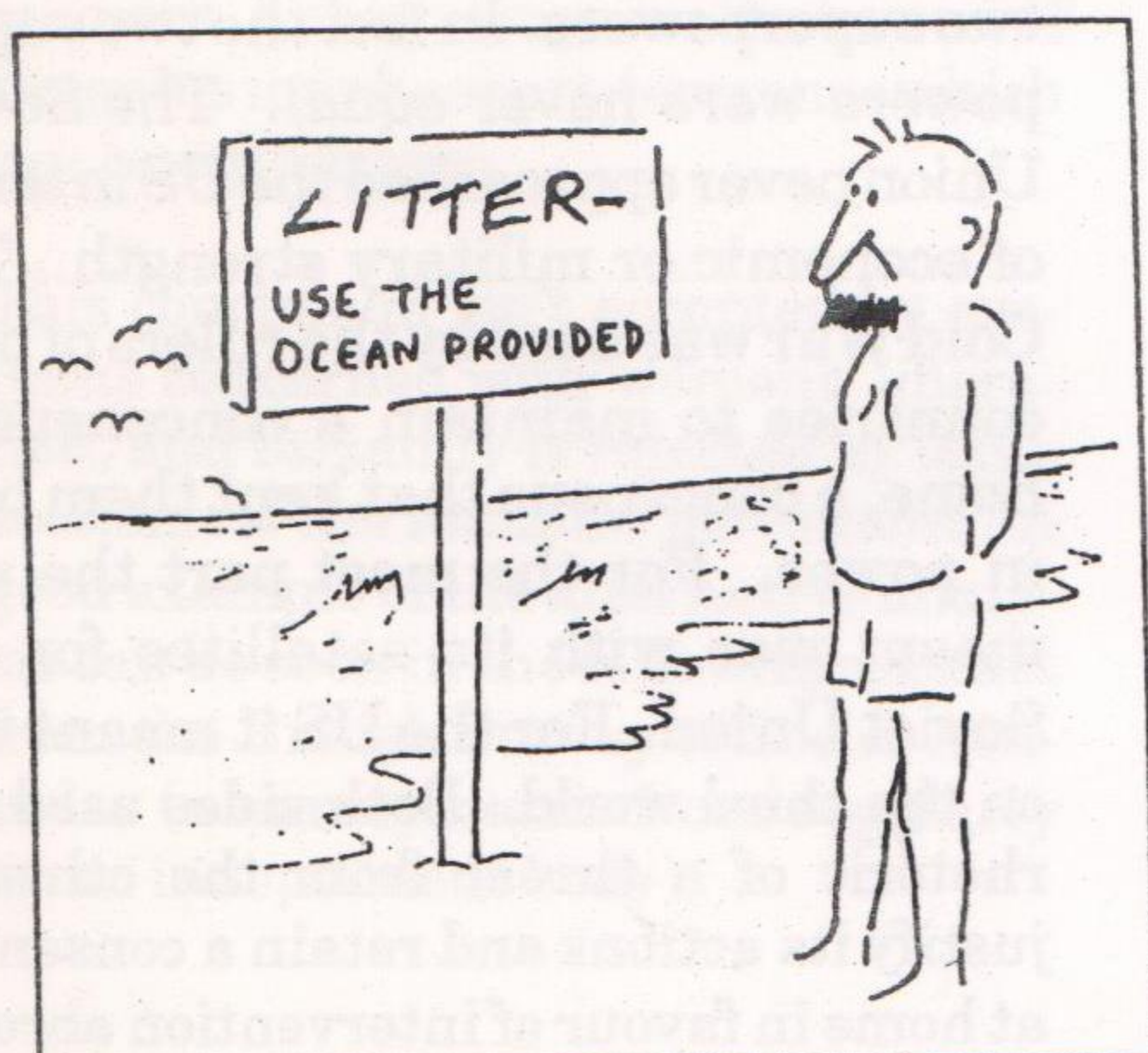
Firstly, if you look back it is possible to see where such doomsday pictures were painted in the past but we survived. In the 1930s ten record warm years in a row combined with increasing carbon-dioxide concentrations led to fears of major global climate changes. Sound familiar? The 1940s-1970s then proved on average to be much cooler than expected. This is not to knock the research of scientists like those on the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Control who believe we are experiencing a greenhouse effect. However it must be borne in mind that climate and ecological systems are extremely complex and to be wary of simple doomsday scenarios.

In 1972 a book was published by scientists in the 'Club of Rome' called "Limits to Growth". In this they argued that key resources such as lead, copper and aluminium were about to run out. Of course they didn't. In the recently published sequel "Beyond the Limits" the scientists admit they were totally wrong. They admit they should never have used the "if present trends continue" type argument. The only thing that is certain about trends is that they rarely do! We weren't on the eve of destruction then. We aren't now, though we do face serious problems.

### OVER-PRODUCTION?

However the question is still raised by a lot of people concerned with the environment: are we over-developed and over-producing? For example, at the "alternative" Earth Summit in Rio a demand was issued for "a cut in the North's consumption of resources and an immediate transformation of technology to create ecological sustainability in the North". Is the problem one of over-production and consumption in the industrialised countries?

We would argue that there is a problem of over-production in capitalism. But it is not real over-production.



Simply that it is an enormously wasteful system of production geared purely towards competition and profit. Huge amounts of goods are made to break as soon as possible, rubbish is sold by advertising, new inventions which threaten monopoly positions are bought out as fast as possible to stop their production (the oil companies are notorious for this). A lot of production is geared purely to maintaining a competitive advantage.

Often more is produced than there is a market demand for. Then the price collapses and recession follows. This might not mean that too much had been produced for peoples' needs. Oh, no! All it means is that more has been produced than can be bought.

So in America, one of the richest countries in the world, 36 million people (15% of the population) were living in poverty in 1991 according to *Business Week*. Worldwide in 1991 there were 200 million tons of grain hoarded to preserve prices. The charity Trocaire estimated that three million tons could have eliminated starvation in Africa for that year.

### ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT

Imperialism is one of the ways the capitalists try to eliminate some of the contradictions involved in apparent over-production followed by recession. It is a system where certain countries are kept at a very low level of development by other well-developed capitalist nations. During booms they can buy up labour and raw materials cheaply. They can also off-load huge amounts of generally inferior products onto these countries to delay price collapse and recession.

Imperialism is not a thing of the past. The Gulf War proved that the imperialists will go to any lengths, including massive use of force, to maintain

their power. At the Summit the so-called developing nations of the South asked for \$40 billion to implement the Bio-Diversity Treaty. They received just \$1 billion. Even \$40 billion is but a small fraction of their indebtedness to Western banks and governments.

These countries pay twice as much in debt re-payment as they ever get from development 'aid'. Most so-called 'aid' usually has a cost: total compliance with the wishes of the donor government. In fact most governmental development aid is used as a tool to keep the imperialised countries in line. 93% of the USA's aid budget goes to Israel where it certainly isn't used for humanitarian purposes!

### CHEMICAL PROSPECTING IN COSTA RICA

When the West's rulers moan about the loss of bio-diversity they are generally worried about potential drugs and other new products they wish to extract, refine and make a profit from. Costa Rica has already signed "chemical-prospecting" agreements with Western pharmaceutical companies. Malaysia tries to sell hardwood products and, indeed, some renewable forest products on the world market. The West charges massive tariffs on finished products but virtually nothing on raw materials which they can process themselves. Other countries like Brazil are so massively burdened with debt they are almost entirely committed to deforestation and disastrous industrial and ranching projects to try and earn foreign currency.

Another example of how imperialism works is in the locating of polluting industry. 12% of the total cost of building a chemical plant in the USA is made up of pollution controls, 6% in Ireland and presumably even less in the third world. So industry that wouldn't be tolerated in the West moves into third world countries. For this reason, when



# Earth Summit

*continued from page 13*

fighting to prevent location in countries like Ireland it is important to try to move beyond the "not in our back-yard" syndrome. You have to try to make links internationally.

The basic point is that capitalism is not committed to development. In fact it is based on arresting the development of most of the world which in turn contributes to environmental degradation.

## POSSIBLE WORLDS

Progress and development are not the problem. Even severely distorted and uneven (e.g. confined to the West) as they are at present they still seem to point to a better future. The possibility of freeing humanity from poverty and drudgery exists. In the seventeenth century average life expectancy in the West was 40 years, now it's 75. Access to education, leisure time and a generally better standard of living has been made possible.

Most people in the West like the im-

provement and wouldn't wish their grandparents' or great grandparents' lifestyle on anyone. Our aim must be to extend the possibilities, to widen peoples' experiences and expectations. Under capitalism we see the potential for a better way of life but the system can't deliver. It offers the promise of improvement with one hand but snatches it away with the other.

## ANARCHIST ALTERNATIVE: DROP THE PILOT

The problems aren't due to unbridled development. In fact in most of the world development is urgently needed. We can't afford to go back but it is impossible to move forward under capitalism. Therefore we argue for the overthrow of capitalism. We make the case for anarchism and workers' management of industry. We need growth which is finely tuned, highly developed and responds to peoples' needs.

For now, we focus on immediate action by workers to address the issue where it arises. Environmental degradation is a class issue. The working class always gets the worst effects, the bosses can retreat to the air-conditioned penthouse

or the golf-links. We support action to reduce pollution from industrial plants or even for their re-location while attempting to avoid just making "not in our back-yard" arguments.

In Britain it took industrial action by the National Union of Seamen to stop nuclear dumping at sea, they just refused to do it even when threatened with legal action. Similarly dockers in Liverpool stopped the importation of toxic chemicals from Canada.

Workers can, in day-to-day struggle, make real gains in forcing industry to clean up. They have also proved capable of managing highly centralised and complex industries in a democratic way. The experiences of Russia (1917-1921), Spain (1936-37), Hungary (1956) and Portugal (1974) support this case.

Workers can make industry something which can ensure a better world and begin the massive task of development that is needed worldwide. This is the only way that resources can be used sustainably and the problems of poverty and under-development tackled. Industry has to be made work for people, not profits.

*Conor McLoughlin*

# Terrorising the Neighbourhood



•Noam Chomsky

## REVIEW

**TERRORISING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD** by Noam Chomsky, (AK Press) £3.95 inc. postage from the WSM bookservice.

**NOAM CHOMSKY is known to many on the left as a leading US dissident. Fewer people are aware that he is an anarchist. A major part of his writings deal with American foreign policy and this work is of particular importance as anarchism is often criticised as having no analysis of imperialism.**

*Terrorizing the Neighbourhood* is based around a speech Chomsky made in January of 1990, shortly after the US invasion of Panama. It seeks to map out

