

PACKARD HITS UNION

PACKARD ELECTRIC is a subsidiary of the American General Motors company. According to the business magazine Fortune G.M. is the largest and wealthiest firm in the world.

1100 workers at the Packard plant in Tallaght are on official strike. It started when management tried to impose a new 'rationalisation' plan on the workers.

The workforce are being offered a two phase pay increase of 4% and 5% over a 2½ year period. This will be conditional on the workers agreeing not to strike — for any reason what so ever — during this time. Management are also demanding increased flexibility on the shopfloor, meaning that workers will be shifted around according to managerial whim.

STRIKE

The workers, mostly in the ITGWU and ATGWU, met before Xmas to discuss this plan. They rejected it by a majority of 3:1. However ITGWU President John Carroll said not enough people were present at this meeting and so, the union could not sanction strike action.

On the 5th January a new ballot of ITGWU members was held, this time there was an 8:1 call for strike action. Official sanction was given.

The General Manager of the Tallaght plant, Hartmut Hengsfert, is renowned as a strikebreaker at factories throughout Europe. With Herr Hengsfert at the helm, the management had foreseen the possibility of a strike and had, accordingly, prepared themselves.

SCABS

Over Xmas, while the workers were on holiday, scab labourers and supervisors were called upon to complete and remove Austin-Rover work from the plant.

Returning workers were told that this had been a training exercise for the supervisors.

Not surprisingly, this excuse was not believed and there was an immediate 'down tools' and walk out. Since then a 24 hour picket has been maintained. Police and courts have conspired with the bosses to limit the effect of the pickets. A court injunction was granted to the company restricting the size of the picket to no more than 20 people.

On the 11th January, a Sunday, almost 100 riot gardai surrounded the plant and blocked off part of the road. This was to allow scabs remove Austin-Rover work from the factory.

HELICOPTER

The following Tuesday more work was removed from the plant, this time courtesy of Irish Helicopters Ltd. The next day gardai were again used to intimidate pickets in order to allow a convoy of trucks to leave.

On the 18th of February a group of ESB workers passed the picket and entered the factory. Picketers refused to allow them to leave. 20 gardai had to be called to escort them past the strikers.

Some of the supervisors, members of TASS, say they will leave their union rather than join the strikers. On a brighter note, workers at Austin-Rover plants in Britain have refused to handle any work done by scabs at Packard.

LABOUR COURT?

Unions and management are currently talking in the Labour Court. Unfortunately these negotiations will do very little for the strikers. Management is out to break the back of the union, insisting on its 'right' to victimise some of the shop stewards for their activity during the strike.

Packard won't be brought to its knees by talk in the Labour Court. It can be by stopping its sales as has been done so successfully on the picketline. To let them get away with anything now is only giving them the confidence to stick the boot into the union in the future.

The running of the dispute should not be left to full-time officials who

have less knowledge of the needs and problems of workers on the shopfloor. Decisions need to be taken at the lowest level possible, to allow for the maximum involvement by all the union members. The unions are ours, we should run them.

Eddie Croasdel

STOP PRESS

The strike is over. The company threatened to pull out of Ireland unless their 'offer' was accepted by February 24th. On that day the workforce voted 413 to 397 in favour, a majority of only 16. Such a large vote to fight on, even in the face of the very real threat, indicates that GM has not broken the back of the unions.

Now the stewards should take up the question of an international shop stewards committee with delegates from GM plants of all countries. With such an organisation it would be easier to stop plants in one country being pitted against those in another. It would also raise the possibility of stopping GM pulling out of one country as a union bashing exercise — by preventing them shifting production to other plants.



Packard workers on the picket line

WORKERS SOLIDARITY

20p

PAPER OF THE WORKERS SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

ISSUE NO. 25. MARCH 1987.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

HAUGHEY MUST GO!

HAS ANYTHING CHANGED? After four weeks of electioneering and cretinism — hard to match this side of the Zoo — the newly elected TDs can be remarked upon for only one thing — their similarity to those in the last Dail. Certainly there have been minor changes. The Leftwing vote centered around the Workers Party being strengthened, while the Middle-class vote has shifted to a party (the PDs) more aggressively in favour of cuts in the Social Services. But overwhelmingly, this Dail is made up of three Parties — all Right wing — and all committed to one major policy — making Irish workers pay for the economic crisis.

