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WORKERS SOLIDARITY

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Yugoslavia **Somalia** **Slaughter**

ANARCHISM or BARBARISM



IRISH ANARCHIST MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY saw the Workers Solidarity Movement conference. As well as WSM members it was also attended by activists from Belfast, Derry and Dublin. Although we are living in difficult times, with a low level of class struggle, the atmosphere was confident. Interest in anarchist politics is growing. A reflection of this was the increase of *Workers Solidarity* sales by 50% over the last year.

New 'position papers' on racism, lesbian & gay oppression, and closer international links with other anarchist-communist organisations were agreed. The last one will be presented to the proposed conference of European anarchist organisations later this year, to which anarchists from countries as diverse as Britain, Russia, Switzerland, Italy, France, and Austria have been invited.

During the conference everyone got their chance to agree or disagree, put amendments or propose alternatives. Free discussion and democracy ensures that everyone understands what is being said and that decisions are only reached after all points of view have been aired.

Among decisions taken were that within our trade unions we will use the record of the PESP to make the case against 'social partnership' with the government and bosses.

Much has been made of a swing to the Left in November's general election. Labour made "historic" gains, taking an all-time high of 19.3% of first preference votes and 33 seats. Unfortunately this was not the result of people looking for radical change. The creation of a Fianna Fáil/Labour

For Starters

coalition will see yet more arguments put for such 'social partnership' between workers and bosses.

Anarchists, being against the division of society into rulers and ruled, did not take part in the election. We desire real democracy, not choosing 166 careerists and promise-breakers to give orders to the rest of us. However we do recognise that elections can be a good indication of people's expectations and attitudes.

Most Labour transfers went to the right wing parties (Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and Progressive Democrats). They did not go to Democratic Left, Workers Party or independent left candidates. This happened despite Labour calling for transfers to the Left. A typical example is Cork North-Central where Labour voters transferred 2:1 in favour of self-proclaimed defenders of the status quo.

Democratic Left and the WP saw their combined vote drop from 5% to 2.8%. Although appearing (without any real substance) to be more radical than Labour, DL saw their vote savaged. The WP died, someone should send for an undertaker. Sinn Féin, yet again, failed to make any breakthrough. In the Dublin area their combined vote didn't even get up to 9,000. In the border counties they saw their vote decline as well.

People have, temporarily, given up hope of sorting out unemployment, low wages, high mortgages and a rundown health service. It has been some years since any

victories were won. There is anger but confidence is low.

We did, however, see a vote for change. There was a big swing. It was not for socialism but for liberalism on social and sexual matters. It started with "X" case last year. Attitudes are changing. The backwoods, Padraig Flynnstone, characters have been served notice to quit.

Labour didn't frighten anyone (apart from other politicians who found their seats threatened!) in this election. Within the Party's "left wing" socialism has probably been dumped as even a dinner party topic of conversation. Of 1,200 delegates at the special conference, less than 50 voted against 'partnership' with Fianna Fáil. Their problem has been seeing socialism as a combination of nationalisation, state control and a benevolent government. That is state capitalism not socialism.

Socialism is about working class power (not somebody ruling over the working class), people having a direct say in the decisions that effect them, production to satisfy the needs of all rather than make profits for a few, individual liberty. It is about creating a truly free and classless society.

With the collapse of Stalinism, and the growth of 'pragmatic' and 'new realist' policies in the Labour and social democratic parties serious socialists have to take a fresh look at their politics. They could do a lot worse than to check out anarchism.

THAT'S CAPITALISM

Belfast City Councillors are going to get rid of 600 jobs over the next eighteen months. They claim that belt-tightening is needed. Needless to say this doesn't apply to their own corrupt practices. Last year they spent about £100,000 on junkets for themselves, and roughly the same amount the year before. In the interests of the unemployed of Belfast they visited Singapore, Hong Kong, Sydney, Toronto, Philadelphia and many other sunny cities. When not travelling they gorged themselves at the ratepayers expense. In 1991 £118,000 worth of free meals went down their throats.

A 17 year old Greek was arrested for distributing leaflets saying that Alexander the Great was a war criminal. The leaflets at-

acked nationalism, pointing out that "there are no clean races in the Balkans, we are all mongrels". An Athens court sentenced Michalis Papadaki to one year in jail.

In the 26 counties there are over 20,000 families on the housing lists. This means over 100,000 people without adequate housing. In the 1970s it was not unknown to build 14,000 local authority houses in a single year. Today the Fianna Fáil/Labour government promise to build 3,500 houses per year. And we can be sure that this promise won't be honoured in full.

Two top surgeons in Uruguay face life in jail

after ripping out the heart of a transplant patient who couldn't pay their bill. The patient, Diego Ruiz, was kidnapped and brought to the Santa Domingo Hospital in Montevideo when his bill became four months overdue. A lawyer for one of the doctors, Dr Eduardo Gomez, claimed "Medicine is business, if somebody doesn't pay for something he purchased you have every right to take it back."

In February the Chinese government reported that slavery still existed in Stalinist China. The official news agency, Xinhua, told of 40,000 arrests which had led to the freeing of 25,000 women and children who had been enslaved.



Whose bloody war?

THE WAR in what was Yugoslavia continues to drag on, with an ever increasing toll of people terrorised from their homes, killed or imprisoned. Most ordinary people are disgusted at the failure of the EC to do anything about it. Yet is EC or UN involvement any sort of answer or would it just make the situation worse?

The breakup of Yugoslavia has been attributed to many sources from the absurd to the racist ("Slavs can't deal with democracy"). In fact the drive for independence and Serbia's reaction against it were fuelled by a number of concrete factors. Croatia with a relatively high GNP in Yugoslavia, wanted independence so it would not have to subsidise its poorer neighbour, Serbia. Naturally Serbia was

opposed to Croatian independence for the same reasons and so there was an economic basis for the ethnic tensions that arose. The leaders of the Communist Party exploited these ethnic tensions to serve their own ends when the Leninist economy started to collapse in the late '80's.

One noticeable feature of the various republics is how they are all dominated politically by those who once ruled Yugoslavia together. Although some senior ex-Communist Party members are in the governments of all the eastern European countries, in Yugoslavia they are virtually unchallenged. Fuelling ethnic prejudices and finding scapegoats helped them to remain in control. The roots of this strategy to retain power date back to the start of the collapse of Leninism in Yugoslavia with the strike waves of 1987-89.

We do not oppose the recognition of Croatia and the other republics. Anarchists want to get rid of all national borders but this must be because this is what is wanted by the population. It is hard to be sure that before the war most Croatsians or

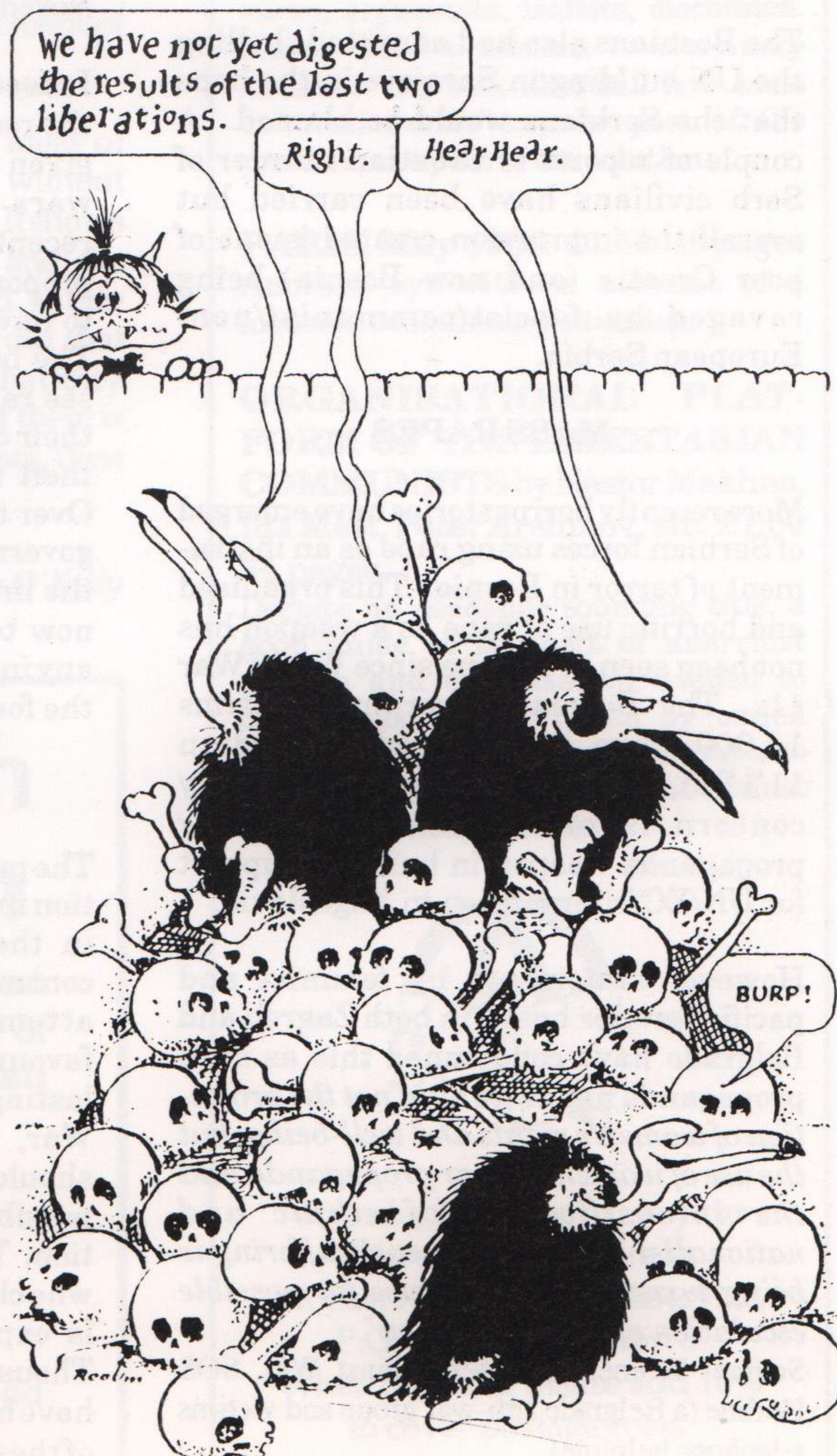
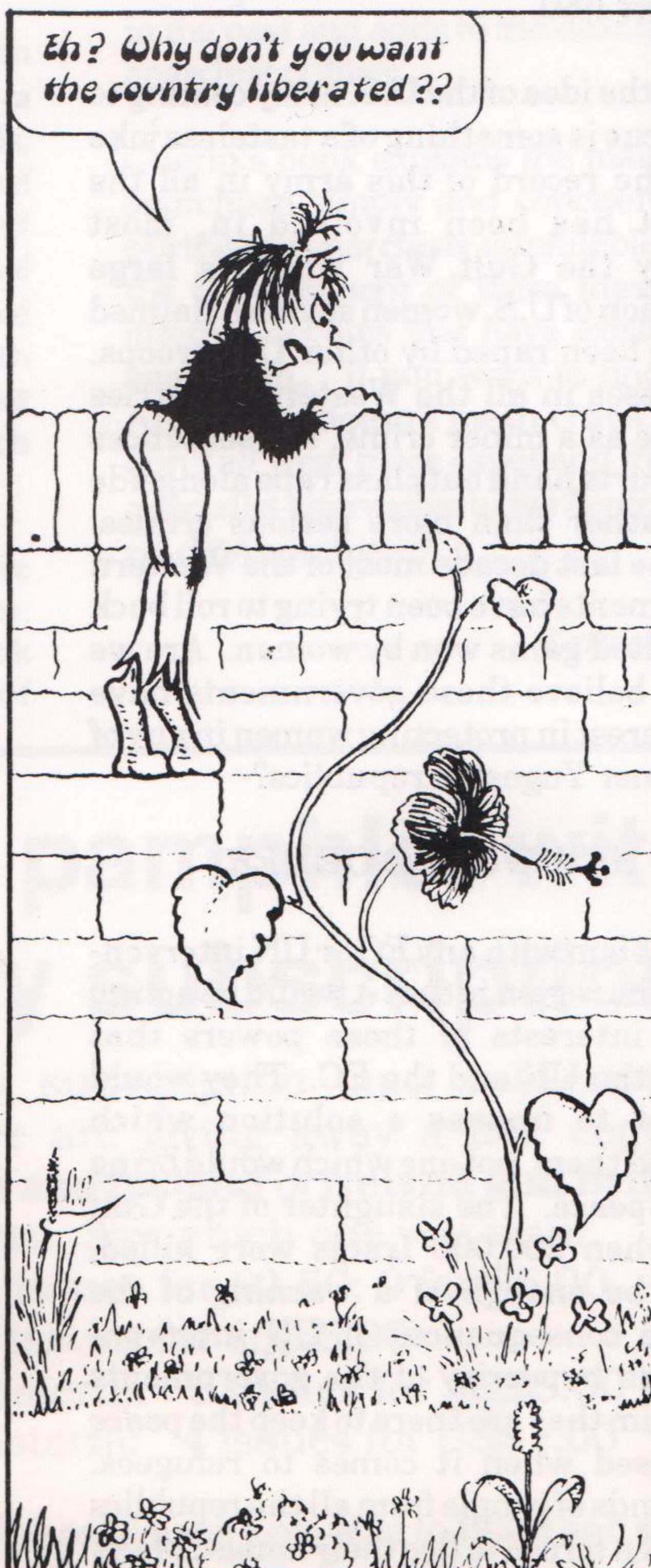
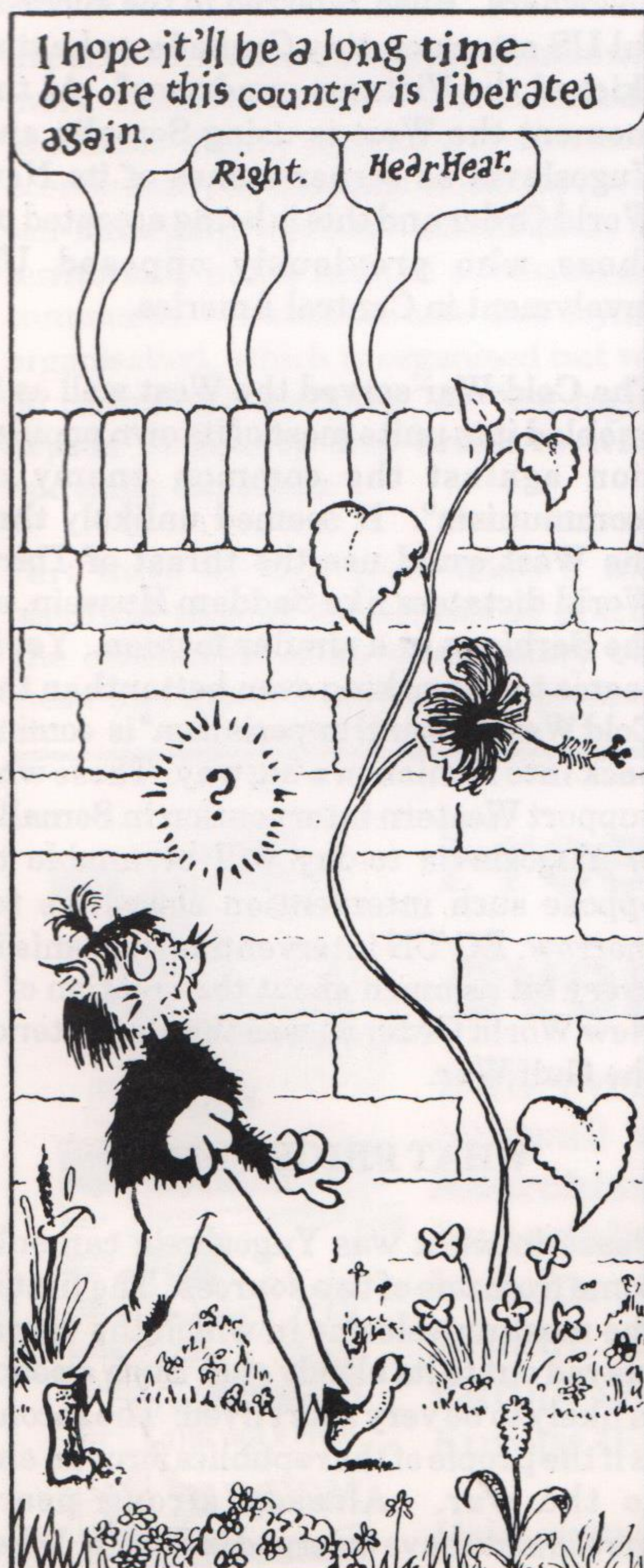
Workers Solidarity page 3