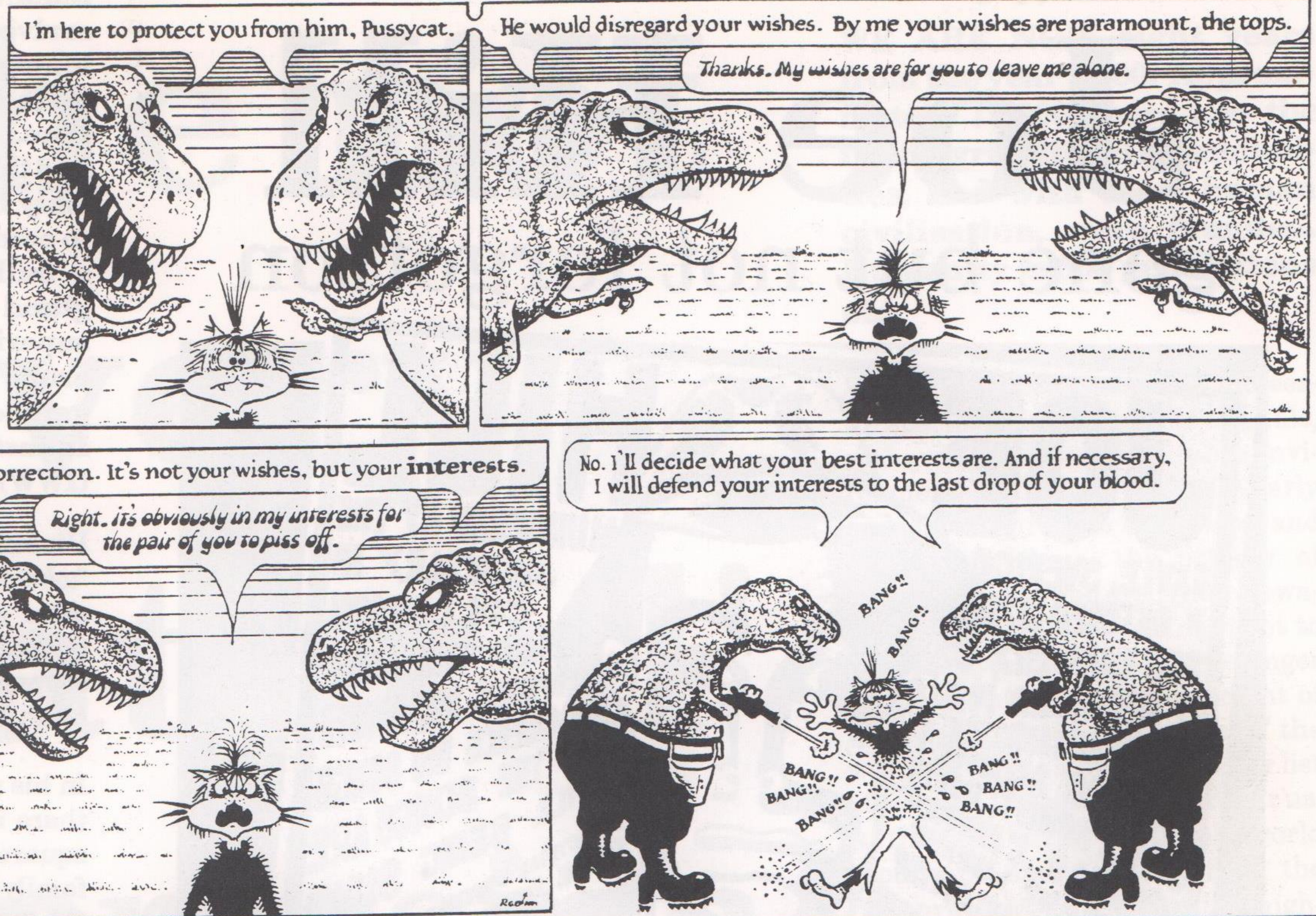
what US foreign policy meant in the Cold War and what its probable direction will be in future. It also challenges some of the established conceptions of what the Cold War meant and as such should be read not just as an introduction to US foreign policy but also by those on the left who find now that their world view collapsed with the collapse of the USSR.

## COLD WAR

The general presentation of post-war history from Right and Left alike was of a history dominated by clashes between two superpowers. In fact the two superpowers were never equal. The Soviet Union never approached the US in terms of economic or military strength. The Cold War was used by the rulers of both countries to maintain a consensus at home, a consensus that kept them both in power. For the most part the war meant war with its satellites for the Soviet Union. For the US it meant war on the third world. Both sides used the rhetoric of a threat from the other to justify its actions and retain a consensus at home in favour of intervention abroad.



# WILDCAT



The power of this consensus is demonstrated in the US by the fact that all the factions of the ruling class were united behind the 'right' of the US to intervene anywhere it liked. From liberals to conservatives this was unchallenged, the arguments that occurred were over tactics. During the Contra war in Nicaragua the US media freely argued over the tactics of pulling Nicaragua into line with US interests. Many did not see the Contra war as the best option yet the "right" of the US to dictate to Nicaragua went for the most part unquestioned.

The end of the Cold War meant the end of the all-powerful Soviet excuse. Panama was significant because it was the first post war US invasion not defended by reference to a Soviet 'threat'. Instead the drug war was invented as a substitute. Since then a range of "would be Hitler's" have been the excuse for US intervention. Perhaps the most remarkable thing about these new threats has been the willingness of the population to accept them as real. The Soviet Union at least had real military power, ICBM's and nuclear warheads. The new "threats" to world peace seem to have little more than Uzi's and large quantities of rusting, outdated Soviet tanks.

## DISCIPLINING THE THIRD WORLD

Chomsky effectively exposes post-war US foreign policy. It was not about

countering the Soviet Union or even halting the spread of "communism". Rather it was about destroying any opposition to US interests throughout the third world. US interests did not mean what was good for people in the US but what was good for the \$9 billion invested by corporations in Latin America. Nationalist governments like those of Nicaragua and Cuba which sought to pursue an independent economic line threatened little more than the profits of big business. The communists the US was supposedly fighting included everything from actual Communist parties to nationalists, priests and community workers.

These are the strengths of Chomsky's pamphlet, its analysis of what US policy was about. There is little discussion however about the next step, the struggle against imperialism of whatever variety. Chomsky ends with the hope that the introduction of rival imperialist powers in the shape of Japan and Europe will create a confusion that the "indigenous popular forces" will be able to take advantage of. He sees solidarity movements in the imperialist heartlands helping these movements through their own efforts and by influencing 'their' governments.

Imperialism however is part and parcel of 20th century capitalism. Its driving force is not so much in the planning rooms of government offices but rather the boards of thousands of corporations. Ruling classes may decide their inter-

ests lie in a greater or lesser degree of intervention but no long term gains can be made in this way. Likewise nationalist regimes pursuing an independent economic path will be dependant on whatever policy the imperialists are providing at the time. Improvements made one year will always be subject to being carpet bombed the next.

## FROM BOSNIA TO BELFAST

The defeat of imperialism on a permanent basis will require a movement fighting not only in the fields and towns of Latin America but also in the cities of the United States. It must be a movement of workers, controlled by workers. Our role as revolutionaries is not only to understand the workings of imperialism but also to start laying the foundations of such a movement.

