

WORKERS LIFE

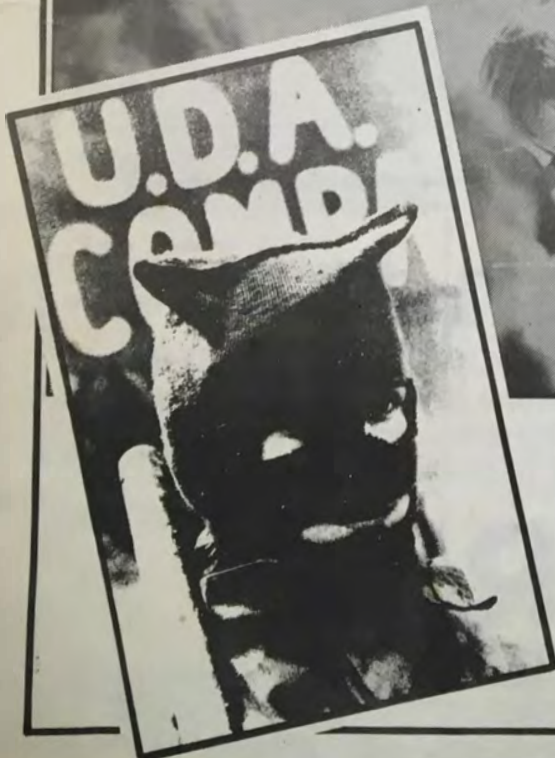
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*European
Elections*

UNDERSTANDING LOYALISM



BOOKS

ULSTER'S UNCERTAIN
DEFENDERS
THE NORTHERN IRELAND
CONFLICT IN
AMERICAN FICTION

Rembrandt
1639



Rembrandt: self-portrait (etching) 1639

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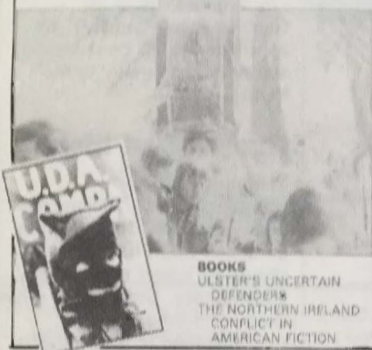
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WORKERS LIFE

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UNDERSTANDING LOYALISM



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IRISH NEUTRALITY has rarely been so popular and yet so threatened. Everyone — right, left and centre — supports neutrality by which they mean not signing a military pact with either the United States or the Soviet Union.

Yet the greatest threat to Irish neutrality lies at our own doorstep. Since signing the Treaty of Rome Ireland has been forced to examine its 'traditional neutrality' which amounted to little more than hear, see and say nothing, and pray that the bombs will fall somewhere else. The impetus for European unity arose from the world wars, and for most member states it is logical to put most stress on military unity; if only to loosen the bonds with the aggressive American nuclear missile policy forced on its NATO allies like Holland, Italy, Greece and Denmark.

The revival of the 30 year old Western European Union (WEU) as a European lobby within NATO has serious implications for Irish participation in any future EEC military initiative. Already the European Council of Ministers likes to 'speak with one voice' on international issues which has lessened Ireland's identification with post-colonial states and underdeveloped countries.

Since independence, most Irish politicians have viewed neutrality as a bargaining chip in a high stakes diplomatic game with Britain to secure unity with Northern Ireland. Even that prominent advocate of neutrality, Sean MacBride, was willing to consider NATO membership in return for British withdrawal from the North. That was thirty years ago, but it is only three years since Fianna Fáil's leader, Charles Haughey took the first tentative steps towards ending the country's neutrality in the euphoria following his 'Georgian teapot negotiations' with Margaret Thatcher. The totality of relationships within and between these islands certainly included a military aspect, and he was tempted to shift policy on neutrality at the party's Ard Fheis before a clamour of protest forced its abandonment. Only Thatcher's expectation of total Irish support for the Falklands and a belated concern within Fianna Fáil for the lives of Argentinian sailors prevented a military alliance with some NATO countries.

During the European election campaign Fianna Fáil displayed classic opportunism with its slogan 'Protect Ireland's neutrality — vote Fianna Fáil'. Charles Haughey declared: 'The Fianna Fáil position is clear and unequivocal on the question of neutrality. As far as we are concerned we will never become a member of any military alliance.' Judging by Haughey's record of strokes and shifts — especially over Northern Ireland — his party's position is anything but clear and unequivocal.

Fine Gael are just as equivocal. They wish to please their Christian Democrat allies in Europe, while pandering to popular opposition to NATO membership at home.

The initiative by the Irish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in organising door-to-door canvasses to increase awareness of our neutrality is a welcome counter to the ambivalence of our conservative MEP's who have a dubious record on cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe. CND wants a commitment to neutrality enshrined in the Constitution and that would be a major step forward.