Bosnians wanted the break up of Yugoslavia. However given the ferocity of the war it is likely that most want nothing to do with Serbia now. The divisions that now exist between the workers of the different republics will not be overcome through forced integration with Serbia. The seeds of hatred that are being sown will be reaped as usual by the bosses, in the form of higher profits. It is opposition to these same bosses that will unite workers of all the republics.

NEW GERMANY

Even the mainstream media admits European bosses, and in particular German ones, played a prominent role in encouraging the break up of the federation. To German bosses, Croatia and Bosnia promise new markets and sources of cheap labour. They are also providing a useful mechanism for the German ruling class to argue for a return to a more aggressive foreign policy. Intervention in Croatia offers the promise of rehabilitating a more aggressive strain of German imperialism, which has been forced to lie dormant since World War II. Germany's strongarming of the EC to recognise Croatia's independence provides an example of how dominant a united Germany is now likely to be. Until June of 1991 both Britain and the U.S. blocked recognition of any secession from Yugoslavia.

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Slaughter in Yugoslavia

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The fact that the European bosses took sides early on is reflected in the media coverage of the war. The cause of the war is presented solely in terms of Serbian aggression against a series of otherwise peaceful republics. In fact right from the start of the conflict the government of Croatia was organising "ethnic cleansing" in the areas it controlled, and trying to snatch control of areas it did not.

The comparative success of Serbia has more to do with its control over the existing army and munitions. There is little to suggest that if the governments of the other republics had similar resources that they too would not have played the same role.

The fact that part of the Croatian forces includes an independent militia (HOS) that has adopted the name and uniform of the World War II Nazi collaborators who committed horrific atrocities is seldom commented on. The deliberate killing by Bosnian forces of two French UN soldiers is also something many papers have not reported on.

The Bosnians also had admitted shelling the UN building in Sarajevo in the hope that the Serbians would be blamed. A couple of reports of Croatian murder of Serb civilians have been carried but overall the impression created is one of poor Croatia (and now Bosnia) being ravaged by fascist/communist/non-European Serbia.

MASS RAPES

More recently horror stories have emerged of Serbian forces using rape as an instrument of terror in Bosnia. This organised and horrific use of rape as a weapon has not been seen in Europe since World War II. The Bosnian government claims 14,000 have been raped (Guardian 11/1/93). In the West the bosses only concern is to use this as another propaganda weapon in building support for UN/EC intervention in Yugoslavia.

However statements by feminist and pacifist groups based in both Zagreb and Belgrade have condemned this as such propaganda has as its aim "not the protection of women's rights and well-being, but the use of women for war propaganda and the intensification of ethnic and nationalist hatred. Women's suffering is being turned into an excuse for possible escalation of military action".

Source: Women in Black against War, SOS Hotline (a Belgrade anti-war group and victims telephone helpline).



"We fear that the raped women could be used in political propaganda with the aim of spreading hatred and revenge, thus leading to further violence against women and to further victimization of survivors". Source: "Independent Alliance of Women of Croatia", "Autonomous Women's House", "Informative-documentary Center for Women", "Anti-War Campaign Croatia", "Zagreb Women's Lobby" and "Center for the Support to Women Victims of War and Raped Women". November 1992.

Indeed the idea of the U.S. army coming to the rescue is something of a tasteless joke given the record of this army in all the wars it has been involved in, most recently the Gulf War where a large proportion of U.S. women soldiers claimed to have been raped by other U.S. troops. The bosses in all the Western countries see rape as a minor crime, the sentences their courts hand out class rape alongside theft rather than more serious crimes. Over the last decade most of the Western governments have been trying to roll back the limited gains won by women. Are we now to believe these governments have any interest in protecting women in any of the former Yugoslav republics?

NEW WORLD ORDER

The problem with any EC or UN intervention in the region is that it would be acting in the interests of those powers that control the UN and the EC. They would attempt to impose a solution which favoured them, not one which would bring lasting peace. The slaughter of the Gulf War, when 200,000 Iraqis were killed, should be enough of a warning of the possible consequences of UN intervention. The hypocrisy of the governments who claim they are there to keep the peace is exposed when it comes to refugees. Thousands of people from all the republics have been forced to flee their homes. Many of these are trying to leave the country yet

the governments of Europe are keeping most of them out. Ireland has only taken in 200!

Calling for UN/EC intervention in the region will not bring peace one day closer. It will, however, provide the imperialist powers with support next time they want to go in somewhere else. Ever since the defeats inflicted on US imperialism in Vietnam it has been less keen to go in elsewhere. Bush referred to the successful US attack on tiny Grenada as having "kicked the Vietnam syndrome". At the moment the West is using Somalia and Yugoslavia as corner stones of its New World Order and this is being accepted by those who previously opposed US involvement in Central America.

The Cold War served the West well as it enabled it to unite most of its own population against the common enemy of "communism". It seemed unlikely that the West could use the threat of Third World dictators like Saddam Hussein, or the Serbians in a similar fashion. Yet it seems to be working even better than the Cold War. "Liberal imperialism" is coming back into fashion in a big way. Those who support Western intervention in Somalia or Yugoslavia to-day will be unable to oppose such intervention elsewhere tomorrow. EC/UN intervention in Bosnia is every bit as much about the creation of a New World Order as was the slaughter of the Gulf War.

WHAT PRICE PEACE?

Peace in what was Yugoslavia can only come from one of two sources. The first is the most unwelcome in which the war is played out to its bloody end. Such a peace is likely to be very short lived. The second is if the people of the republics force an end to the war. Already strong peace movements have emerged in Serbia. What is needed is a peace movement that can

build strikes and mass demonstrations which either overthrow the current regimes or scare them into calling off the war.

This needs to be a movement which spreads across all the republics. It must recognise the right of any republic to secede from the federation where it has been democratically established this is what the population wish. The rights of the minorities in each republic must also be respected, and such a movement needs to physically defend any minorities from "ethnic cleansing" operations.

Sizable peace movements do exist and

demonstrations have occurred in Belgrade and Sarajevo, numbering tens if not hundreds of thousands. Last year on April 6th a large anti-war demonstration was fired on in Sarajevo.

Our role in the rest of Europe should be to campaign against any imperialist intervention through the EC or UN, and to demand the withdrawal of what forces have been deployed. We should also support any movement in the region which campaigns against the war and encourage it along more militant lines. Finally and quite concretely we must fight for the doors to be opened to all refugees from any of the republics.

War is a regular and integral part of capitalism as ruling classes fight it out for access to raw materials, resources, etc. There will be no lasting peace anywhere until the conditions are created for such a peace by abolishing capitalism. Otherwise we face a future full of Yugoslavias. On a world scale there have only been a handful of days of "peace" since the end of World War 11.

Andrew Flood

articles 2 and 3

What would you do with them?

Article 2: The National territory consists of the whole island of Ireland, its' islands and its' territorial seas.

Article 3: Pending the re-integration of the national territory and without prejudice to the right of Parliament and Government established by this constitution to exercise jurisdiction over the whole of that territory, the laws enacted by Parliament shall have the like area and extent of application as the laws of Saorstát Eireann [26 counties] and the like extra-territorial effect.



MENTION THE CONFLICT in the North and many people will turn off. Not because they do not care about what is going on but because they do not feel that they can make any difference. Who wants to hear about another death or another bombing? Most people in Ireland were glad to see the release of the Birmingham 6 and the Guildford 4, but in Dublin last Summer only 300 marched against the extradition of Angelo Fusco. The answer to the problem is made out to lie with the British and Irish governments in collaboration

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Getting rid of Articles 2&3?

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with the Unionist leaders. Workers in the South do not see themselves as having a part to play in the solution.

It is in this atmosphere of alienation that talks, and talks about talks, can be portrayed as having an impact. In fact they were just talks. The latest set wound up last November with nothing decided. The banning of the UDA can be portrayed as positive action against the loyalist death squads. Even though they still exist, and are now killing more people than the Provos. And this while it has come out that Brian Nelson, a British mole, actually took part in at least sixteen murders with official permission.

The Unionists are able to claim that it is the Republic of Ireland's 'claim' to the North in Articles 2 and 3 that is the cause of the 'troubles'. Meanwhile the British State is getting away with occupying the place and few people see this as a problem.

In an upcoming referendum anarchists will oppose the deletion of Article 2. We do so, not because we support the 26 county state over the 6 county one, but because we are opposed to the partition of Ireland. The Article recognises the partition of Ireland is a problem, and we want to see a united Ireland. For this reason we will oppose its deletion.

We, however, won't get too excited about Article 3. To support the claim of the Dublin government is to support the authority of one set of bosses over another. We, who want to get rid of the division into bosses and bossed, won't do this.

WHY IRELAND WAS DIVIDED

Ireland was partitioned because of the conflicting economic interests between capitalists in the North-East and those in the rest of Ireland. Generally speaking the South was less developed and wanted independence to defend its infant economy from cheap British imports.

The North-East was already relatively well developed with thriving linen and shipbuilding industries, both of which depended on Britain for export markets. The partition of Ireland and the creation of the six county state was a compromise between these conflicting interests.