CUTS, CUTS, CUTS

This crisis has now been going on since the late 70s. It has seen unemploy-

ment rocket while massive emigration, like in the 50s, has returned again. All the while the Public Service has taken the brunt of the "cost cutting" exercises with not just wages dropping, but teaching, hospital and social services deteriorating also.

TAXATION

This scandalous state of affairs has hit workers more than any other class in Ireland. Its part and parcel of a situation where we now pay (if we are "lucky" to still have work) one of the highest levels of taxation in Europe along with various forms of double taxation like water and refuse rates, VAT and PRSI. This election, for all the talk there is about it, will not change one iota of this.

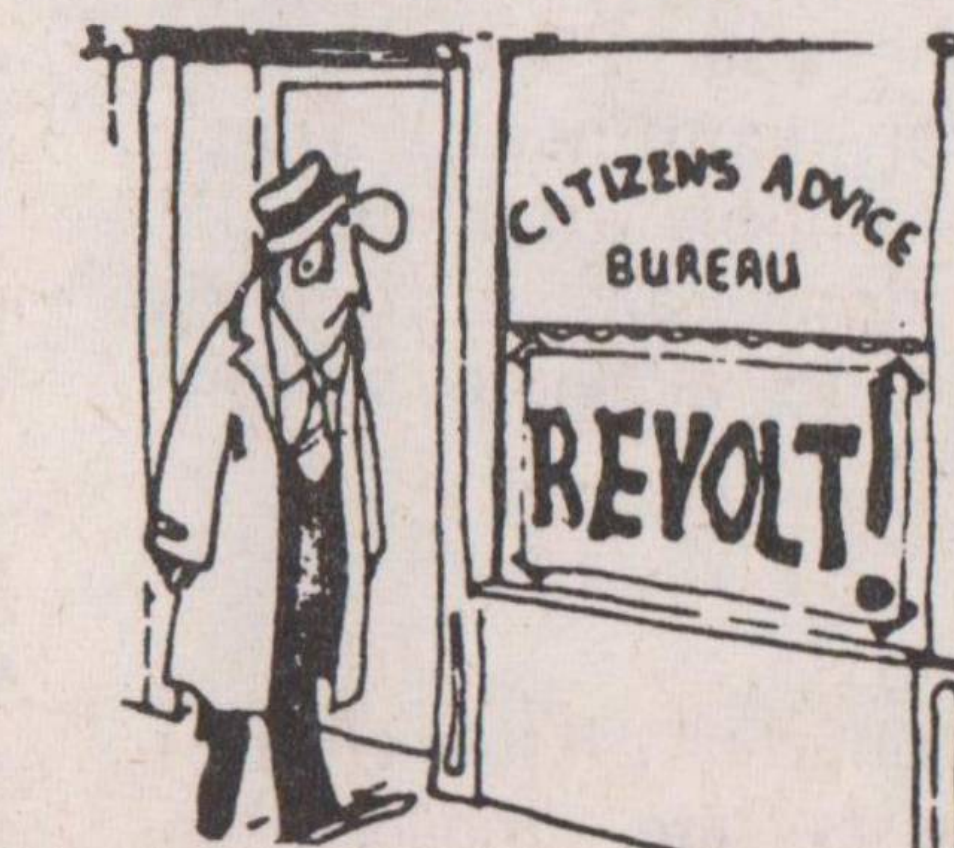
The W.S.M. did not stand in this election. Nor will

we be standing in any in the future. General Elections are for us just a con-job giving people the illusion that they can change things, when in fact the real decisions about economic policy and taxation are made in the boardrooms of the Banks and the big companies. Worse still these elections divert attention away from where workers are really strong — the shop floor.

DIRECT ACTION

As anarchists the W.S.M. stand for workers fighting back, themselves, collectively, through their Unions. A few years ago the potential of workers power was made apparent when the Tax Marches brought out over a ¼ million workers onto the streets. Last year, the cuts in the Public Service were challenged by the teachers, by Dublin and

Cork Corpo stoppages and by all public service workers during the one-day strike. This shows a growing, though still small, level of militancy against the Bosses cuts. Moreover it shows workers themselves standing up and doing the fighting. It is this direct action and not the rhetoric of any TDs that can put a stop to the cuts. It can, more to the point, show us our real strength and our ultimate power to get rid of this rotten and unjust system and replace it with socialism and freedom.