A further step forward would require the development of a policy of positive neutrality. This would involve reaching beyond our shores, and joining with other neutral and non-aligned countries in actively working for world peace and disarmament. In today's world, neutrality means a lot more than simply standing aloof from conflict; *it means preventing it.*

Condolence

THE WORKERS' PARTY last month sent the following message of condolence to the Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party on the death of Enrico Berlinguer, General Secretary P.C.I.

'The Workers' Party have just learned of the death of Comrade Enrico Berlinguer, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Italy. We send our deepest and comradely sympathy to all Italian Communists on this tragic happening. Comrade Berlinguer's death is a blow, not alone to the Communist Party of Italy, but to progressive forces throughout the world.

'His outstanding contribution to the development and building of the Italian Communist Party as the major progressive force in Western Europe will be his enduring memorial.

'On behalf of all members, supporters and progressive people of Ireland, the Executive Political Committee of The Workers' Party tenders its sincere condolences.'

Sinn Féin 'law and order'

'I'LL BE VOTING Sinn Féin this time,' a middle-aged woman in Dublin told the *Irish Times* on the eve of the European Elections. 'I'm tired of all the robbings and muggings.'

The following letter, reprinted from the *Northern People*, might cause her and like-minded people to have second thoughts:

'The problem of teenage hooliganism and vandalism is an ever increasing one in all working class areas of Belfast.

'Lately we have witnessed the Provo solution to this. Gangs of known Provos can be seen nightly roaming our streets during the hours of darkness, wielding hurling sticks, some with nails protruding from them whilst other members of this lunatic fringe are armed with iron bars.

'They have been known to drag terrified youngsters from their homes and beat them senseless. It is worth noting that many of those responsible for these sadistic attacks are well known to local people as incorrigible thugs.

'Gerry Adams, commenting at a recent meeting in St. Paul's Hall stated that some parents have lost control of

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their children. Can he really wonder at this? Knowing as he does that when concerned parents complained to Provisional Sinn Féin about their kids joining the Provo Fianna they were told unceremoniously to clear off or they would be severely dealt with.

'At the same meeting Dean Montague implored parents to lead by their own example. Let us all hope that this message is not lost on the Provo leaders and that they will start by ceasing their attacks on life and property.

'When all is said and done, a large part of the blame for the present situation rests squarely on the heads of the Provos. So it is up to them to play their part in giving a lead to today's wayward teenagers. This cannot be done with nail-studded hurleys or with iron bars.'

Body-blow

ANGLO-IRISH relations were

dealt another body-blow recently when Princess Margaret attacked a famous son of Tipperary. 'I won't,' she fumed, 'be photographed with that over-made-up tart.'

No, she wasn't referring to Ronald Reagan, but to the celebrated pop singer Boy George.

Appeal

AN APPEAL for funds to help the families of striking British miners has been launched by the Workers' Party.

The official strike of the National Union of Mineworkers is now in its fourth month. The workers are engaged in a long and bitter struggle to defend their jobs, their communities, and the trade union rights of tens of thousands of miners.

The families are now suffering real deprivation, and are being denied even bare social welfare subsistence on the orders of the Thatcher administration.

The Workers' Party appeal

asks 'Irish people in general, and trade unionists in particular to help the British mineworkers in their hour of need.

Remember that during the 1913 lockout in Dublin, it was the British working class who came to the rescue with donations of over £50,000 — a huge sum in those days.

'Please send whatever you can afford to: Miners Appeal, The Workers' Party, 30 Gardiner Place, Dublin 1. All contributions will be receipted and passed promptly to the NUM.'

Guaranteed Irish

THE much battered 'Guaranteed Irish' scheme has been relaunched following the European Court ruling that it should no longer be an official state agency. Since June, it has been administered by the Confederation of Irish Industry (CII) as an independent company with directors representing manufacturing and retail firms as well as trade union interests.

The original 'Guaranteed Irish' scheme was introduced in 1975 by the Irish Goods Council to promote the symbol for quality, and make consumers aware of Irish made products.

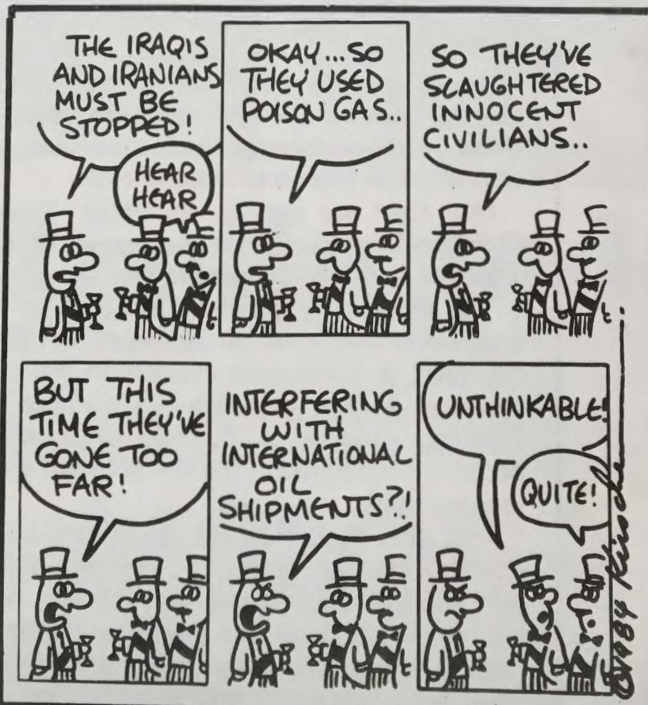
The relaunched company expect to have 2,000 firms participating by the end of the year. Firms qualify by ensuring that at least 40 per cent of the product's ex-factory selling price is made up of Irish raw materials or labour.