In order to win support for partition the bosses in the North-East stirred up sectarian hatred against Catholics. They made sure there was a material basis for such hatred. Slightly better housing and jobs were given to Protestants over Catholics. It was made clear that these privileges would go if Protestant workers

supported Irish independence.

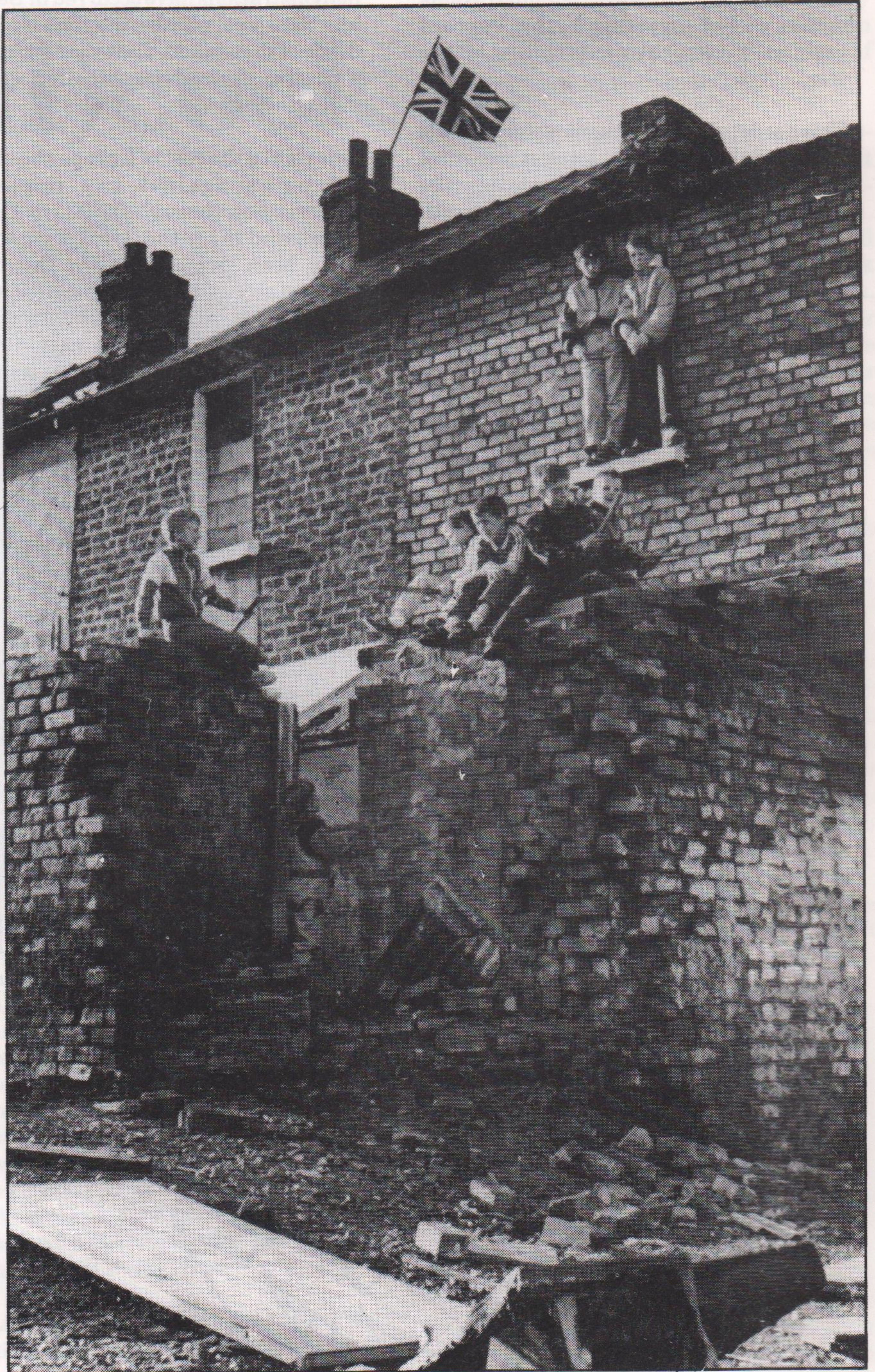
On this basis the sectarian statelet of the six counties was founded. It was built with Protestant working class support on the grounds that they would remain better off than Catholics. These conditions have existed right up to the present day. Protestant workers may be more likely to be unemployed and on lower wages than a worker in London or Manchester. But they know that they are still only half as likely to be unemployed as a Catholic living in the next housing estate.

The loyalist terror groups have their recruiting grounds in Unionist working class areas. They feed off the fear that Protestants will lose their slight privileges over the Catholics. They encourage sectarian hatred by saying that

Catholics are the main enemy of the Protestants. That is why Loyalists such as the Ulster Defence Association will target any Catholic. They have been tricked into believing that it is Catholics that are the main enemy and they are all 'legitimate targets'.

In reality the main enemy for both Catholic and Protestant workers is the ruling class. They are the people who set wages, hire and fire, and seek to control peoples' lives in all areas. For socialists, the most important task is to unite Catholic and Protestant workers and convince them to fight together against the bosses.

This has happened before, for example the Outdoor Relief Strike in 1932 when Catholics from the Falls Road and



•"No Pope Here". Lucky Pope!

Protestants from the Shankill Road of Belfast fought together for better conditions for the unemployed. And more recently in the health service strikes and the DSS strikes against sectarian intimidation throughout the 1980s.

Partition is not only bad because of the way that Northern nationalists are treated. It also has an effect in the South. As Connolly predicted partition led to "a carnival of reaction, North and South".

For most of the history of the state, politics in the South has been dominated by Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael. There is hardly a political difference between the two of them. The influence of the conservative Catholic Church has until recently determined social legislation. In the South the carnival is winding down, but in the North it is still going at full belt.

It is because of this that anarchists are opposed to the deletion of Article 2. A socialist perspective needs to be heard. The question of partition, and the sectarian state must be dealt with properly by socialists or it will not be solved.

NATIONALISTS

Anarchists do not support the nationalist point of view. This will be put forward by Sinn Féin, the Irish National Congress, Neil Blaney and such like. They are fighting for a united capitalist Ireland. Socialism will not get much chance to be heard. We will be told that, yet again, 'labour must wait'.

We are not struggling for a united capitalist Ireland. We will be putting forward the socialist position that we are against partition because it fans the flames of sectarianism. In its place we want a socialist 32 county Republic uniting both Protestant and Catholic workers.

Unfortunately at the moment anarchists cannot set the political agenda. Our influence is far too small. Most of the time we have to react to events as they occur. We helped to win the referenda on travel and information last year but we recognise that the main event that triggered the referenda was government action. They injuncted the 14 year old girl and caused the "X" case. It was people's reaction to this issue that forced the changes in the constitution.

Likewise with a referendum to change Articles 2 and 3. While we would prefer to be involved in widespread united strike action of Protestants and Catholics, arguing for socialism, we cannot do so at the moment. If there is to be a referendum we will use it as an opportunity to argue a socialist perspective. This is an opportunity to argue a socialist answer and it should not be missed.

Andrew Blackmore

Vampires in America

PART OF THE old Eastern European legend says that a vampire must be willingly invited into the house of its victim, and once invited in has its victim in its power. Members of the Teamsters Union (America's largest general trade union) might well ponder this legend.

The Teamsters invited government intervention in the 1980s to help ensure free elections and oust corrupt Mafia controlled officials who had held power for decades. In 1989 a "mutual consent decree" was put in place creating an Independent Review Board to facilitate the democratisation process. The Board was made up of one union representative, one government representative and one 'impartial' outside person, who was to be agreed by both sides. The Board was to be disbanded once free elections took place inside the Teamsters.

On August 20th 1992 Federal Judge David Edelstein ruled in favour of a government request to extend the power of the Board to make decisions that "shall be final and binding" and ordered the acceptance of William Webster, former Director of the FBI and CIA, as the 'impartial' third member.

This came after the corrupt officials had been ousted by reform candidates and, significantly, after a string of successful strikes by the reinvigorated Teamsters. Webster, as well as being the former head of the state's secret police agencies, also sits on the boards of the anti-union Pinkerton Security Agency and Anheuser Busch - whose workers are members of the Teamsters Union.

To add insult to overt attack the judge

A SUDDEN REMEMBRANCE OF THE PREVIOUS DAY CLEARS HIS CLOUDY BRAIN.

OH MY GOD! I'VE BECOME A VICTIM OF DRACULA.



also ordered the union to pay all the expenses of the IRB, including unlimited compensation to Webster who gets \$365 per hour. Union members, who sought to stop corrupt officials stealing from their union, have already been forced to pay over \$30 million for the 'services' of the IRB.

Do we need any more evidence of the need for unions to be independent of the state?

Source: Workers Solidarity Alliance, USA.

and bloodsuckers in the bank

LAWRENCE SUMMERS, Vice-President and chief economist of the World Bank is just the man to explain "free market" values to any of us who may have illusions about fairness or human rights.

In a leaked memo he explained how the economic logic of dumping toxic waste in the less developed countries was impeccable. According to him people in low wage countries are going to die quicker, and so won't have time to die of cancer.

He said a person in a low wage country might earn \$500 a year and have ten years to live, whereas in a higher-wage country a similar person might earn \$50,000 a year

and have twenty years to live, and so would contribute more to "economic growth". Therefore you should put the pollution where the lower value is.

Needless to say, he didn't talk about using cleaner production processes or increased safety measures. That would be an unforgivable interference with the "free market" right to extract the maximum profits.

Anti-abortionists told to

SPUC OFF!

IRELAND IS a conservative country. Since the founding of the Southern state 70 years ago, church has been intertwined with state. The majority of its citizens belong to the Catholic Church. Catholic ethos is enshrined in the Constitution, in the laws, in the education system. Catholic tentacles make their way into most areas of public policy.

Yet Ireland is changing. Where previously the church was an almost unquestioned authority on moral issues in Ireland, now the positions many Irish people hold on social issues are in direct conflict with the church. The most recent examples of this were the abortion referenda held on November 26th, 1992.

The sea change that has occurred in Ireland on the highly emotive issue of abortion reflects a change in the fabric of Irish society. As anarchists we are committed to a basic change in the present system. This will only occur when the working class no longer accept the legitimacy of capitalism. It is frequently argued, usually by those with a blinkered knowledge of history, that it is impossible for society to change in such a fundamental way.

Yet societies do evolve. People do break from the dogmas of the past. Humanity isn't caught in a stuck groove. One of the questions socialists must be able to answer is how do ideas change? It is by looking at the examples that history throws up that we can find the answer. So what did happen in Ireland in 1992? Who were the key players? Who was influential and who wasn't, and lastly what are the

implications of the abortion result.

WHY A REFERENDUM?THE BACKGROUND

In February 1992, the Attorney General, in accordance with the Constitution, placed an injunction on a 14 year old alleged rape victim. The purpose of the injunction was to prevent her from travelling to Britain in order to obtain an abortion. Irish people were appalled. Protests sprang up immediately. For two weeks there were near continuous demonstrations at the Dáil. Internationally the case received huge coverage, with foreign news crews flooding into the country.