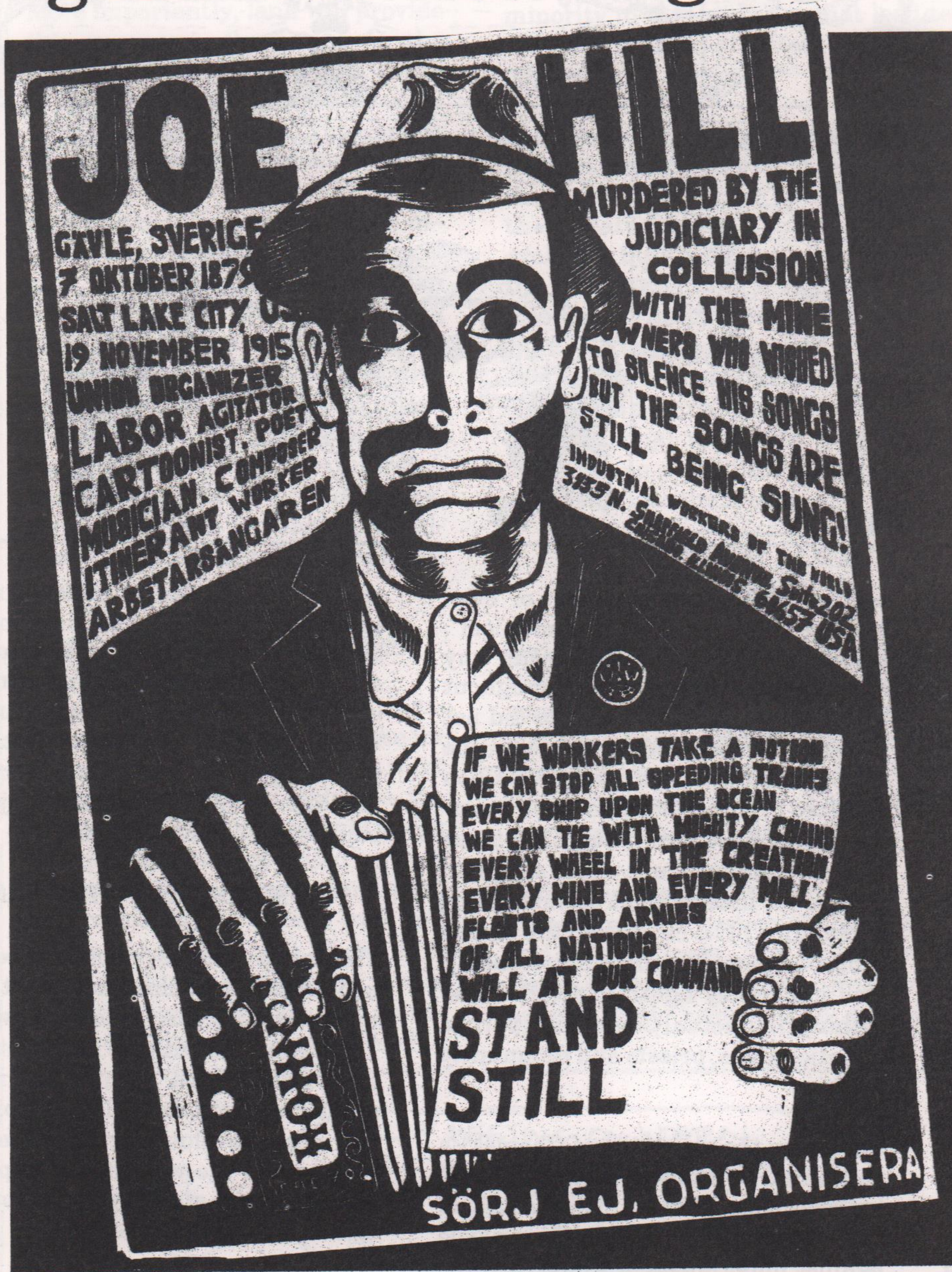
This should not be an excuse for inactivity now. Our role is to argue for the defeat of the imperialists wherever they intervene from northern Ireland to Iraq to Yugoslavia. In Ireland we oppose any involvement in UN or EC policing operations on behalf of imperialism while starting to build a movement north and south with the aim of forcing British withdrawal from the north and the introduction of an anarchist society based on need and not on greed.

Andrew Flood



# Joe Hill

## gone but not forgotten



EMMANUEL JOEL HAAGLUND arrived in the USA as a penniless immigrant - just like songwriter Irving Berlin around the same time. But whereas Berlin glorified the American dream and slavishly followed the patriotic road to commercial success to become a millionaire songwriter, Hagglund - now Joe Hill - by far the superior talent, remained an itinerant worker and became an organiser for the revolutionary Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) union.

His songs are known around the world, "where working folk defend their rights there you'll find Joe Hill". He was framed on a murder charge by the copper bosses in the Mormon state of Utah 77 years ago this November.

In his native town of Gavle (Sweden) there is a statue to him in the town square, while the room where his family lived is preserved as a museum (15,000 visitors a year come to see it). Some years ago the owner of the house, a distant relative, sold it to the SAC in preference to others in order to preserve Joe's memory. The SAC is a 15,000 strong syndicalist union with a revolutionary tradition.

The rest of the house is used as an office for the SAC's forestry union - in accordance with his last message "Don't mourn, organise". The backyard has been converted into an attractive summer meeting place - the Joe Hill Garden.

He asked for his ashes to be sent to Chicago for burial (jesting "I wouldn't be found dead in Utah") but the FBI had the last sick laugh. They intercepted them in the post and perhaps thinking that they too might be inflammatory, only released them two years ago.