IRELAND'S ANARCHIST PAPER

IN THE run-up to the election the ICTU and a few individual unions, notably the ITGWU, ran advertising campaigns against the Coalition's policies. One of the slogans that appeared on billboards was "Jobs Not Promises". A good slogan.

At least it would have been if it meant we should fight against closures and redundancies, and ignore the promises of the politicians. But that wasn't what Carroll, Browne and the others had in mind.

INVESTMENT

The point of it all was to get us to vote against Fine Gael and the PDs (Labour's record in government being conveniently forgotten), to vote for parties who said they might invest a bit of capital to get the economy moving. It had nothing to do with a workers fightback.

This is the opposite of the views expressed in this paper, which encourages a fight for jobs and better conditions as part of the struggle for workers control of society. For anarchists, the industrial action taken by workers in Dublin County Council which forced management to take on more staff (see *Workers Solidarity* No. 17) was far more fruitful than voting for even the most left sounding party.

FAILURE

Most union officials believe that government adminis-



tration is the key to solving the unemployment problem. The logic of this leads to them sitting on the boards of state bodies like AnCO, Manpower and the Youth Employment Agency. The YEA is a capitalist institution whose role is to try to cover up the system's inability to solve youth unemployment by making grants and very cheap labour available to small capitalists. Its record is one of dismal failure.

It is the same kind of reasoning that has union officials in Britain sitting-in on the YOP schemes which oversee the exploitation of young workers, who are sometimes paid even less than they would get on the dole.

SIDE EFFECT

Unemployment, like wars and mass starvation, is an inevitable side-effect of capitalism. As long as that system lasts so will unemployment. The answer

does not lie in putting Labour — or any of the other would-be representatives of the working class — into power to manage the capitalist economy. The answer lies in uprooting the whole system that puts profits before people.

While the present set-up continues the majority of workers are faced with either dull and thankless jobs or the dole. We can use industrial action to save at least some of the jobs the bosses want to get rid of. But the only way to guarantee decent jobs for all is to end the rotten system we now live under.

POLITICAL LEVY

This is something beyond the comprehension of the union officials, wrapped up as they are in the present system. Many of our unions are actually affiliated to the Labour Party and a portion of our membership dues goes to fund the election campaigns of the

likes of Dick Spring and the other wasters who presided over the welfare cuts in Labour. Those wonderful people who brought us 4½ fun-packed years of Coalition government.

If your union is affiliated to Labour you are entitled to ask for a form stopping any portion of your dues going to Labour. Go on and do it. We don't need them — they need us.

Workers should represent themselves in their own struggles. By handing control of our struggles over to politicians and bureaucrats we are just setting ourselves up for future sell-outs.

It is up to ourselves to begin taking control of our own struggles, both in work and outside it. And the sooner we set about doing it the better.

Greg Ryan



THAT'S CAPITALISM

The United Nations have calculated that fifty million children will die of malnutrition related illness by the year 2000 on the African continent. That's fifty million *after* the UN has done all it intends to do to alleviate starvation.

One quarter of the world's scientists are engaged in tasks of a military character. This means that rough-

ly half a million scientists and engineers are working in military research and development — not in industrial research, not in medical research — but in researching ways of waging war and killing people.

Ronnie Reagan described Col. Oliver North, the man at the centre of the 'Arms to Iran' scandal as a "True Patriot". Now it's emerged that during the 1985 hi-

jack of a TWA plane in Beirut, Col. North urged a cruise missile strike on the hi-jackers headquarters in downtown Damascus, the capital of Syria. Yup, a true patriot.

Fearing further political turmoil resulting from last year's earthquake in El Salvador, the U.S. government gave £55 million in aid. But to date, most of it has stayed in the corrupt hands of President Duarte. What little has been dispersed has been pathetic. The inhabitants of a shantytown of 1,000 huts were given twelve shovels and wheelbarrows and told to

re-build their town without even so much as a bag of cement.

The US House of Representatives have published a report on secret experiments carried out by Nuclear power scientists during the last forty years. 'Project Manhattan' involved feeding, injecting or exposing hospital patients, prisoners and other people with uranium and other radioactive material without their permission. Hundreds died or were seriously affected, and it's thought that the experiments are continuing, and not just in America.