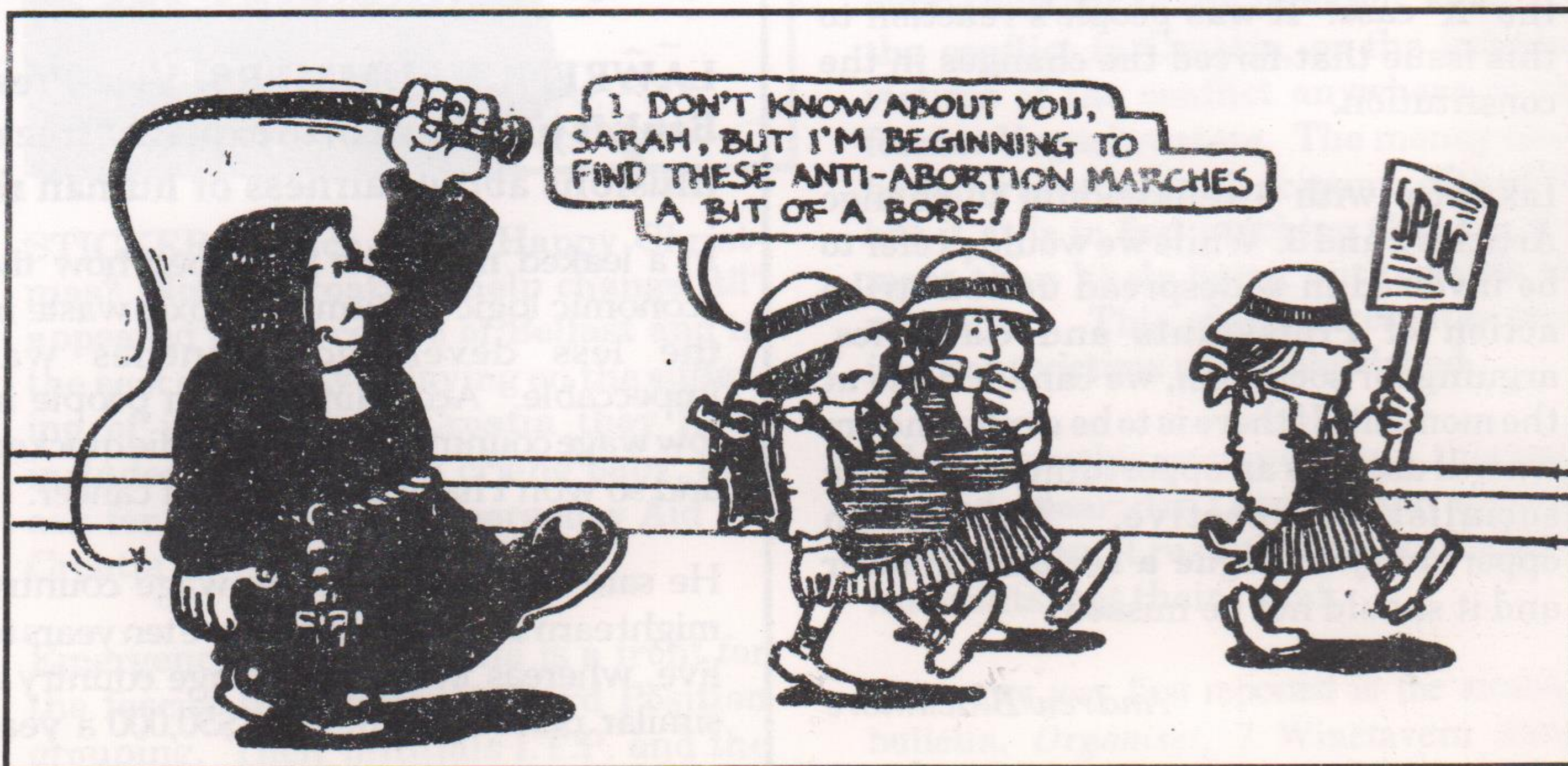
Fianna Fáil, the main party in power, had just gone through a leadership change and the last thing they wanted was to be saddled with another abortion controversy. The Attorney General's ruling was upheld in the High Court. At a march organised by the Dublin Abortion Information Campaign (DAIC), 10,000 people chanted 'for a women's right to choose'.

Faced with this mounting anger the government took the unprecedented step of offering to pay any court costs the family might incur if they appealed to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court lifted the injunction enabling Ms X to travel to England. In doing so it interpreted the Constitution a new way and changed Irish law in regard to abortion.

Where previously abortion was completely illegal now it seemed that abortions could be performed here if there was a threat to the life of the mother, including the threat of suicide. However in any other case, it would still be possible to obtain injunctions in order to prevent a woman travelling. The "pro-life" movement was up in arms about abortion on hallowed Irish soil. The government did not want to face the embarrassment of further injunctions.

It was faced with two possible solutions to the thorny problem it faced. Either to resolve it through legislation, which would entail introducing abortion in some form into Ireland. Or to hold a referendum, thus avoiding the necessity of stating their own position on the issue. As politicians they did not want to alienate the "pro-life" movement, which is influential in rural areas. Neither did the party want to isolate the mass of new liberal working class voters that they are currently wooing as their traditional rural base dwindles.

Their attempt to sit on the fence resulted in a referendum wording which neither side liked very much. The electorate were asked to vote in three separate referenda. The first two were straightforward and dealt with the right to travel and the right to abortion information. The third dealt with the so-called 'substantive' issue of abortion. The wording allowed for abortion in this country where "*the life as opposed to the health*" of the woman was threatened, "*excluding the threat of suicide*".



Immediately previous to the "X" case a shift in power had occurred within FF ranks. Charles Haughey was replaced as leader and Taoiseach by Albert Reynolds. Traditionally FF strength had been in rural Irish communities. Now nearly a third of the population lives in the greater Dublin area, with many more in large cities and towns. Enormous movement from the countryside has meant that support in urban areas is crucial to any party wanting to form a government.

FIANNA FAIL... THE PEOPLES' PARTY

In order to survive, FF has to be able to capture the more liberal ground that Labour and elements of FG held. Previously the "pro-life" campaign was very influential within FF by virtue of its ability to ensure electoral death for any TD which refused to support its demands. For this reason in 1983 it was able to force the government to call an anti-abortion referendum.

Times have changed however. The support of the "pro-life" movement for FF is not worth the possible expense of losing liberal votes. The Maastricht treaty contained a protocol copperfastening the Irish ban on abortion. During this referendum, FF succeeded in seizing the middle ground, portraying both the "pro-life" and pro-choice groups as extremists.

They attempted to do the same thing in the abortion referendum. However while the FF government may have put the referenda on the table, the FF party did not take part in any campaign to ensure their wording was passed. An MRBI poll (Irish Times 13/11/91) held before the referendum indicated that only 50% of FF supporters were in favour of the Government's wording on the substantive issue.

THE REST OF DAIL

FF silence was only matched by the hush from the opposition benches. The Progressive Democrats who were FF's partners in coalition, despite claiming to oppose the government's wording, still voted for it in the Dáil. FG kept their mouths tightly shut, and Labour weren't much more vocal.

As the 'Irish Times' editorial bemoaned on November 13th *"It is a bitter paradox that with this enthusiasm for women's representation and for the garnering of the womens vote, the same parties have all but abandoned womens interests in the referendums to be held on the same day as the election. Where is the Progressive Democrats' campaign against the Fianna Fáil-sponsored wording on the so-called 'substantive issue'? Where is the resistance to this women-threatening measure promised by the tribunes of the Labour Party and Democratic Left? Where are the liberals - and indeed the prominent women of Fine Gael (John Bruton sits on the fence), as the days tick by to the setting*



•From little acorns... a pro-choice demonstration outside the Dáil just a couple of years ago

once again of another constitutional, legal and social snare whose victims by definition, will be women?

Of the smaller parties, Democratic Left, seeking to draw a distinction between itself and the Labour Party, had announced that they were actually in favour of abortion in some circumstances and would be campaigning for a No vote on the substantive issue. However this campaigning was limited to the production of leaflets and as DL does not have a

grass roots organization few of these saw the light of day. The Workers Party's most recent conference had passed policy in favour of a woman's right to choose, however this did not appear before the General Election.

The Green Party is deeply split on the question of abortion. To such an extent that in Dublin North East two members one "pro-life" (David Healy), one pro-choice (Saidbh O'Neill) stood for election. The party were incapable of being any more

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Where were the Vanguards?

THE IRISH LEFT is very small. However history has shown that it is possible to have influence far out of proportion to your numbers. So what strategy did these highly organised groups committed to fighting for womens' liberation adopt. **Militant Socialist** placed all its efforts in electioneering for one of their members, Joe Higgins, who was standing in Dublin West (the General Election being on the same day as the referendum). Their only presence in the pro-choice movement was to turn up in mass to a Repeal the 8th Amendment Conference (REAC) in order to get one of their members elected onto committee and try (but fail!) to get other left groups off.

The **Socialist Workers Movement** concentrated on their age old policy of showing up the "pro-life" movements as the bigots they really are, chiefly by holding counter demonstrations when ever the "pro-lifers" marched. In one instance worthy of a black comedy both **Democratic Left** and the SWM held separate counter demonstrations on

the same weekend. Both refused to support each others' event, both claimed the other was being ultra-leftist.

Five weeks before the referendum the SWM attempted to set up a 'Youth Against Bigotry' campaign. However this disappeared very quickly without trace. Both Militant and the SWM put party building before politics. Recruitment was prioritised above gaining a victory in the referendum.

The **Spartacists**, a small and not often seen organisation leafleted against womens oppression whenever anyone else provided them with an opportunity to do so. They could not get involved in any Right to Choose campaign as they believed all these campaigns were in fact campaigning to keep abortion illegal!!

DL, Labour Party, Workers Party, SWM and Militant members took no part in any campaigning groups on the ground. The only Green Party members working on the referendum were in the "pro-life" camp.

Beating the fundamentalists

SPUC OFF!

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progressive than the Irish Bishops. As one party member explained to *Workers Solidarity*, "with two such fundamental opposing positions being proposed, the only consensus the Greens could reach would be to split, and in that situation the environment is more important than womens rights."

THE DUBLIN ABORTION INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

When the X case occurred the only group campaigning on abortion was the Dublin Abortion Information Campaign (DAIC). This was an activist campaign, formed in November 1990. Its main strategy then was to break the law by distributing abortion information, thereby highlighting the situation in Ireland, and hopefully making the law unworkable. When the "X" case broke, DAIC organised a march of 10,000 people to oppose the injunction.

Soon after the "X" case DAIC adopted a Right to Choose position and made this the main focus of their arguments around the case. People with divergent political ideas, from the Workers Solidarity Movement, students, members of the Labour Party, the Irish Workers Group, Red Action and other pro-choice activists came together to distribute information, canvass, put leaflets in letterboxes, organise meeting and marches.

In the months that followed there were various different attempts to set up more broad based campaigns. DIAC continued its separate existence, co-operating with other groups on the ground where possible. Before the referendum, DAIC targeted different areas of the city for door-to-door leafleting and posterling.

HERE COMES REAC

The Repeal the Eight Amendment Campaign (REAC) was formed early in March on the basis of campaigning for a removal of the 1983 anti-abortion amendment, for the provision of non-restrictive information and for the right to travel. It

drew its membership from people who had been involved in 1983 campaign and, in many cases, had been dormant since that defeat. It also drew from the existing abortion information campaigns and from members of the feminist movement with an orientation towards community politics (who also organised within the Womens Coalition). It intended to be a broad based national campaign.

Meanwhile the more 'middle class' elements of the feminist movement set up the 'Frontline' group, based around the service organisations (Well Women Centres, Doctors For Information, etc). They saw their role almost solely as a lobby group 'pressurising' the various political parties.

REAC was primarily based in Dublin, Cork, Waterford and Galway. From the beginning the campaign was split between the feminists who favoured lobbying, and socialists and activists who emphasised campaigning on the ground. Of course it



....with a ballot box in one hand and a Carmelite in the other

was said that the two approaches were not incompatible, but in practice REAC activity was centred around press conferences and letters to the Irish Times, at the expense of workplace and door-to-door leafleting and local organising.

Public meetings and marches were not supported and not built for, and surprise surprise, not successful. A good example of this is that a REAC public rally held in Dublin's Liberty Hall, on the 20th of October, just over a month before the vote was attended by just over 70 people.

As often happens, the divisiveness within the campaign was blamed on personal differences rather than politics. Eventu-

ally it became a waste of time and effort for activists to remain in REAC. The Dublin group collapsed, with most activists joining DAIC. The Galway REAC changed its name and went its own way.

In the month before the referenda everybody who was anybody met to form the Alliance for Choice. The role of the Alliance was to make available leaflets and posters, and to co-ordinate press conferences. At last we had our umbrella.

The Alliance, however, was top heavy with a lot of people who did meetings but didn't do much work. The bulk of the leafletting and canvassing in Dublin was still done by DAIC and, to a lesser extent, the Womens Coalition. With the exception of Cork, Galway and Waterford few active groups existed around the country.

The main problem affecting REAC, Frontline and the Alliance was their faith in the power of 'leaders of opinion' to win the battle for us and, as seen above, Irish liberals had gone to ground. Letters were written to the Irish Times (who did come out in our favour). Press conferences were repeatedly held, none getting more than a few minor mentions. The committee produced detailed briefing documents, holding meetings with organisations varying from the Council for the Status of Women to the Fianna Fáil womens committee.

Yet in the end, the target audience, the "progressives" with power, refused to be pushed. For the most part the voice of the pro-choice movement in Ireland was not heard by the Irish people. REAC acted as a flea on the back of the liberals but the liberals weren't scratching.

THE "PRO-LIFE" MOVEMENT

The impotence of the pro-choice movement was matched by the confusion within the "pro-life" movement. Not only were they abandoned by Fianna Fáil but the movement was split on a number of fronts. Firstly between those who wanted to campaign for a No vote in all three referenda and those who preferred the more acceptable face of allowing a Yes vote on Travel (their argument being that as you couldn't actually stop women from travelling the amendment was impractical). Indeed, an article by a "pro-life" professor in the Irish Times warned that "a No vote might be seen as triumph for pro-abortion lobby".

BISHOPS RULE?



The Catholic bishops collectively released a statement saying that Catholics could legitimately vote either way on the substantive question. Although a few Bishops then broke ranks and called for a No vote, the "pro-life" movement's mainstay argument that they represented the true wishes of Irish people had been undermined.

Even on the question of Abortion Information, which all elements opposed (SPUC had pursued clinics and student unions to the courts to prevent them distributing information), the "pro-life" campaign didn't even come close to matching the intensity and ferocity of the 1983 campaign. With the setting up of a new "pro-life" grouping proclaiming itself as the organisation of the "pro-life" working class youth, a further split occurred.