Information from the Kate Sharpley Library bulletin

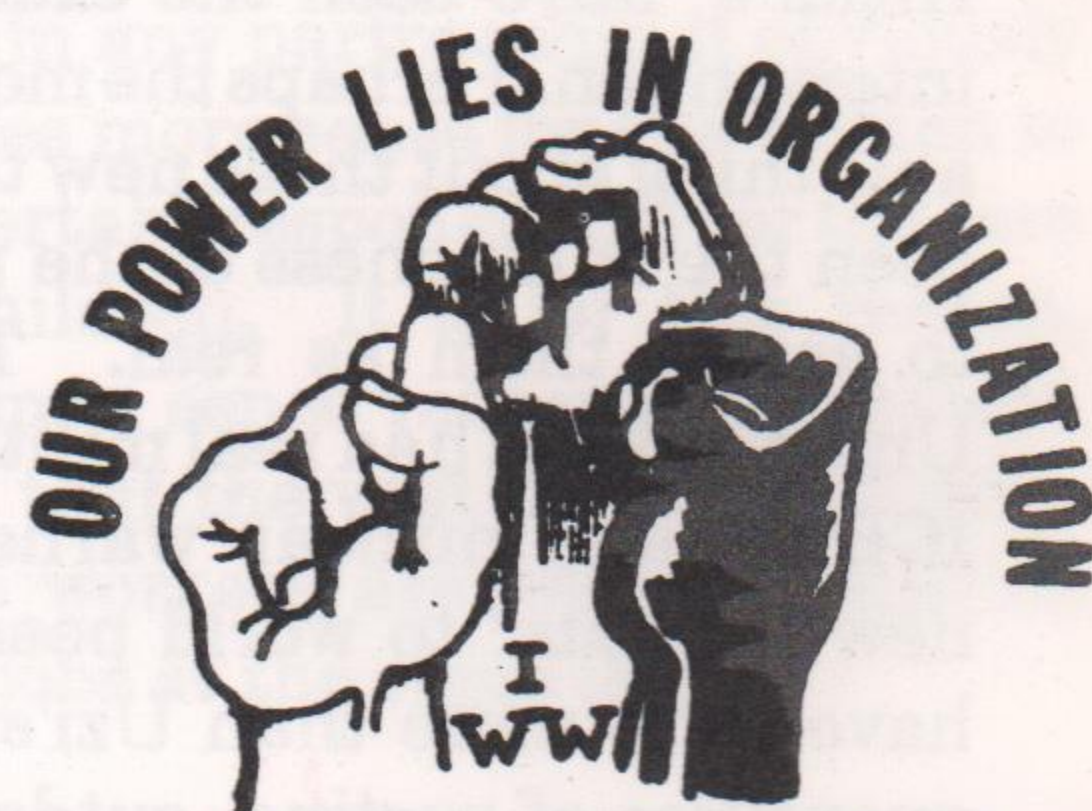
## American solidarity with South African workers

Two US unions, the United Steel Workers and the International Association of Machinists, are claiming success in

a campaign supporting black South African trade unionists. They have pressurised Philadelphia-based Crown, Cork & Seal to re-instate 196 workers who had been fired for protesting against state-sponsored violence.

The workers, members of the NUMSA union, had taken part in a two-day strike to protest against apartheid violence. Crown fired them and brought in non-union labour to do their jobs.

When the union tried to negotiate a settlement, the company had six workers and three union officials arrested on 'intimidation' charges.



The settlement brokered by the American unions calls for 100 of the sacked workers to be re-instated immediately and the other 96 to be given preferential recall. The charges against the nine have been dropped.

Source: *Industrial Worker*



**Pregnant and happy... Congratulations**  
 If you are not happy about it,  
 information on all options  
 - keeping your baby, adoption or abortion -  
 is available.

**Womens Information Network**  
 Telephone 01-6794700

## Chop, Chop

The Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists in Russia reports scattered protests and strikes since the beginning of the year. Workers are fighting back against job losses and a declining standard of living. To forestall another major challenge from Siberian oil and coal workers, President Yeltsin dispatched "rouble trains" to defuse threatened strikes by releasing overdue pay. Throughout Russia and the Baltic states workers in many enterprises have not been paid their wages for several weeks, even months.

Yeltsin's walkabout in Moscow on June 12th was disturbed by a man with a meat cleaver who volunteered to enact Yeltsin's statement that he would rather cut his own head off than raise prices. Police intervened to head off the cuts.

## letters

### NATIVE AMERICANS

Dear Workers Solidarity,

Following your article on how Columbus was anything but a hero, maybe you would be interested in some current statistics which add to what you said about 500 years of oppression. These figures come from the organisation 'Women of All Red Nations'.

- \*Reservations still exist.
- \*Unemployment on the reservations is between 50% and 80%.
- \*Infant mortality is 300% the national average.
- \*The TB rate is eight times the national average.
- \*On some reservations the teenage suicide rate is up to ten times the national average.
- \*25% of all Native women have been sterilised without their informed consent.
- \*Between 25% and 35% of Native children are forcibly removed from their families and fostered, adopted or institutionalised.
- \*Another 27% are forcibly boarded-out

by the racist bureau of Indian Affairs,  
 \*The average life expectancy of Native Americans is 47 years.

Every decade since 1792 there has been resistance by native people, from Alaska to Chile. The Seminole Wars of 1812-36 saw Native Indians joined by runaway African slaves and some poor whites to form a powerful resistance force. Similar unity must be a model for today's fightback.

Paula Madigan,  
 West Finglas,  
 Dublin 11.

### ABORTION RIGHTS

Dear Workers Solidarity,

I got your magazine for the first time at Féile. What a breath of fresh air. It was great to see a magazine that supports a woman's right to choose, and willing to say it openly.

For too long too many people have seen abortion as something to be hidden away and not talked about. How can anyone win support for abortion rights if they don't even talk about it? It isn't always easy or popular but it has to be done. Here is a postal order for a subscription.

Eimer Collins,  
 Dublin 8.

## BOOKS FOR ANARCHISTS

**IRELAND AND BRITISH IMPERIALISM** by the Workers Solidarity Movement. £1.50 40 pages.

A collection of anarchist writings on the partition of Ireland, republicanism, loyalty, how to combat sectarianism, the lessons of the Civil Rights movement, the Falls and the Shankill fighting together, and more.

**ANARCHISM AND IRELAND** by the Workers Solidarity Movement. £0.90 24 pages.

A beginners guide to anarchism with sections on the State, democracy & freedom, elections, socialism from below, trade unions, unemployment, womens' freedom and the national question. Also a quick look at anarchism in action in the Russian and Spanish revolutions.