MAKING THE LAW UNWORKABLE

THE CAMPAIGN to Defend the right of Open Line Counselling and the Well Woman Centre to give counselling and information on abortion is continuing with a great deal of active participation from many groups and individuals. Already it has spread to Cork, where the campaign group have organised a march on March 7th, for International Womens Day through the city centre. The marchers are to carry banners and placards with phone numbers of clinics in Britain and the North, where women who want abortions can go.

The campaign has organised for a list to be drawn up of 100 media names who are willing to give out information on abortion clinics in Britain. If 100 injunctions are served on these people, then 100 more volunteers will be willing to put their names forward. We must make this law unworkable.

INFORMATION PACKS

There will be information packs available at stalls throughout Dublin on March 7th for International Womens Day. An all-woman vigil is being held

outside the GPO at 5.30 pm and various fund raising activities are being undertaken to provide finance for future campaign needs.

RIGHT TO CHOOSE

We believe that it is the right of every woman to be able to have an abortion if she wishes. Since that option is currently denied us in Ireland, it is essential that counselling and inform-

ation be available to allow women to make their own decisions. Safe legal abortion is a basic demand for women.

Women should not be made to feel guilty for choosing to have an abortion over bringing a child into this totally unsupportive, hostile society, where capitalism is only interested in making our role that of rearing the next generation of workers. Ade-

quate and safe contraception is not available; circumstances are not ideal, and many women find themselves with unwanted pregnancies. Women must have the right to choose.

All support, donations and help with the campaign will be welcome. The weekly activists meetings are held at 8.00 pm. every Tuesday at USI rooms, 16 North Great Georges St., Dublin, and in Cork at the Quay Co-op, Sullivans Quay, 3.30 pm each Saturday.

Pam Venes



W.S.M on Dublin's Defend the Clinics March

Student Terrorists?

Gardai reacted to a peaceful demonstration by students ... by arresting U.S.I. officer Peter Graves under Section 30 of the Offences Against the State Act. The arrest happened on February 5th during an occupation of the Department of Education in Dublin. U.S.I. members were protesting about the lack of equal access to higher education for both women and working class students.

Many students expressed concern and surprise at the

use of Section 30 which is ostensibly for use against "subversive elements". This arrest follows the arrest of four students in Athlone, when a similar protest was cut short by gardai using Section 30.

Section 30 was introduced to combat "those trying to overthrow the state". This would seem to include students, trade unionists and, a couple of years back, campaigners against the Reagan visit.

This comes as no surprise to us. Government will use its armoury of repressive laws against opposition to the status quo. Section 30 has to be seen for what it is — a weapon for suppressing not only so-called terrorists but also

any section of the working class that gets up off its knees.

Barry Ryan
(USI member)

Don't Trust Forte

AS THE STRIKE at the Shelbourne Hotel enters its sixth month with management refusing to budge, a few interesting facts have been surfacing about the owners, Trust House Forte. Last year Lord Forte boasted "there is no need for unions in our business. In

my business we have reduced union membership from 36% to 3%." They do this by sacking shop stewards and threatening other union members with the sack. This has provoked at least 12 major strikes in British THF hotels since 1974.

PROFITS

The infamous Lord Forte also said last year "Wage costs as a percentage of turnover should be a maximum of 20%. Gross profit is also vital. It should be 65-70%." A victory for the Shelbourne workers is essential, another defeat will encourage bosses in other hotels to impose the same

continued on page 6

NOW THAT the electoral dust has settled we can see that the pundits got it wrong when they said the 'left' vote had collapsed. As anarchists we are not involved in the election game but we do recognise they can give a rough idea of the way people are thinking. If you exclude Labour (and we do, apart from all else, they had just come out of a right wing coalition and so were unlikely to attract radical votes) the vote for candidates claiming to be socialists actually registered a small increase nationally. This demonstrates that there are now tens of thousands who have decided that big changes are needed. But how far can Sinn Fein and the Workers Party go; can Labour survive and what does the defeat of Alice Glenn mean? WSM members give their views.

Labouring For What?

DICK Spring made it back into the Dail with only four votes to spare. Yet two anti-coalition TDs picked up seats, in Kildare and Galway West. Does this mean there will be a swing to the left in the Labour Party or are we looking at the beginning of the end?

Labour lost almost a third of its vote. In the three constituencies where it gained seats it did so with a lower share of the vote than in the 1982 election. It only increased its vote in two areas, Waterford by 3.4% and Limerick West by 1.5% (bringing it up to 519!). But Labour will survive, for the present anyway.