Youth Defence modelled itself on the tactics of Operation Rescue type groups in the U.S. On marches they chanted "we don't need no birth control, hey Taoiseach leave the kids alone". They leafletted on Saturdays in city centres with gruesome pictures of supposed abortions. They put pickets on TDs houses, including those of Nuala Fennell and Eamonn Gilmore. They rang in death threats to Radio Dublin when they wouldn't carry interviews with them. Pro-choice campaigners were attacked, in one incident with pickaxe handles and snooker cues resulting in broken bones. Youth Defence marches were 'stewarded' by hired heavies (complete with wrapped knuckles).

The music paper *Hot Press* in its November edition ran an expose on Youth Defence, following which the editor, Niall Stokes, had a concrete block thrown through the back window of his car. The "pro-life" movement which had been careful building up an acceptable middle class image were horrified and attempted to disown the organisation. However mud sticks, and Youth Defence became a graphic example of the threat of fundamentalism.

One of the key arguments used against the Government's wording was that it proposed a distinction between the mother's life and the mother's health. Doctors were drafted in from both sides to either argue that a pregnancy never threatens the life of the mother or that in some instances it did. While of course the life/health distinction is appalling, to some people faced with highly qualified professionals arguing both sides of the coin it became a difficult one to become convinced of either way. Doctors who publicly support abortion felt they faced the threat of their surgeries being targetted by "pro-life" groups. Despite this one organisation of doctors did arise, Doctors for Information.

Doctors for Information (and Democratic Left) were warned off being involved with REAC, it supposedly was too radical and dangerous. Both organisations withdrew from speaking on REAC platforms, despite the fact that these were the only public meetings being held on abortion in most parts of Ireland.

The ATGWU and SIPTU ran a joint campaign within their own unions calling for a Yes, Yes, No vote. The Irish Congress of Trade Unions released press statements opposing the government wording on

CRISIS PREGNANCY?

for information about
all the options
- including abortion -

Womens Information Network

01-6794700

abortion and produced over 150,000 leaflets arguing their case. Unfortunately years of centralised bargaining have left the unions with little activist core to draw on, most of these leaflets never made it out of their wrapping paper.

THE RESULTS

In the end, however, the electorate voted Yes to Travel, Yes to Information and No to the substantive issue. What did this mean? Considering that no "pro-life" group called for a Yes, Yes, No vote and Yes, Yes, No won, it's likely that the majority of the vote on the substantive issue was for liberal reasons.

However it was impossible for many commentators to say this. On one hand political parties such as FF and FG contain both sides of the argument within their ranks. A politician runs the risk of alienating half of the party if she/he claims victory for one side over another.

On the other side many liberal commentators were unable to identify themselves as pro-choice. Instead of calling a spade a spade they stumbled over awkward phraseology. Rather than accepting this as a win for the pro-choice side it was for "those forces with a pro-women perspective". It was a victory that dared not speak its name.

Previous to the referendum the Irish Times was warning "if the politicians who so vociferously criticised the FF wording do not revert to the issue....it will pass". Yet the politicians did ignore the referendum and the wording did not pass. It is the view of many liberals that politics is for high profile players only; politicians, judges, journalists, professionals and bishops. The Irish people are only capable of looking on.

In the last 12 months the Irish people have changed politically. They voted for a woman's right to information on abortion, they voted against a distinction between a woman's life and a woman's health. This time last year the popularly held opinion among those fighting for abortion rights in Ireland was that we'd be lucky not to lose abortion information, never mind a referendum on abortion itself. We were on the run. Yet in one year the tables have turned and the "pro-life" campaign is on the losing end of things. So what caused the change?

In general, the structure of Irish society has changed in the last few years. Emigration has slowed down, with many young people returning to Ireland believing it better to be unemployed at home rather than in London or Manchester. An IMS poll in the Sunday Independent on February 23rd showed clear differences in attitudes to issues such as abortion and divorce along age lines. While 74% of those between 18-34 thought the Eighth Amendment should be revised, the figures were 60% for those between 50-64 and 50% for those over 65. Many emigrants are returning from more secular countries and their attitudes on these issues reflect their experiences abroad.

A second difference in Ireland is the movement of people from rural communi-

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SPUC OFF!

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ties to more urban areas. Within urban communities, there are larger numbers of social interactions and a greater variety of ideas. The power of the church is much decreased. People aren't as bound by the ties of tradition. Of course, as socialists these are factors that are completely out of our control.

However once change like this begins to happen it is up to us to utilise it, just as it was at the beginning of the industrial revolution for early socialists to organise within the emergent working class. As revolutionaries, we know that the time isn't always ripe for our ideas, but we also know that times change. The Irish situation proves this case in point. However once people start becoming more receptive to different concepts, it's important for our ideas of

how society can be better run to be there. This is why the Workers Solidarity Movement organises through good times and bad. When the good times start, we'll be ready.

The third and very important factor was the "X" case. This not only horrified many people but also for the first time identified a pregnant woman as more than just an incubator for a foetus. The reality of what it means to deny women the right to abortion was made clear.

For the future, the "pro-life" movement are correct when they say this is the thin end of the wedge. Though it is certain that the politicians will try to fudge the issue yet again when they deal with legislation later this year, the ground on which they walk is not as firm as it used to be. The pro-choice movement will have to learn not to put their faith in the laps of the political parties but rather in the ability of the Irish people to listen, to understand and to agree with our arguments. It is the many we have to convince, not the few.

Aileen O'Carroll

Andrew Blackmore sorts the vote

Travel		Info		Abortion	
No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
26 Counties (not Dublin)					
42	58	45	55	65	35
26 Counties					
38	62	40	60	65	35
Dublin					
27	73	30	70	67	33

IT IS HARD to analyse the most important result from the referendum, namely the 'substantive issue' or the abortion referendum. It would only be possible to give an accurate reading of this referendum if a further poll was taken. People need to be asked why they voted 'No' on the day.

The Irish Times has made the most serious attempt so far to analyse the result, but they used data taken before the Referendum. This is of limited use since the MRBI poll taken nine days before the ballot showed that a quarter of the electorate still had not decided which way to vote.

The poll also predicted a 'No' vote of 56%, nearly 10 points lower than the actual 'No' vote of 65%. Clearly many people had yet to make up their minds.

A Liberal vote

The other two referenda, on Travel and Information yield more information. A 'Yes' vote in these referenda indicate at the least a liberal stand on abortion. Voters were spread over the spectrum from 'free abortion on demand' to not liking it but not wanting to put too many impediments in a woman's way.

Taken with the vote for Mary Robinson and the recent Labour Party advances, the referenda results show a growth of the liberal vote.

Rejection of far right in referenda

The Referenda on Travel and Information prove that the 'No, No, No' lobby failed by a decisive amount. From a look at the Travel vote which had the lowest percentage of 'No' votes it can be seen that 'No, No, No' campaigners won at most 38% of the vote.

The 'No, No, No' lobby contained extreme anti-abortion groups such as Youth Defence

and the Christian Centrist Party. That these people were rejected is no surprise. More significantly the extremely conservative lobby was supported by several Bishops including the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Desmond Connell.

This is worth mentioning because the Dublin 'No, No, No' vote was at most 27%. The Archbishop's intervention included letters being read out from the pulpits at Sunday mass. His massive failure at the polls was a welcome rejection of his views by most Dubliners and showed a shift away from Church views.

Failure of far right in General Election

People not only rejected church leaders. In the General election the far right were slaughtered.

Niamh Nic Mathuna, the Youth Defense leader and candidate in Dublin Central only received 514 first preferences. This was despite the fact that 13,617 people in this constituency voted 'No' to Travel. Most people who voted 'No' to Travel probably voted 'No' to Information and Abortion as well because these respective 'No' votes were higher.

Niamh was the only 'No, No, No' candidate in that constituency, the most conservative constituency in Dublin. She obviously did not benefit from her views on abortion. All the other 'No, No, No' campaigners failed to pick up votes from the potential support that they had.

'The Dublin Effect'

The divide between the urban vote and the rural vote is well known. Rural people traditionally vote more right wing than the urbanites.

This is most clearly seen by the clear divide in the vote between Dublin and the rest of the country. Dublin is one county out of 26 but it still amounts to over a quarter of the electorate (29%). In both Travel and Information, the Dublin 'Yes' vote was higher than the 'rest of the republic' by 15 points. This shows the strategic voting importance that Dublin has.

The Dublin vote pulled up the result in both Travel and Information by 4-5 points. It is possible that in the future a close referendum result will see Dublin casting the deciding vote for the 26 counties. For example in the Divorce referendum next year, the 'rest of the republic' could vote 'No' to Divorce by 52%. A Dublin 'Yes' vote of anything over 63% would see the referendum carried and Divorce introduced in the 26 counties.

To see the 'Dublin effect' again we can look at the Referendum on Travel. 73% of Dubliners voted 'Yes' to Travel. Even if the 'rest of the Republic' had voted 'No' to Travel by a decisive 61%, the result at the end of the day would still have been a 51% 'Yes' vote.

Effect of campaigning

Finally if we want to get some estimate of the success of the canvassing and leafletting done by the Workers Solidarity Movement, the Dublin Abortion Information Campaign and the Alliance for Choice we can look again at the results.

The number of spoilt votes was less than half in Dublin than anywhere else in the country. In the Abortion referendum 2.4% of the votes were spoilt in Dublin compared to 5% in the rest of Leinster, 5.5% in Munster and 7% in Connaught/Ulster.

This indicates that people in Dublin were better informed than anywhere else in the country. Pro-choice leaflets must have played some part in that. On the other hand the Dublin turnout at 66% was slightly less than the national average at 68%. When it comes to referenda people must be urged to get out and vote as well as being convinced of the arguments.

From all that can be gleaned at the moment the pro-choice side did far better out of the referendum than the far right. November 26 can go down as being a significant victory for women's rights in Ireland. It is, we hope, the start of a long term trend.

Referenda results taken from the Irish Times, Saturday November 28 1992. MRBI poll mentioned was in the Irish Times, Saturday November 21 1992.

Will the state that waged war against Nicaragua save Somalia?

"LIBERAL Interventionism" is the new buzzword for 1993. In every newspaper they are baying for blood. "US intervene in Bosnia", "America sort out Somalia" scream the headlines. People who might have questioned American intervention in Nicaragua, Panama or the Middle East are raging that the marines didn't go into Somalia sooner. Aid agencies who condemned America's role in Central America are begging them to extend their mission in Somalia. It is time to look at how the crisis in that country is being used to justify America's 'big brother' role in the New World Order.

Sending the marines in to "solve" the crisis in Somalia was rather like sending a pyromaniac with a can of petrol to put out a fire. The famine in Somalia is man-made. It is a result of the underdevelopment caused by colonialism and the later refusal of the big powers to let many of the ex-colonies develop their economies. Somalia up to 1991 was a net exporter of agricultural products, 64% of its exports being livestock and meat. Most of the population are subsistence level nomads but two million were involved in fairly well developed agriculture.

George Bush's intervention actually goes back to the 1970s when he was director of the CIA. \$356 million worth of weapons were poured into Somalia. Before this the country had been split between Britain and Italy. In 1960 it was granted independence. In 1969 a military coup bought Major General Siad Barre to power.

GUNS, GUNS AND MORE GUNS

His dictatorship was propped up with Soviet money so naturally the CIA attempted to subvert it. In 1977 he tried to take over part of Ethiopia, at that time a Soviet puppet. From then on this was a dictatorship which was "on-side" with the 'free world'. It received more "aid" and, especially, more guns. It became increasingly dependent on foreign aid, its agriculture remained underdeveloped

and export-orientated. Its people began to starve.

Aid agencies estimate that there are now 7.5 million guns in the country. In 1990 the population was estimated at 7,555,000 (*Encyclopedia Britannica, Micropedia 1991*). Since then it has been devastated by war, famine and disease. So there is an average of more than one gun per person in this sad country.

In January 1991 the hated Siad Barre

was finally toppled. The various factions which opposed him began to fall out and the country slid into civil war. The reaction of the West was to withdraw all aid. The UN pulled out.

The intervention of 20,000 American marines is not going to put the country to rights. While in the short-term they have secured aid supplies the signs are there that the long-term prospects are not good. The Americans will try and sort out some form of puppet government. They are already setting up "interim security councils" (*New York Times Jan 3rd*). After something has been cobbled together with UN help they will exit. They will leave behind a country with at least 14 warring factions and 7.5 million guns. From there things can only get worse.

ARMED PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES

So why go in in the first place? It is difficult to support the claim that the Americans might have any direct strategic interests in Somalia. Oil has been discovered there and it might make a useful staging post on

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letters

Exagerating the fascist threat?

Dear Comrades,

The recent issue of *Workers Solidarity* is good but I disagree with your analysis of fascism in Europe. Firstly, the rewriting of history to favour the Right is not the product of marginal Hitler enthusiasts like Irving. It is a product of the need for imperialist states to establish a political justification for aggressive intervention in other countries, in carving out their 'new world order'. This requires the rehabilitation of the militaristic Right and the idea of white European supremacy.