**THE BOLSHEVIKS AND WORKERS CONTROL** by Maurice Brinton. £3.95 86 pages.

How the workers took control and how the Bolsheviks took it away from them. An analysis of the formative years of the Russian bureaucracy. "Quotes more sources than you could shake a stick at" Sean Lenin (no relation).

**PORTUGAL, THE IMPOSSIBLE REVOLUTION** by Phil Mailer. £4.00 399 pages

Eye-witness account of the 1974 revolution by a libertarian Irish emigrant. A new type of history where official documents and ministerial pronouncements are relegated to Appendices - while ordinary people, in action, crowd each other off every page.

**WILDCAT'S ABC OF BOSSES** by Donald Room. £1.95 48 pages. Anarchist cartoons, some of which have appeared in *Workers Solidarity*.



To order books or to get your free catalogue write to  
 Workers Solidarity Bookservice,  
 P.O. Box 1528, Dublin 8.  
 When ordering please add 10%  
 to cover postage costs.



# REVIEW

**MASTERMINDS OF THE RIGHT** by Emily O'Reilly, (Attic Press) £7.99

**THIS IS A fascinating book on the one hand and a very dissappointing one on the other. The author, journalist Emily O'Reilly, traces the history and growth of ultra-right Catholic groups and organisations in Ireland, groups which grew in response to attempts to liberalise very conservative and restrictive social legislation. Due mainly to the efforts of these small groups most of this restrictive legislation is still in place.**

We still have the ban on divorce. So-called 'ethics committees' implement Catholic rules in public hospitals. Abortion is still totally illegal despite the recent Supreme Court ruling. Only in the case of contraception has the law been made slightly less restrictive with John O'Connell's new Family Planning Bill.

The story begins with the battle for contraceptive rights back in 1968. Social attitudes were changing. The issue was being discussed and debated, a huge demand for contraceptives was being expressed. In 1969 the Fertility Guidance Clinic, the first private clinic in the history of the state to offer contraceptive advice and help, opened in Dublin at 10 Merrion Square. In 1972 the Supreme Court found, in the McGee case, that the state's ban on the importation of contraceptives for personal use was unconstitutional.

**Prescribing the pill is "not doctoring at all, it is just butchery". Arthur Barry, former master of the National Maternity Hosital and member of the Irish Catholic Doctors Guild**

However in 1973 the right-wing challenge to the beginnings of a liberalisation of the law on contraceptives began. Emily O'Reilly credits John O'Reilly, an engineer with Dublin County Council (not Dublin Corporation as in the book), as being the chief mastermind behind an assault by a whole range of

right-wing organisations on the rising wave of liberal ideas and attitudes on sexuality, and on social issues generally.

She states "in 1973 would emerge that man, that state employee, whose machinations on behalf of the conservative Catholic lobby throughout the following two decades would lead directly not just to the insertion of a constitutional ban on abortion in 1983 but also to the defeat of the divorce referendum three years later and to a major threat to the ratification of a new E.C. treaty six years after that".

There is obviously a great deal of truth in this statement as subsequent events proved but, as anarchists, we would disagree with a view that sees history and the emergence of social forces purely in terms of individual personalities. Social forces and class interests of the time led to the emergence of individual personalities but the emphasis in this book is purely on these individuals, especially John O'Reilly and on the interlocking web of organisations he was instrumental in setting up.

This list of far-right organisations is impressive: PLAC 1981, SPUC, Family Solidarity, Irish Family League, Council of Social Concern, Catholic Witness,

Irish League of Decency (whose President suffered a fatal heart attack after seeing an uncovered breast on RTE's 'The Spike'), Parent Concern, STOP and the Responsible Society. Behind all of these groups were the Knights of Columbanus, a patriarchal, secretive, Catholic fundamentalist network of influential men who seek to exert power and influence through infiltrating influential groups and organisations, anonymous lobbying and the targeting of individuals hostile to their orthodoxy.

The book goes on to reveal the membership of, or close connection with, the Knights of many senior politicians, businessmen and key figures in the state services and industry. They include Bobby Gahan, RTE Assistant Director General; Liam Healy, Director of Independent Newspapers; Con Power, former director of the Confederation of Irish Industry and Justice Rory O'Hanlon to name but a few.

The book documents in great detail the different methods used by the various organisations to put pressure on politicians and to influence public opinion towards their fundamentalist viewpoint. The strategies used ranged from crude smear tactics as when they suggested that Garrett Fitzgerald was

# Subscribe!

*Free pamphlet with each subscription*

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

please tick which pamphlet you would prefer

**Anarchism and Ireland** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ireland and British Imperialism** \_\_\_\_\_

All cheques payable to WSM.

Return to WSM, P.O. Box 1528, Dublin 8, Ireland.

Ireland: 9 issue subscription for £5.00  
or 4 issues subscription for £2.50

Britain: 6 issue subscription for £ 5.00 (sterling)  
Europe: 5 issue subscription for £5.00 (sterling)  
Eastern Europe: 4 issue subscription for \$ 1



# Workers Solidarity Movement



not seriously pro-life because of his pluralist 'constitutional crusade', to targeting individuals in any position of influence.

One such example quoted is that of a letter sent by the Irish Family League, a John O'Reilly creation, in 1978 to all teachers and priests throughout the country calling on them to ensure that Fiona Poole was not elected president of the Irish National Teachers Organisation because she was a member of the Irish Family Planning Association. O'Reilly's crowd lost this one when the majority of primary teachers ignored them and elected her.

The disappointing features of this book are centred on two main issues. Firstly and most importantly, the book totally ignores the massive street protests around the "X" case. They do not warrant even one line. Likewise, the campaigns and activities of the left and the liberals are dismissed as useless and ineffective. For example, in the lengthy section on the battle for contraceptive rights, not even the famous 'contraceptive train' when 100 women publicly and illegally imported contraceptives is mentioned.