It is a mistake to look at it as if it was a Labour Party like the British one. While it does enjoy the affiliation of some of the biggest unions and will even make passing reference to Connolly, it is not a real Labour Party.

More than anything else it is an alliance, with a base among trade union officials and professional people, of individual politicians whose political ideas are all over the place. Their electoral support does not come from agreement with policies but, in the main, from running clinics, clientism and 'pressing the flesh'. That is why Sean

Tracey kept most of the 'Labour vote' this time when he ran as an independent anti-contraception/anti-divorce candidate. That is why two of the Party's Senators, Tim Conway and Helena McAuliffe-Ennis, could defect to the PDs without a second thought.

There will be much talk about 'rescuing the Party' and staying out of coalition ... now that there is no coalition for them to join. We have heard this every single time they have been voted out of office and there is no reason to believe they are any more sincere about it this time around. Are we really to believe that the Party of Spring, Desmond, Quinn & Co. is suddenly going to transform itself into something it has never been?

There is no place for socialists in this support group for a collection of professional politicians who presided over the cuts in health, social welfare and education; who prop up a system that has put 250,000 out of work and forced another 100,000 to emigrate; who defend tax 'incentives' for the rich while screwing the rest of us. Their only vision of 'socialism' is a few meagre reforms granted from above — if the bosses don't object.

Alan MacSimóin

IF VOTING COULD CHANGE THE SYSTEM IT WOULD BE AGAINST THE LAW

Sinn Fein Play The Game

Sinn Fein didn't attempt to hide their disappointment at their share of the vote: 1.9% nationally, or 3.1% as a proportion of the constituencies where they stood. But the excuses offered don't bear close examination. It's true that Section 31 puts them at a disadvantage, but their poor showing was not, as they insist, a consequence of people voting for Fianna Fail to head off the 'spectre' of a FG/PD coalition, when they might otherwise have given their first preference to Sinn Fein. In many constituencies with a SF candidate, FF's share of the vote was actually down on the last election. And a glance at SF's transfers also reveals that whilst FF usually got the largest single share, transfers were just as likely to go in every other direction, including FG and PD.

None of this should really matter, except that SF's election post mortem reflects their new found obsession with elections and the vagaries of voting behaviour. But then, Sinn Fein didn't put forward portest candidates, but seriously saw this run out as a first step to eventually 'forming a government in Ireland,' as it was put by their Director of Elections. Gerry Adams elaborated when he explained that Sinn Fein's participation was partly to establish where they might do well in the local elections. And presumably, from there they'll identify their next general election prospects, and so on.

Sinn Fein have wholeheartedly embraced parliamentarianism, thus committing themselves to a clientelist system where politics are subordinated to getting people one notch up the housing list, and where policies deemed an electoral

liability are usually hidden or dropped, as so ably demonstrated by the Workers Party.

This is not to say that Sinn Fein will ditch everything they stand for, but with one eye fixed firmly on the next election, their priorities will shift and political dilution is inevitable. Because what they don't realise is that the

parliamentary system exists to maintain the status quo, and it's continued existence reflects the status quo. But when the present set up is effectively challenged, the Dail will be swept aside and anyone with a record of accommodating themselves to it will go the same way.

Dominic Carroll

Bye Bye Alice

IT WOULD be reassuring to believe that Alice Glenn, Tom O'Donnell, Cllr. Deegan and all the other cohorts of SPUC/Family Solidarity/Family League/Life have suffered a defeat, have lost their public support in this election.

Indeed looking at the election results one would think they have. Glenn in Dublin Central and O'Donnell in Limerick East lost their seats. Deegan in Tipperary North lost his deposit. Glenn's statement "the family is the true measure of the greatness of the nation" and her "God Rules OK" views may have worked in the recent referenda but seemed not to be an issue of reckoning in the general election.

MORAL POLICE

Maybe this time people feel that the moral police have gone too far. The election literature of Glenn was totally aimed at stable married heterosexual couples, with demands for tax allowances for the children of MARRIED workers, an end to child benefit 'discrimination' against MARRIED mothers, and end to

DE ROSSA heads the poll, MacGiolla gets back, Sherlock recaptures his seat and McCartin beats Haughey's for the last one in Dublin North-East. It was a good election for the Workers Party. In most constituencies their vote was up, most spectacularly in Dublin South West where Pat Rabbitte came ahead of Labour Party chief whip Mervyn Taylor on the first count.