The invention of a distinct national history for the German puppet-state of Croatia is part of the same process as it involves (i) a humanitarian pretext for German intervention in Yugoslavia, and (ii) a new historical perspective which views Nazis as over-zealous but patriotic anti-Stalinists. The Serbian 'death camp' myth serves to relativise the holocaust.

Secondly, there is a danger in the assumption that the rise of the Right in the 1990s is a natural product of crisis capitalism just like the 1930s. The two scenarios are very different - crucially because the 1930s was about the militant and ruthless crushing of the workers movement by the bosses. In the 1990s there is no workers movement and no need for the capitalist class to resort to the same measures.

The Fortress Europe imperialist consensus which blames the Third World for global instability and scapegoats immigrants stretches from mainstream Left to far-Right. In this state-bred atmosphere it is little wonder blacks are subjected to racist assaults with such regularity by Nazis and non-Nazis alike. Revolutionaries should be directing their fire at the establishment root of the problem, not playing the bosses game of targeting the neo-fascist fringe.

Yours for communism,

Alan Reid,
Bristol,
England.

*We welcome letters
from our readers*

Write to Workers Solidarity,
P.O. Box 1528, Dublin 8.

Somalia

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the way to the Middle East. The main consideration, however, is simple: good publicity.

During operation "Desert Storm" the media was restricted and their reports had to be passed by military censors. Operation "Restore Hope" has taken place under the direct glare of media publicity. Newspapers, magazine and TV crews have been allowed unrestricted access and reporting. The marines daring dawn raid of December 4th faced batteries of cameras and TV floodlights. The marines were somewhat irritated (not having the chance to, at least, put on a bit of makeup beforehand for the cameras) but clearly somebody quite high up had given sanction for the media invasion.

The high point of the armed photo-opportunity was the Christmas visit of the "great white father" himself. This nauseating stunt was dubbed "Show-malia". Bush patted heads in foodlines and orphanages. The cameras clicked obligingly. As soon as he left the press pulled out as well. "The hiss you hear" noted Associated Press on January 3rd, "is the air going out of a good story".

HITMAN

The US economy is now massively dependent on arms manufacturing and the arms merchants are a hugely powerful lobby. Increasingly America is becoming the hitman for the more buoyant Western economies. The Gulf

War was an excellent showcase for the Pentagon's "usefulness and capabilities" in this regard. They were the ones who "sorted out" Saddam, and were massively bankrolled by Saudi Arabia, Japan and the EC.

As well as wars conducted in the name of 'democracy' (like the Gulf War where America's allies included Saudi Arabia where women are not even allowed to drive cars!), there are to be 'humanitarian' interventions. These help to make invading other peoples' countries more acceptable to the public. There is always enough cash for arms and armies, but not for food, healthcare or education. We are supposed to forget that the big world powers are the ones who wreck third world economies and prop up the dictators.

The invasion of Somalia is an attempt to get over the 'Vietnam Syndrome'. It is an attempt to legitimise invasions in the 1990s. Somalia is an ideal 'theatre' in which to intervene. It contains a lot of small arms but nothing which could stand up to high-tech American ordnance. And it was easy, even the liberals and soft-left wanted intervention in this "exceptional situation". On the other hand, despite the pleading of the 'liberal interventionists', they are in no rush to jump into the former Yugoslavia. This would involve confrontations with well armed forces in extremely difficult terrain. It could become a long and complex war, where public support would bleed away. It would be too reminiscent of another continent, another time, another place and a country called Vietnam.

Conor McLoughlin

Fascist fraudsters



STICKERS which read "Happy Christmas? Not in Croatia... help change it!!" appeared in the centre of Belfast and in the east of the city. Playing on the suffering of innocents in Croatia they have included a picture of a crying baby, and ask for donations to 'Emergency Aid for Croatia'.

Emergency Aid for Croatia is a front for the fascist International Third Position grouping. Their initials I.T.P. and the contact address which appears on all their

propaganda appears in small print on the sticker. In the six counties they are linked to the Ulster Movement, an organisation who aim at independence for the 'Ulster nation' (perhaps they also want to annex the three counties in the Republic). They also share all the same racist, homophobic and fascist aspirations of the ITP.

So where is the money going, most definitely not to the innocent victims of the conflict in Croatia, or the innocent victims of the conflict anywhere in the former Yugoslav state. The money could be going into the bank accounts of the ITP, but if it is in fact reaching Croatia, it is more than likely being put towards the war effort. This of course creates more innocent victims of the bloodshed.

Where ever this money ends up, this must be made clear: don't send money to nazis. Now as then, it results in the suffering of innocents, not their relief.

This story was first reported in the anarchist bulletin, *Organise!*, 7 Winetavern Street, Smithfield, Belfast BT1.

World anarchist News

Libertarian Days in Germany



A MAJOR congress on the theme of "ways towards an anarchist society" will be held in Frankfurt, Germany over the Easter weekend. This annual gathering, 'Libertare Tage/Libertarian Days', is becoming increasingly popular. Up to 2,500 participants are expected this year.

As well as discussions and debates on issues like industrial organising, anti-fascism and anti-authoritarian education; there will also be concerts, theatre and exhibitions. If you are interested in attending write to Libertare Tage 1993, Sandweg 131a, 6000 Frankfurt am Main 1, Germany.

Solidarity with Nigerian libertarians

FOUR NIGERIAN libertarians are in jail. The government of General Babangida has engaged in arbitrary arrests, bans on political activities it doesn't like and the closure of all federal universities. Journalists who don't toe the government line are having a hard time. The Academic Staff Union of Universities and the National Association of Nigerian Students have been banned.

This is all part of the... (wait for it!), transition to civilian rule. The military government have set up two political parties, the National Republican Convention and the Social Democratic Party. They have decided to crack down on the independent working class movement. Among those arrested following a wave of anti-government strikes and demonstrations last summer were four members of the libertarian socialist Awareness League. Udemba Chuks, Garba Audu, Kingsley Etioni, and General Secretary James Ndubuisi are still in jail.

In an international week of solidarity actions, calling for their release and freedom for all detained trade unionists and socialists, activities took place around the world in February. Nigerian trade union, civil liberties and anarchist organisations put out a call which was taken up by anarchists in many countries. In Dublin the Workers Solidarity Movement protested at the Nigerian embassy and delivered a letter calling for the release of the detainees. Letters were also handed in from a number of Unemployed Groups, Student Unions and trade unionists.

Financial aid has also been sent to help support the families of the prisoners and pay for legal assistance. What may be a small amount of money here can stretch further there. Sterling drafts (available from any bank) should be sent to Samuel Mbah, P.O. Box 28, Agbani, Enugu State, Nigeria.

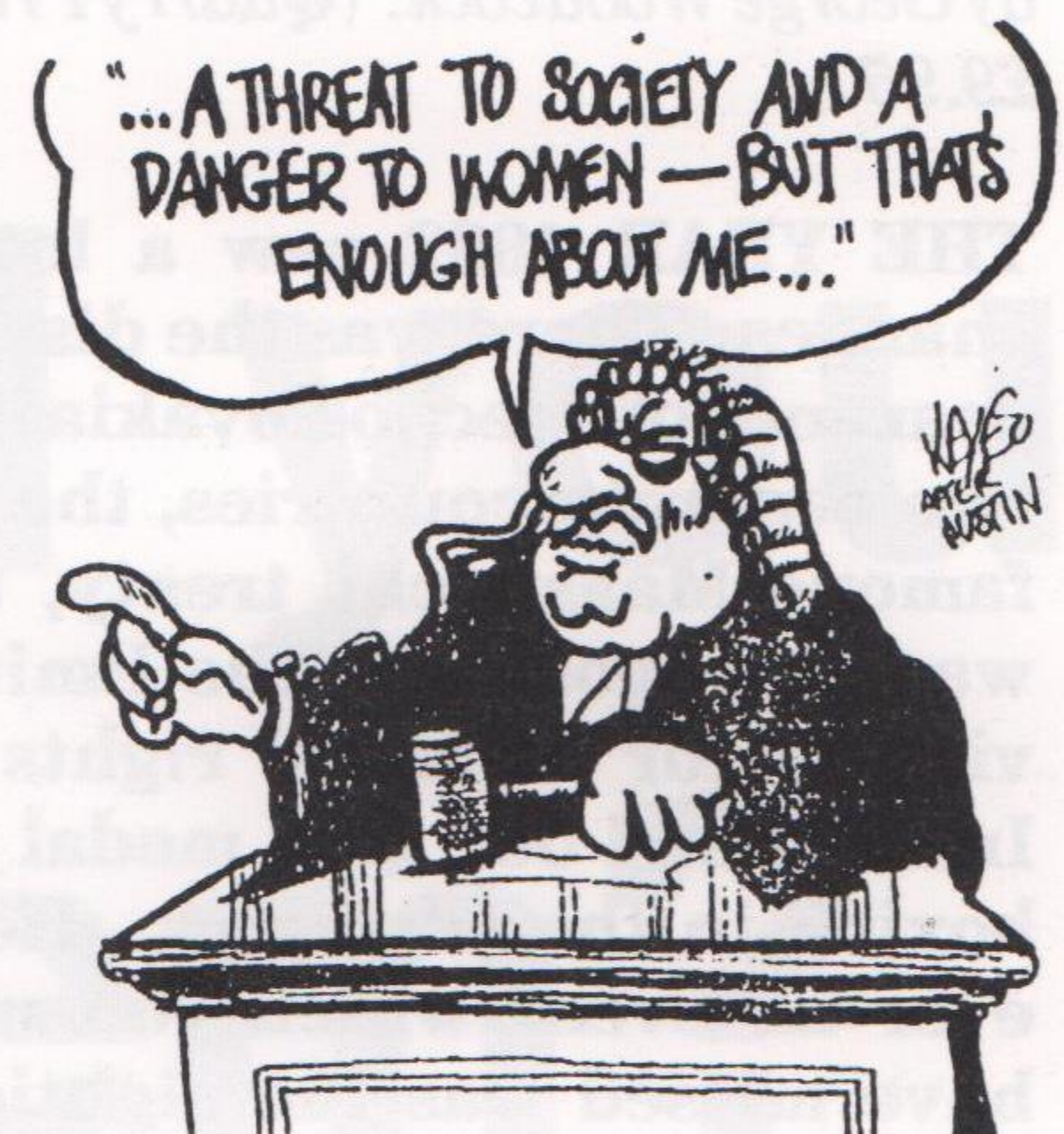
WE'RE IN HERE FOR YOU



YOU'RE OUT THERE FOR US

Sexist old drivellers

MANY PEOPLE are angered by the often derisory sentences handed out for rape and sexual assault in Irish courts. However we are far from unique in this respect. A recent look by the "Sunday Observer" in Britain at *their* senile drivellers, sorry, High Court judges threw up some of the following:



His Honour Major Argyle who let the rapist go because "you come from my part of the country". Judge Raymond Dean who told a 1990 jury in the Old Bailey "as the gentlemen in the jury will understand, when a woman says no she doesn't always mean it". Then there is Sir Kenneth Jup who thinks rape is OK provided it stays within the family. In 1987 he gave a man a 2 year suspended sentence for raping his ex-wife. "This was a rare sort of rape" he observed, "it is not like someone being jumped on in the street. This is within the family and does not impinge on the public".

Sir Kenneth retired in 1990. Unfortunately still at large is Judge Gabriel Hutton. In 1988 he gave a man 2 years for attempting to rape a nurse. He then suspended all but a month of the sentence. He addressed his consolation to the rapist expressing his hope that "you will be able to keep your well paid job and the couple of weeks you spend in prison will be treated by your employers as part of your holidays". In 1990 he gave 2 years probation to a man for sexually assaulting a 12 year old boy remarking that the man needed a chance "to get over his problems".

Des McCarron

All (Wood)cock and Bull

REVIEW

ANARCHISM AND ANARCHISTS
by George Woodcock. (Quarry Press)
£9.95

THE YEAR 1992 saw a lot of changes. There was the disappearance of Czechoslovakia into two separate countries, the infamous Maastricht treaty, the war in Yugoslavia, the limited victory for women's rights in Ireland and our gold medal for boxing in the Olympics. However an event which you may have missed was the eightieth birthday of George Woodcock. To celebrate this, a book was published of Mr Woodcock's collected essays, entitled "Anarchism and Anarchists".

The noted academic and intellectual covers a broad range of topics in his book, from the revolutions of 1848 to the prospects for anarchism. One surprise for me was the mention of Ireland in the first paragraph of the initial essay. However the author is only referring to the unrest which spread through Europe in 1848.

"Anarchism Revisited" is by far the most interesting essay in the first half of the book. In this Woodcock tries to defend the position which he adopted in his book "Anarchism" which was first published in 1961. His position was that the Anarchist movement was effectively dead. He wrote "nor is there any reasonable likelihood of a renaissance of anarchism...". Yet within seven years of these lines being typed by Woodcock, Europe erupted in a social revolt in which many of the participants identified with Anarchist politics.