The focus is exclusively on the individu-

als who make up the fanatical far-right and on their interactions and machinations. The impression is given that at least some of these people are indeed masterminds and, in the eyes of the author, virtually invincible. The book makes no reference to the huge changes there have been in public opinion, not just on condoms and the availability of contraceptives but on the issue of abortion itself. 80% in the opinion poll of May 1992 supported legalising abortion in restricted circumstances. Of these 16% supported a woman's right to choose without restrictions.

It is a fascinating book for detailed information on the groups and individuals on the Catholic far-right but it presents a seriously unbalanced view of the social forces currently at work in Irish society. It also presents a particular view of how political events happen and of how political decisions are made which is all about secret meetings and lobbying behind closed doors and nothing about open democratic campaigns for change or about street politics and their influence on political events. It tells us a lot about the Catholic fundamentalists but nothing about how to curb their influence.

Patricia McCarthy

## Is this not murder?

**THE DEATH of 280 miners in the explosion on March 4th at the Kozlu coal mine in Turkey was reported worldwide. However not all the facts were made public.**

The accident was preventable. Although the miners received only 29 seconds warning, the high level of explosive gas in the pit had been recorded 23 minutes earlier. On top of this, many of those killed died from carbon monoxide poisoning because management had not issued them with the masks which Turkish regulations demand for every miner.

These 280 deaths were 280 murders. Now, like all murders, those responsible are trying to cover up the crime. The Assistant Director of the Turkish Coal Board tried to conceal the time of the explosion. Then it was decided that

no more autopsies would be performed on dead miners and that 147 bodies were to remain sealed in the pit for at least six months. The Coal Board hopes to avoid paying compensation to the bereaved by hiding the fact that deaths were due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

Miners' wives have marched and petitioned against this. Miners in nearby pits attempting to organise solidarity action have been arrested. The Turkish security forces have an appalling human rights record.

Average life expectancy of miners in the Zonguldak coalfield is 46 years, against a Turkish average of 63 years. Each year one in five of the workforce is injured. Deaths at work run at 18 per million tons of coal, the world average is 0.4. These figures speak for themselves.

Information from the *International Union Bulletin*

## 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 32county 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 was practiced in Russia, and still is in China, 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.

\*\*\*\*\*

As part of our fight for anarchism we are involved in the struggles for higher wages, for trade union democracy, for womens' 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 peoples' right to fight back. But we are not nationalists, we do not merely want to get rid of the border. We want to unite our class and create a totally new Ireland.



\*\*\*\*\*

I want more information about the Workers Solidarity Movement.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to WSM, P.O.Box 1528, Dublin 8



**ANARCHISM IS** a much maligned and misunderstood set of ideas. It has come to symbolise, to many people, a society of destruction and disorder. Yet nothing could be further from the truth.

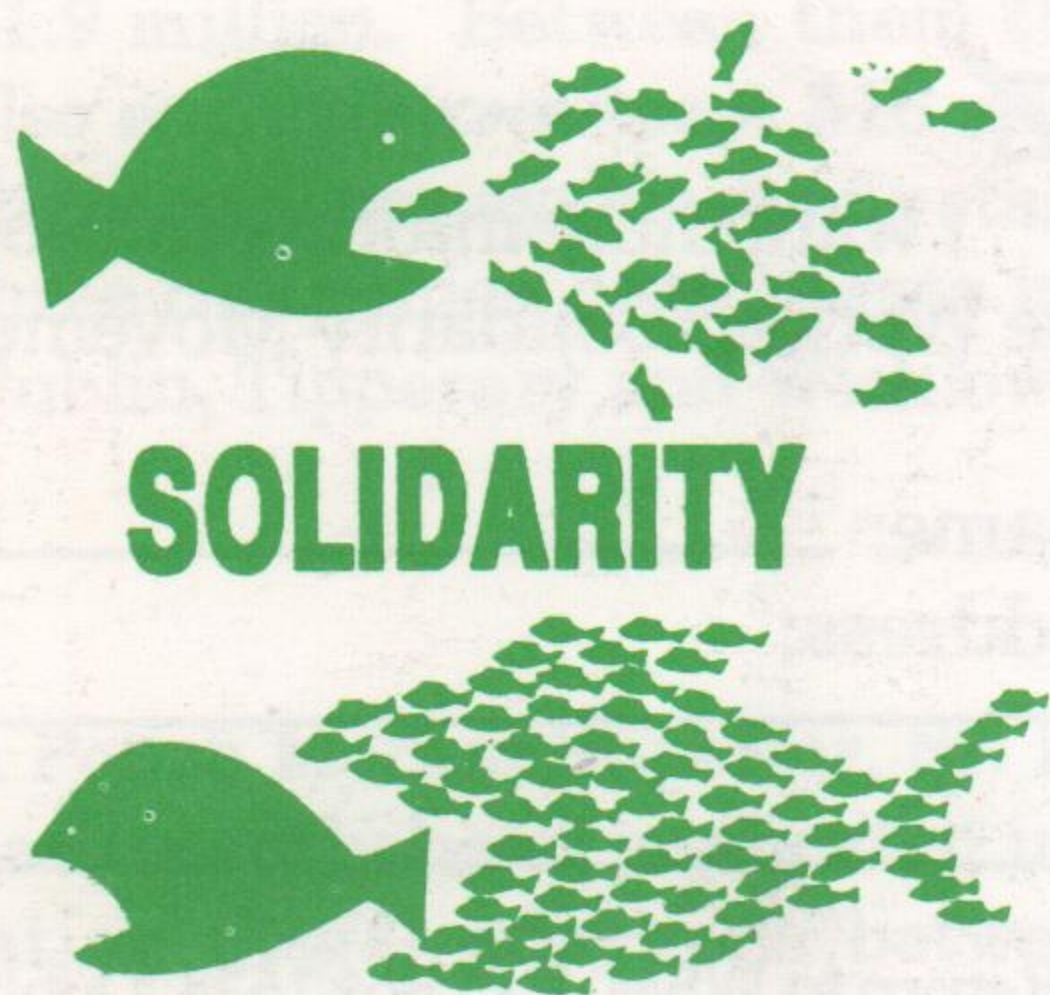
Anarchism has been deliberately slandered and misrepresented, not only by those running this society but also by most on the Left. Deliberately, for the reason that its uncompromising and radical critique of society and how to change it poses a challenge that can not be met except by slander. Its roots and association with the working class of all countries tells the real truth.