W.P. Pull the Vote

The WP are pulling a large part of their vote from people who are 'working class and proud of it', the people who know that it is the PAYE tax payer who foots the bill for almost everything.

But while the vote they draw indicates a willingness to consider 'socialism' as an alternative we have

to be clear what the WP means by socialism. All their policy documents issued over the last decade are explicit that it is, in their eyes, some sort of giant state bureaucracy with lots of ESBs, CIEs, etc. to provide jobs for all. Concepts of workers control and freedom don't enter into their scheme.

Indeed up to recently they were dominated by a Stalinist old guard, though this may be losing influence to the 'new politicians' who see the pro-Russian line as a bit outdated and an electoral liability. But even this new breed will tell you that Russia is their model and is a living example of 'socialism'.

To keep the votes coming the WP are forever moderating their views. The latest example is their public abandoning of the class struggle (the notion that bosses and workers have different, irreconcilable interests) by calling for the state, bosses and trade unions to get together to "sort out the economy." And I always thought class struggle was the reason we needed socialism and the way we would achieve it!

Ex-WP member

lost out when the vote pie was served out.

"IMMORAL"

On the other hand, the economic "immoralists" of the Progressive (sic) Democrats got great big servings of public support. And they have intentions of doing much more for

right wing politics than Glenn and her followers could ever achieve. They will push hard for cuts in social welfare, health and public education; and they will try to make it appear 'sensible' and even 'progressive'!

Richard Birmingham



An active service unit of the PDs-the fur coat brigade

PAMPHLET

Anarchism and Ireland — Pamphlet outlining the politics of the WSM. Available for 80p (inc. postage) from P.O. Box 1528, Dublin 8.

Review

The Politics of Irish Freedom. Gerry Adams. (Brandon £3.95)

IN AN INTERVIEW with the *Irish Times* following publication of his book, Gerry Adams claimed that socialism in Ireland was not on the immediate political agenda. As if to emphasise this position, in his book the chapter on socialism is a mere nine pages, the shortest apart from the concluding chapter.

This might not seem important, except that Gerry Adams clearly considers himself to be a socialist and can be regarded as representing the left wing of republicanism in the 80's. But for the moment, it's not something he'd like to draw attention to. For Adams and the Provo's, the immediate objective is the removal of the British and an end to partition. Adams identifies this as a purely republican struggle, and argues that "although you cannot be a socialist and not be a republican, republicans don't necessarily have to be socialists." Confused?

CLASSES

Its simple. The Provo's have located the source of the problem with the British presence. That's not to say that Adams doesn't recognise the class divisions in Ireland. He does, but for the moment they don't matter. What's important now is getting the Brits out. As things stand, only nationalists and socialists are interested in this. So, because the Provos can't see any way of winning loyalists to the cause, it's to the likes of the SDLP and Fianna Fail that they turn. This in spite of having devoted a chapter to slating them as collaborationist and opportunist. But for the sake of 'pan-nationalist unity', as he puts it, it makes sense to "agree to disagree on social and economic issues and maximise pressure on points of agreement." And in doing

IRISH FREEDOM

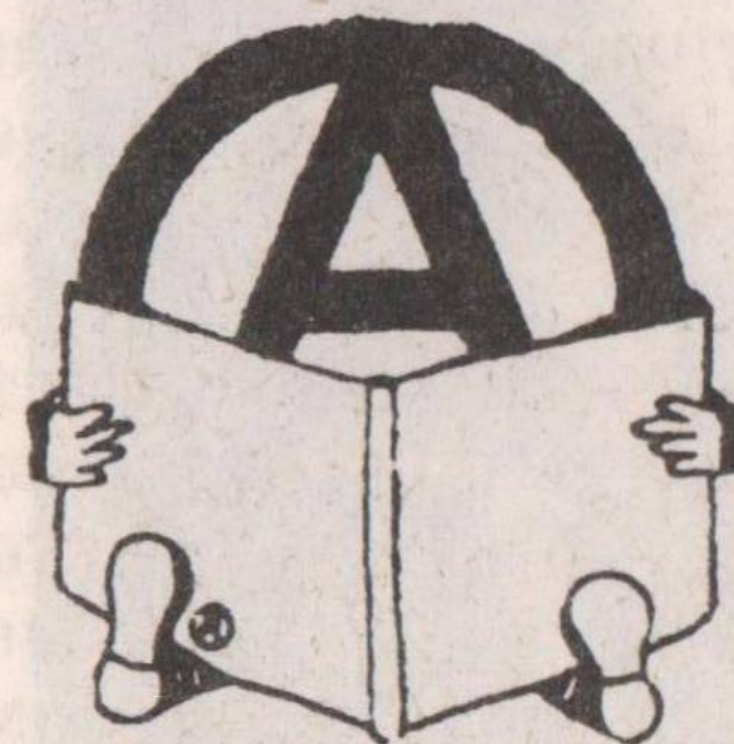
business with these people, Adams stresses the importance of not "unnecessarily bringing out some of the class differences" between Sinn Fein and the SDLP leadership.