Woodcock had decided to leave the Anarchist movement so as not to be infected by the "orthodoxy of belief". He readily admits that to stay in the movement "would probably ruin me as a writer and stepped aside to become a free wheeling radical of my own kind". Since then the radical has never stopped trying to be yet another intellectual to write the obituary for Anarchism.



•George Woodcock

So how does the man who dogs the Anarchist movement like the perennial undertaker in a spaghetti western waiting to measure us up and nail the lid on our coffin defend his position. In 1968 Woodcock quietly got on his typewriter (while the battle of the barricades was being fought in Paris) and decided to plaster over the gaping holes in his premature prediction of the death of Anarchism. "Anarchism Revisited" is the fruit of a man who refuses to admit he was wrong and is well worth a read.

Like all great historians or hurlers on the ditch he left an escape clause or trap door in his 1961 book. In order to clarify this he claims that the movement of Anarchism is dead but the idea "which was alive two centuries before Bakunin", or the theoretical core of Anarchism "may still have the power to give life to a new form under changed historical circumstances".

Woodcock goes on to quote from some obscure survey in 'Freedom' in 1962. He seems to have a very narrow cloth cap and clogs definition of the working class in that he excludes teachers, health and welfare workers, and anyone involved clerical or administrative/clerical posts. A majority were also very young. The Anarchists were a movement of "dissident middle class youth".

Yet in 1968 ten million workers were on strike in France (numerous factories were occupied) and the people of Czechoslovakia and students of Germany were on a collision course with the authorities. For

such an esteemed historian surely Woodcock knows that he can't base an argument on the results of a survey of 457 people in Britain in 1962.

The book also covers briefly, an appreciation of Proudhon and his theories. It also has a short account of the fascinating life and work of Michael Bakunin. The majority of anarchists (with a small a) covered in the second half of the book are the intellectual types like Goodman, Read and Thoreau. Not being familiar with their work I found these accounts to be interesting introductions to their works. However I am far more likely to read books by people who are or were involved in class struggle rather than the ivory tower academics.

In the space of four pages Woodcock attacks Noam Chomsky for not being anything more than a left wing Marxist. The attack is pursued on the basis of Chomsky's introduction to Guerin's book "Anarchism" (a book which I would read before anything by Woodcock). The basis of Woodcock's gripe with Chomsky is that he puts the working class (economic matters) at the centre of anarchism. Woodcock on the other hand sees anarchism as a mish-mash, liberalism, community politics and minority rights. Under his definitions I am a member of a dead movement and I am reviewing a book on Anarchism which has no mention of Malatesta or Makhno.

This book was published on the occasion of Mr Woodcock's 80th birthday. I wish him a happy peaceful retirement. The last thing the Anarchist movement needs is an active grim reaper waiting to write an obituary. I would recommend this book to people who treat it for what it is. A collection of essays written through the eyes of an intellectual historian who decided to leave the Anarchist movement in the 1950's or risk "being ruined as a writer". Notice the priorities. Mr Woodcock since 1961 has done for the Anarchist movement what Chernobyl did for chicken Kiev.

Dermot Sreenan

REVIEW

ANARCHISM by Daniel Guerin
(Monthly Review Press) £4.95

ALTERNATIVELY this book could be called "All you ever wanted to know about Anarchism but were afraid to ask". After reading Guerin's "Anarchism" you'll be a convinced anarchist, armed with lots of arguments and examples to throw

at the Leninists. This book is an easy reading introduction to the main ideas in anarchist thought and the events that have helped to form them. It is divided into three sections, Anarchist theory, Anarchist economy and Anarchists in revolutionary practice.

In part one Guerin discusses the anarchist objections to the state, bourgeois 'democracy' and authoritarian socialism. In particular Guerin focuses on the difference between anarchism and other strands of socialism. This difference is well illustrated by the discussion on the importance of individual freedom within society.

There is a common fear that socialism will destroy individuality. This fear is partly based on the tendency of many socialists to discuss socialism purely in terms of the benefits to 'society'. The anarchist emphasis on the individual highlights a different vision of a future society which aims to liberate the individual and delight in people's differences.

Guerin gives a real example of this commitment to individual freedom. On the eve of the Spanish revolution, the CNT (Confederacion Nacional de Trabajadores - a mass anarcho-syndicalist union) passed a motion to allow naturist and nudist communes "unsuited to industrialisation" negotiate special economic agreements with the other agricultural and industrial communes.

In part two, Guerin discusses anarchism in more concrete terms. He describes a libertarian society organised on two levels; economically in the form of a federation of self-managing workers' associations; and territorially in the form of a federation of communes. Proudhon saw this form of organisation, which is organised but with no centralised authority, as "the highest degree of liberty and order to which humanity can aspire".

Part three of this book takes a more historical view of Anarchism in practice. The constraints of an introductory book mean that this is a very brief overview of

Everything you ever wanted to know about anarchism

events. Guerin looks at the involvement of Anarchists during the Russian revolution, including the events at Kronstadt, the Makhnovista and the attempts of the Bolsheviks to suppress Anarchists and their ideas.

The story in Spain was quite different. Despite the threat of fascism, the Spanish revolution of 1936 was far more libertarian. Anarchism had a strong tradition in Spain so the revolution shows us some anarchist ideas in practice. Guerin looks at the attempts at self-management in agriculture and industry. He also looks at the political factors that brought the revolution to an end.

What is interesting in this account of the Russian and Spanish revolution are the criticisms levelled at the anarchists themselves. Although the actions of the Bolshevik party are rightly condemned, the anarchists are far from idealised. Their failings in revolutionary practice are highlighted rather than hidden. This honesty enables us to learn from mistakes in the past and adds to the development of anarchist politics.

Guerin's book explains the main ideas of anarchism simply and concisely without portraying anarchists as infallible. It shows the development of these ideas and the internal debates that have existed within anarchism. If you want to find out that Anarchism doesn't mean chaos, that they don't all wear black capes and that there is a socialist alternative to the Leninists, then read "Anarchism".

Kathleen O'Kelly

BOOKS FOR ANARCHISTS

ABC OF ANARCHISM by Alexander Berkman. £2.20 86 pages. Answers the questions you always wanted to ask. Is anarchism violent, can we live without government, how could society be organised, who can change society, is a revolution necessary?

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.

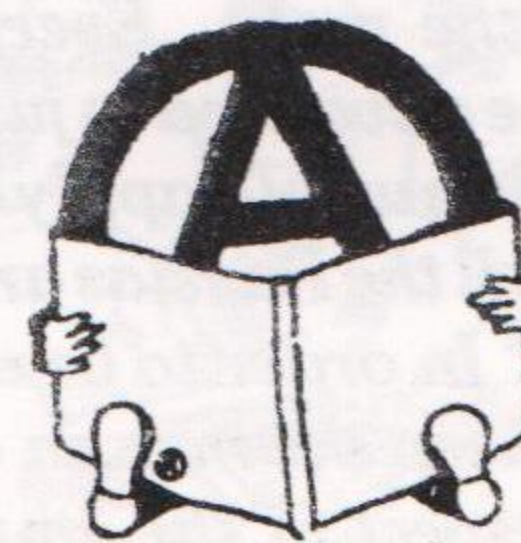
PORTUGAL, THE IMPOSSIBLE REVOLUTION? by Phil Mailer. £4.00 399 pages.

Eye-witness account of the 1974 events in Portugal by an Irish libertarian socialist. Ordinary people, in action, crowd each other off every page. Interviews, arguments, leaflets, discussion. Shows what a modern revolutionary situation can look like; and how some 'revolutionaries' can be part of the problem, not part of the solution.

PARIS, May 1968 £1.50 48 pages. Another eye-witness account of a modern revolutionary situation.

ORGANISATIONAL PLATFORM OF THE LIBERTARIAN COMMUNISTS by Nestor Makhno, Ida Mett, Peter Arshinov, etc. £1.50 34 pages.

Despite an academic sounding title, a good guide to the sort of anarchist politics and organisation needed to change society. Written by exiled Russian and Ukrainian anarchists who had fought for the revolution and against the Bolshevik dictatorship.