Anarchism views society, what it is and how it should be, on the basis of two fundamental pillars. These are the economic nature of society and the manner in which political power is organised. We believe that the economic system under which we presently live must be abolished. We also say that the political institutions of capitalism, which are hierarchical and authoritarian, must go too. These institutions serve the employer class and will have to be replaced with ones based on mass participatory democracy and freedom.

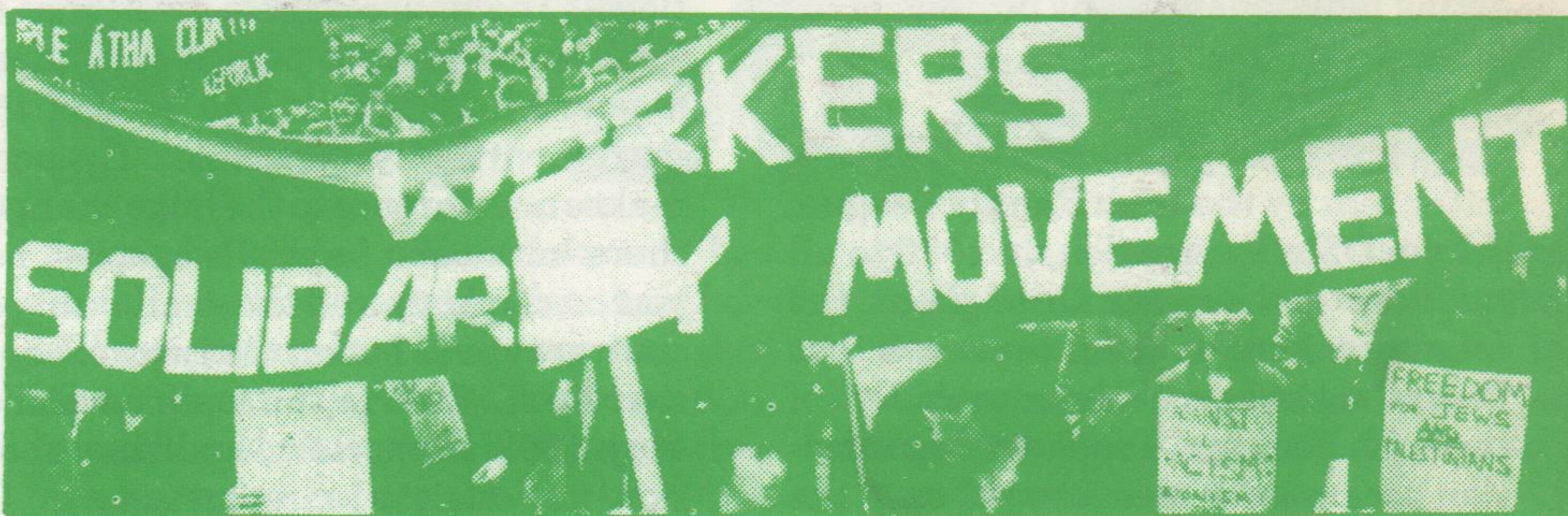
### **WORKERS COUNCILS**

In the new economic order the workers of the world will own and share all the wealth they produce. Decisions will be made through workplace and community councils which will be federated at all levels and centrally co-ordinated. Thus political power will not be organised in a hierarchical manner, where a central government tells everyone else what to do.

Those socialists who follow the ideas of Lenin hold that such a society can only be built by using the State structures, albeit a "workers state", under the leadership of their Party. Anarchists reject this since both the State and Party are hierarchical and authoritarian. They are diametrically opposed to the aims and organisation of the new society.



## Thinking about Anarchism



## Anarchism, socialism and freedom

Rather than building a real socialist society where both economic and political power would be everyone's possession and nobody's property, these people end up building societies that are no more than State Capitalism like Russia was and China still is. In these countries ordinary people do not have any say in how things are run or in the decisions that effect them. They are ordered about and exploited just as happens in the "free world".

Anarchists predicted this long before it was confirmed by the betrayal of the Russian revolution, when the workers' soviets and factory committees were suppressed by the Bolshevik state. After all, the means you use and what you end up with are connected. Thus, if the structures used to build socialism are hierarchical and undemocratic you should not be surprised if the society you end up with is hierarchical and undemocratic. This scientific law seemingly escapes some self-proclaimed followers of "scientific socialism".

### **FREEDOM**

The question of freedom is not just a subject for some mere philosophical debate. It is at the very heart of revolutionary change and socialism. A successful revolution is not just a shift in economic power from the employers to the workers.

It is a time of real freedom. It is a time when the shackles of the old oppressive order are thrown off and the workers movement explodes into creativity as it copes with organising every facet of society so that the needs of all are met. Everyone can get involved, through their assemblies and delegate councils, in

decision making and planning that used to be the sole concern of central government. Freedom of ideas, criticism and input will not only be a practical reality but a necessity.

Capitalist society is organised in a top-down way. Orders come from the top and those at the bottom obey them. The institutions by which the bosses rule, the Government and the State, are built so that the rule of a minority over the majority is possible. Control of political freedom, ideas and information is fundamental to their working. Participation is strictly limited so that most people never have any say.

### **"WORKERS STATES"**

That is why we wish to abolish these structures. They can never be used to create socialism but instead will actively sabotage the workers' cause. The "workers states" advocated by the Leninists for the transition to socialism have proven to be its greatest enemy. Only workers' councils can form the basis of the new society.

We stand uncompromisingly for a new world. One which will be owned and managed by all those who work. It will be organised from the bottom up and production will be to meet peoples' needs, not for the private profit of a few. Anarchist society will make real the old call "from each according to ability, to each according to need". Every individual will enjoy complete control of her/his life with no limit on their freedom as long as they do not encroach on the freedom of anyone else. Now, isn't that something worth struggling for?

*Kevin Doyle*