Therefore, argues Adams, it's 'ultra-left' to "break up the unity of the national independence movement by putting forward socialist demands that have no possibility of being achieved until independence is won." Similarly in the 26 counties, an anti-imperialist movement "cannot be built around the slogan of socialism."

LIMITS

No other statements could better illustrate the severe limits to Sinn Fein's much heralded left turn. It's not only a case of subordinating the goal of socialism to the republican struggle. It also reflects the shortcomings in the Provos' analysis of class society in Ireland, North and South, imperialism, loyalism and most importantly, it reveals a confused strategy for achieving even the limited kind of 'socialism' the Provos talk about or for ending partition.

And it is limited. His own description is "a definite form of society in which the main means of production, distribution and exchange are socially owned and controlled and in which production is based on human need rather than private profit". He does not describe this definite form of society. Who will "socially own"? Will it be the state or a system of workers councils? What does he mean by "the main means"



The question is half answered when he goes on to say "You must have your own national government

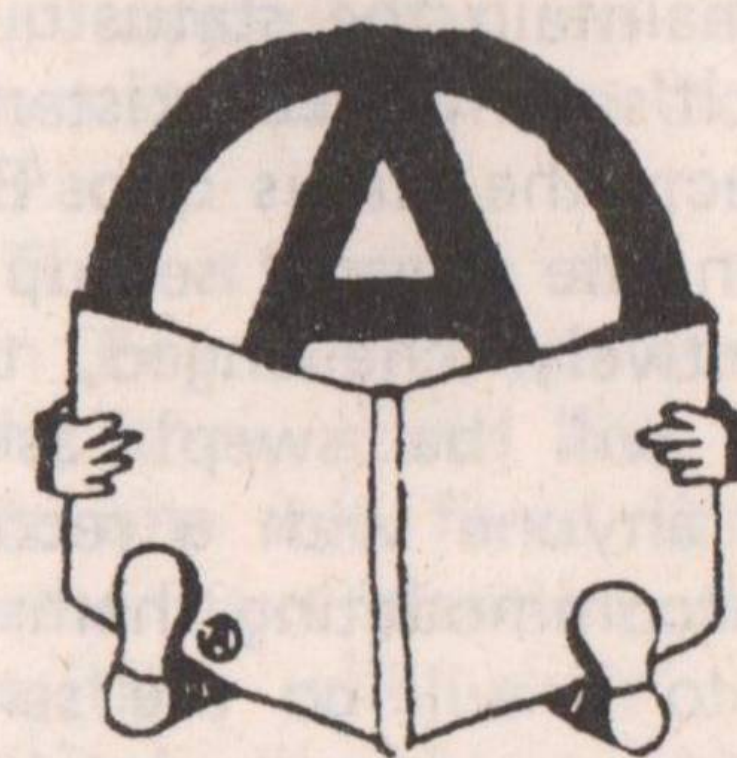
with the power to institute the political and economic changes which constitute socialism". So, he says, socialism can be legislated into being from above. It does not come through the efforts and self-activity of ordinary workers. It is not something created by them and under their control. Ironically his conception of socialism seems to differ little from that of the Workers Party or Labour Party.

Although it won't be easy, a pre-requisite for removing the border is the participation of most of the million protestants in the North. The Provos have ruled this out, though interestingly, Adams concedes that "one cannot shoot or bomb an independent Ireland into existence." Yet somehow, the Brits will be shifted and Adams is confident that the loyalists will accept the situation just as surely as they accepted, among other things, the disbanding of the B. Specials. But it's utterly simplistic to cite the response to the disbanding of these thugs, who were in any case replaced with the UDR, as an indication of how loyalists will react to being forced into a united Ireland.