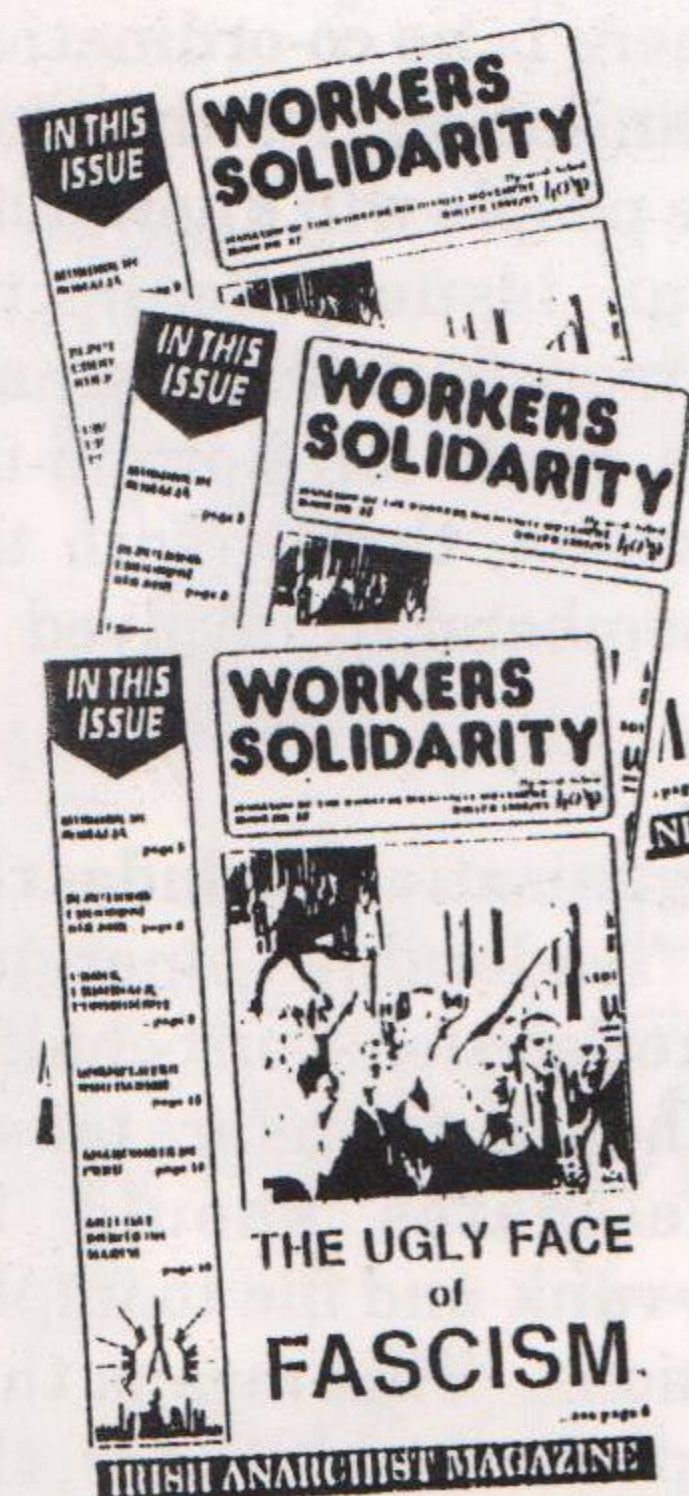


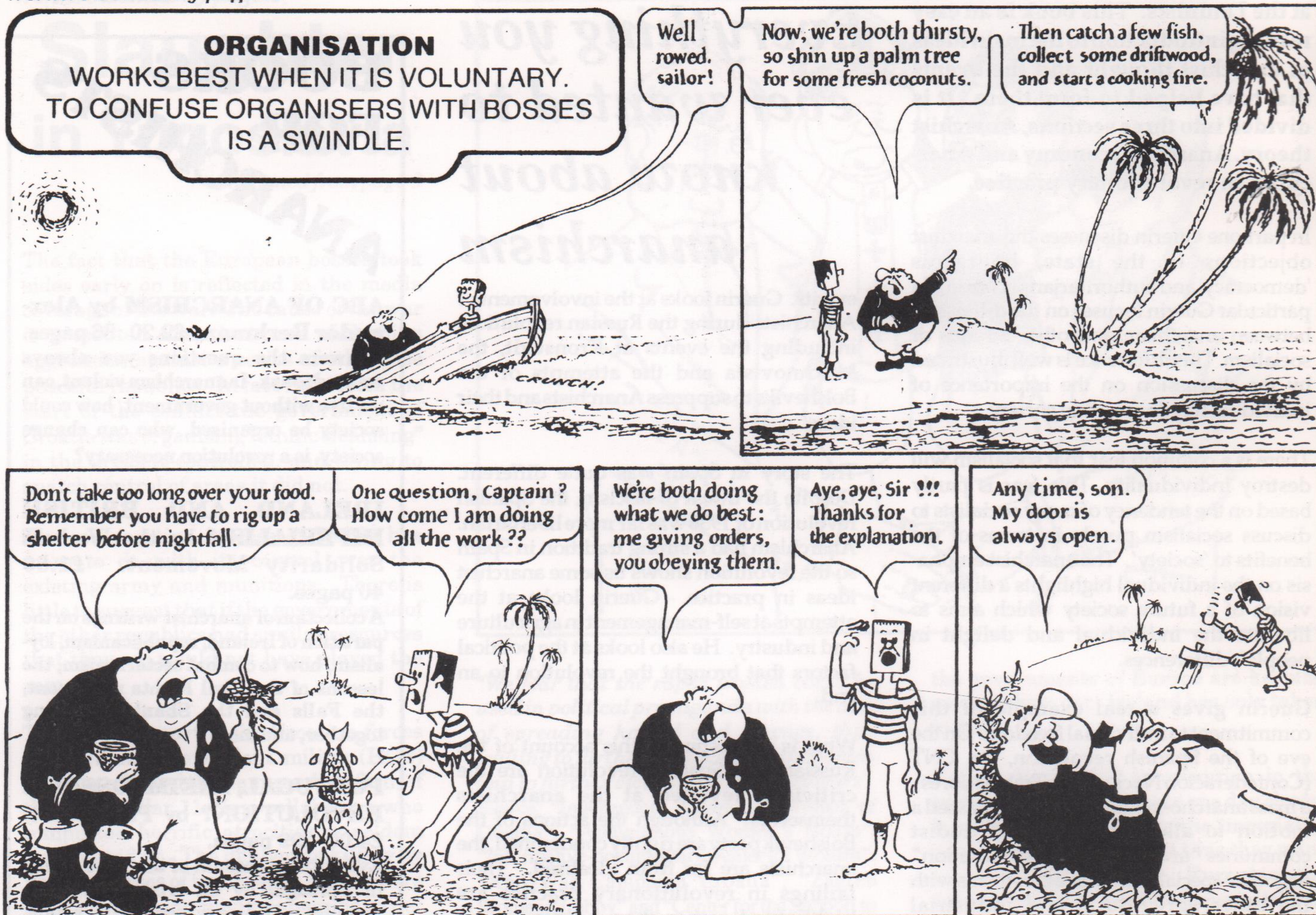
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Anarchism and leaders

continued from the back page

leadership implies.

2. Consider what it means

This power of initiative, this sense of responsibility, the self-respect which comes from expressed manhood, is taken from the men, and consolidated in the leader. The sum of **their** initiative, **their** responsibility, **their** self-respect becomes his.

3. The order and system

The order and system he maintains is based upon the suppression of the men, from being independent thinkers into being 'the men' or 'the mob'. Every argument which could be advanced to justify leadership on this score would apply equally well to the Czar of all the Russias and his policy of repression. In order to be effective, the leader **must** keep the men in order, or he forfeits the respect of the employers and 'the public', and thus becomes ineffective as a leader.

4. He corrupts the aspirants to public usefulness

He is compelled, in order to maintain his power, to see to it that only those who are willing to act as his drill sergeants or

coercive agents shall enjoy his patronage. In a word, he is compelled to become an autocrat and a foe to democracy.

5. He prevents solidarity

Sheep cannot be said to have solidarity. In obedience to a shepherd they will go up or down, backwards or forwards as they are driven by him and his dogs. But they have no solidarity, for that means unity and loyalty. Unity and loyalty, not to an individual, or the policy of an individual, but to an interest and a policy which is understood and worked for by all.

Finally he prevents the legislative power of the workers

An industrial vote will affect the lives and happiness of workmen more than a political vote. The power to vote whether there shall or shall not be a strike, or upon an industrial policy to be pursued by his union will affect far more important issues to the workman's life than the political vote can ever touch. Hence it should be more sought after, and its privileges jealously guarded. Think of the tremendous power going to waste because of leadership, of the inevitable stop-block he becomes on progress, because quite naturally, leaders examine every new proposal and ask first how it will affect their position and power. It prevents large and comprehensive policies being initiated and carried out which depend on the understanding and watchfulness of the great majority. National strikes and policies can only be carried out when the

bulk of the people see their necessity, and themselves prepare and arrange them."

LEADERS OR IDEAS?

Clearly the bad side of 'leadership' outweighs the good. The strong leadership or rule of individuals stifles self-activity and creates passive dependence. This is not to deny all forms of leadership. Anarchists do seek to become a leadership, a *leadership of ideas* rather than one of 'prominent personalities' or unaccountable representatives. We seek to make anarchist ideas the most widely accepted and supported within the working class.

A rejection of the 'leadership' idea does not mean that there is no co-ordination, efficiency or organisation. Neither does it deny that some people will know more about particular issues, be better speakers or have more forceful personalities. Anarchists work for 'bottom-up' forms of organisation, that is with the rank and file membership involved in taking decisions.

Such a form of organisation excludes the possibility of a 'leadership' emerging which would make decisions "on behalf of the members". When decisions are taken, accountable delegates should be appointed by the rank and file to implement these decisions. This means that the organisation remains under the control of the members, and not under

Not unjust to discriminate?

TEACHERS OF physical education have added their voice to protests against the anti-gay policies of the Catholic Church. Last year the Vatican said "gays and lesbians suffer from an objective disorder and it is not wrong to discriminate against them". They went on to list the employment of teachers and athletics coaches as cases where "discrimination on the basis of homosexual tendencies is not unjust".

At its annual general meeting the Physical Education Association of Ireland, most of whose 350 members are teachers in secondary and vocational schools, a motion rejecting the Vatican statement was passed.

No speaker opposed the motion.

Ms. Ger Murphy, President of the PEAI, stated that "sexual orientation is not a criteria that should be used in the hiring or firing of physical education teachers, and being homosexual has no more relevance than being heterosexual". She went on to condemn the Vatican statement as "a fundamental attack on the privacy of the individual".

IMPACT has negotiated an anti-discrimination agreement covering 65,000 workers in local authorities and health boards. This gives some protection to Vatican targets such as childcare and social workers.

the control of any leadership, no matter how well intentioned they may be at the outset.

PARTY OR CHURCH?

Some "socialists" operate with the idea that there is a "crisis of leadership", that the working class need a leadership which will, of course, be the Party of these "socialists". Without the Party they can't change anything. The Party is to be the brains, the vanguard of the class. Within the Party the 'best' members make up the Central Committee, and the 'best' of these becomes the leader.

The process leads to a strict hierarchy in which policies and instructions come from the top. Not totally dissimilar to the way the Catholic church works. Democracy gets pushed into the background, if it doesn't get lost completely (as happened in the Communist Parties and many of the Trotskyist ones).

This sort of set-up will lead workers nowhere except to more exploitation and dictatorship as it did in Russia and China. Anarchists, reject the 'top-down', or capitalist, form of organisation because we know that the means you use will determine what you end up with. A hierarchical and authoritarian organisation can only result in a hierarchical and authoritarian society.

Those who would dismiss our objections as 'nit picking' and our alternative as 'inefficient' or 'unworkable' usually do so because they regard their 'leadership' as all-important. They pay lip service to Marx's statement that the emancipation of the working class is the task of the working class itself but either don't understand what he said or they disagree with it but won't say so because to disagree with Marx is regarded as a type of heresy in many left wing circles.

Anarchists have no objection to organisation. They are all for it. They were a major force within the first international socialist organisation, the International Working Mens Association. They were the driving force behind building trade unions in many countries including the USA, Argentina, France, Italy, Portugal, Korea, Russia, Switzerland, Poland and many others. More books have been published about the Spanish Civil War than any other, so how is it that Leninists still claim that anarchists have never been capable of organising when each and every one of those books will tell you that the anarchist CNT union had over one million members? Surely this would not have been possible without a high degree of organisation!

All right, says the cynic, but what about today? Things are more complex and complicated and anarchist forms of organisation could no longer work.

We only have to look across the sea to Spain once more. The National Confederation of Workers (CNT-AIT) with several thousand members, the General Confederation of Workers (CGT) with at least 20,000 members, the CEEP, better known as 'La Co-ordinadora' which organises 80% of the dockers and the Agricultural Labourers Union (SOC) with about 20,000 members all operate on anarchist organisational principles. They have found no need to abandon these principles. Neither has the 15,000 strong Central Organisation of Workers (SAC) in Sweden, nor have the anarchist influenced unions in other countries. (For a report of a recent international conference attended by some of them see *Workers Solidarity* no. 34.)

Alan MacSimóin

* *The Miners Next Step*, Unofficial Reform Committee. Tonypandy, Wales. 1912.

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 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 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 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.

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

A CYNICAL EYE is directed at anarchists whenever they speak of organisation. Is not anarchism the opposite to organisation? The simple answer is NO. Is it then the opposite of large or complicated organisation. The answer is equally simple, NO. So where do such mistaken ideas come from?

Anarchists want an end to the present system and its replacement by a socialism that is indivisible from freedom. Being just as realistic and practical as anyone else they know that the bosses are well organised and have the forces of the state at their disposal. To bring about such a fundamental change will require a very high degree of organisation. So where do the accusations that anarchists are incapable of organisation come from?

It is not just that our opponants will tell lies about us. Of course that happens, one only has to read the papers of Leninist groupings who take great delight in using the word 'anarchy' to describe chaos. These groupings do not have the excuse of ignorance, their misrepresentation is a case of petty and childish slander. But this hardly explains the confusion as their readership is not exactly massive. However similar misrepresentations in the *Independent*, *Press*, *Herald*, *Times*, *Star*, *Examiner*, *Newsletter*, *Irish News*, *Echo*, on radio and TV do have such an effect that the anarchism = chaos idea is widely accepted by those who have not yet met an anarchist.

ARE RULERS NECESSARY?

This is not to claim that there is a conspiracy by broadcasters and newspaper editors to tell lies about anarchists. That would be quite an absurd proposition to put forward in Ireland today. Our numbers do not yet inspire so much fear in the ruling class that they would go to such lengths. The reason is that anarchists reject the view that there must always be a division of people into rulers and ruled. The rich and powerful (and those who would like to be rich and powerful) cannot accept this.

In their eyes, because of their own sense of superiority and self-importance, to live without rulers could only lead to chaos. The working class, they believe, are too stupid to run their own lives, let alone the whole of society. They are absolutely

Thinking about Anarchism



Follow the leader?

convinced that the absence of a small ruling group can only lead to disorder.

So then, what type of organisation should we seek to build? Two forms are possible. The first is the one we are all used to whether it be the Dáil, in our trade union or even in a campaigning group. This is a structure where the decisions are made at the top and most of the electorate/members have no effective say in the decision making process. We are expected to simply obey. Though the handful of people at the top may have been elected we have no real control over them. In no way are they really accountable to the rest of us.

PACK OF LIARS

In recent years the best example was the Fianna Fáil slogan of "Health cuts hurt the old, the sick and the handicapped". As soon as they got their behinds onto cabinet seats they proceeded to savage the health service, breaking all their election promises. And when health workers, other trade unionists and concerned individuals took to the streets in protest we were told that our behaviour was undemocratic, that we should abide by the democratic election result!

Organisation based on a small leadership telling everyone else what to do is always opposed by anarchists. We have no desire to be ruled, ordered around or dictated to. But is this not an unrealistic position that takes no account of the real world? Back in 1912 miners in South Wales began a discussion* about structures in their union. They looked at both sides of the leadership issue. Although that was eighty one years ago, what they found still provides food for thought today and it is

worth quoting from. (The language of their document reflects both the sexist ideas of those times and the lack of women in the mining industry).

THE GOOD SIDE OF LEADERSHIP

1. Leadership tends to efficiency

One decided man, who knows his own mind is stronger than a hesitating crowd. It takes time for a number of people to agree upon a given policy. One man soon makes up his mind.

2. He takes all responsibility

As a responsible leader, he knows that his advice is almost equivalent to a command, and this ensures that his advice will have been carefully and gravely considered before being tendered.

3. He stands for Order and System

All too frequently, 'What is everybody's business is nobody's business', and if no one stands in a position to ensure order and system, many things are omitted which will cause the men's interest to suffer.

4. He affords a standard of goodness and ability

In the sphere of public usefulness there is a great field of emulation. The good wishes of the masses can only be obtained by new aspirants for office showing a higher status of ability than the then existing leaders. This tends to his continued efficiency or elimination.

5. His faithfulness and honesty are guarded

Hero worship has great attractions for the hero, and a leader has great inducements on this side, apart from pecuniary considerations to remain faithful and honest.

THE BAD SIDE OF LEADERSHIP

1. Leadership implies power

Leadership implies power held by the leader. Without power the leader is inept. The possession of power inevitably leads to corruption. All leaders become corrupt, in spite of their own good intentions. No man was ever good enough, or strong enough, to have such power at his disposal, as real

continued on page 18