UNITY

The truth of the matter is that none of the problems in the North will be resolved except through the joint action of catholics and protestants united in a class struggle against the entire repressive and economic apparatus of the Orange Statelet. The only hope for this kind of working class movement is through an increase and broadening out of the kind of activity protestant and catholic workers continually turn to together: strikes. But this perspective for building an all Ireland anti-imperialist and socialist movement around trade union struggle is dismissed by Adams in the fourteen lines he devotes to an analysis

of the unions, on the grounds that partition makes normal class politics impossible. Adams preferred strategy centres on a combination of the armed struggle, radical campaigns and activity in the Dail and council chambers.



Still, this book provides an astute analysis of some of the key events in the North since 1968, and chronicles the repression, discrimination and deprivation faced by catholics since the foundation of the state, and before. For people who think the IRA are the problem, this book is a useful reminder that the Provos only arose as a response to the rotten Orange state. Britain, loyalism and the 30,000 soldiers and cops roaming the streets kicking in doors and kicking in teeth are the problem. Whilst that situation persists, so will the Provos.

But if you think socialism isn't just a long term aspiration but is also a guide to action for today, the politics of Gerry Adams won't be enough for you.

Dominic Carroll

WSM MEETINGS

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

CORK

Every Thursday at 8pm in the Quay Co-op, 24 Sullivans Quay.

March 12th

The Politics of Education

March 26th

The Struggle in Palestine

DUBLIN

Details from *Workers Solidarity* sellers or from P.O. Box 1582, Dublin 8.

GOMBEEN GRACE PAYS UP

THERE IS some good news from the picketline this month, for a change. After ten weeks on strike at the Phibsboro branch of Pat Grace's infamous Fried Chicken (see last month's *Workers Solidarity*) the two victimised workers, Liz McAuley and Kerri Nichols finally succeeded in winning compensation.

This success is made even sweeter because Grace tried to pull off a typical bosses' trick by offering a deal (in secret) to five of the seven women who were sacked last November. These five women gave in to Grace's pressure. They accepted a

pittance thinking they were better off getting a few crumbs from the bosses table than sticking it out, in solidarity with the other two until all seven got adequate payments.

"HURTFUL"

I was helping out on the picket with other Workers Solidarity Movement members when Liz and Kerri heard about the deal that had been done behind their backs. They were demoralised and felt it was "soul destroying and very hurtful". But the thought of Grace winning made them more committed to con-

tinuing with the strike, even though it involved picketing twelve hours a day for all seven days of the week.



Grace tried everything from threats of violence to sending his lackeys up to the picket to intimidate the strikers. All to no avail, the strike went on. Even though their union, the ITGWU, refused to give official sanction to the strike they didn't give up. Liz and Kerri stood their ground and kept the picket going with help from their sisters, the Workers Rights Association and the WSM. Locals also helped out by bringing tea and chips as encouragement.



VICTORY

A week later Grace, who was feeling the effect of the picket on his business, offered a settlement payment. Needless to say, it was a lot more than the five who let their friends down received. I asked the two women after the

settlement how they felt about the aid (or lack of it) they had from the union. Both agreed that the 'help' it gave them "wasn't worth a shit" and it showed "the members have no control over the union officials". Liz added "it is totally undemocratic that they are not elected by the rank and file membership".

The union officials have given two obscene reasons for not giving official sanction. 1) there had been a similar dispute with McDonalds in 1979 and it had



been lost, and 2) there were not enough strikers to maintain a good picket. This has been shown to be nonsense. In fact delegates to the union's Dublin District Council hammered the No. 4 branch officials for their handling of the dispute.

The success of this strike is a small example of what can be done when workers are running their own struggles and have the will to beat the bosses. It is something that, with organisation, we all can do. We just need the self confidence to go for it.

Richard Birmingham



JOIN THE WSM

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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THF

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harsh conditions. When you are fighting a multinational like THF a stepping up of the strike is needed. A good start would be a weekly mass picket to boost morale and stop supplies getting in. Meanwhile donations are very welcome and can be sent to: Shelbourne Strike Committee, No. 4 Branch, ITGWU, Liberty Hall, Dublin 1.