As a form of consumer protection the new scheme expects member firms to satisfy customers with reasonable complaints, and in the event of dissatisfaction will intervene on a consumer's behalf.

Most of the participating firms so far have come from the clothing, furniture, engineering and food and drink sectors with others involved with household products. Interestingly, there is only one firm representing the footwear industry.

One of the eight directors is trade union secretary, John Mitchell from the Distributive and Clerical Workers' Union. He is joined by employers and managers from Clery & Co., Glen Abbey, Premier HB, Tegral, Nokia and Irish Ropes.

Launching the new scheme, Chairman Norman Kilroy said that its predecessor had been of enormous benefit in developing and protecting Irish products and jobs. 'Guaranteed Irish is about expanding the sales of



Irish made domestic r replacing i Ireland imp £1,000,000 consumer

'Our des sale of Gu products v by any na concepts. stand on th side with t country. T will not be something origin," he

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Irish made products on the domestic market, especially in replacing imports. In 1983 Ireland imported about £1,000,000,000 worth of consumer goods.

"Our desire to maximise the sale of Guaranteed Irish products will not be motivated by any narrow nationalistic concepts. Our products will stand on their merits, side by side with those of any other country. The consuming public will not be encouraged to buy something simply because of its origin," he announced.

Whatever about 'narrow nationalism' the new scheme is not open to manufacturing firms in Northern Ireland who may feel slightly aggrieved at the loss of their 'Irish' status. According to a spokeswoman for the scheme, firms in Northern Ireland are not comparable because of different grants and subsidies as well as confusion with UK products.

Sinn Féin guide to canvassing

THE FOLLOWING account of the Sinn Féin approach to canvassing electoral support comes from a voter in Twinbrook, Belfast:

The householder answers a knock at the door. He is confronted by two youths, one armed with election literature, the other with a book and pen.

First youth: Who are you voting for? How many votes in your house?

Householder: Don't you think one's political views are private?

Second youth: Jasus mister, haven't you heard about the

armed struggle that's going on? It's only them or us.

Householder: You came on a political canvass. Do you mind if I ask you a few questions on your party's commitments to EEC membership?

Second youth: Fire away.

Householder: Would Sinn Féin play a full role in making the EEC a vehicle for peace and prosperity in Europe?

First youth: Our first priority is a United Ireland, a united Europe is irrelevant to us.

Householder: Why bother with the EEC elections then?

First youth: If elected, it would give us a platform to highlight the Irish problem.

Householder: You seem to be engrossed with a united Ireland. How would this Ireland fit into a modern world?

Second youth: 'Ireland for the Irish', 'Up the Provos'.

Householder: You haven't convinced me in any way that I should vote Sinn Féin.

First youth: Mister, wise up. Obviously you haven't heard of Danny Morrison, Gerry Adams or the hunger strikers. If you were a Taig you would not need convincing.

Householder: Yes I have heard of all these people and I am a Taig (Catholic) but to me politics are not about religious beliefs but about bread and butter.

Second youth: (Pushing a pamphlet into the householder's hand) You will find all your political answers in this.

On reading the pamphlet the householder discovered it contained only local issues concerning Sinn Féin meetings with the Housing Executive and the local Council. Nothing

about the EEC election.

On the termination of the debate the Sinn Féin members left and the householder heard one youth say to his mate: 'That oul lad is F... thick or else he must be a Sticky B...'

Equal pay and red faces

THE WINNING of their equal pay claim by women employees of the country's largest union, the ITGWU, on the eve of the Euro elections was nicely timed. Had Ireland not joined the 'Common Market', we would still be waiting for equal pay legislation — and so might many other countries.

While the union chiefs may not be overjoyed at paying £100,000 in wage increases to their hardworking clerical staff, they may take comfort from the fact that every EEC member country has been subject to legal action for failing to comply with the Euro directives on equal treatment for workers.

Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome sets out the basic principle that men and women shall receive equal pay for equal work. This was followed by a directive on equal treatment in relation to training, promotion and working conditions and measures to ensure equal treatment for men and women in social security schemes.

So the ITGWU is only about ten years behind these reforms but as the European Commission has prepared a Community Action Programme on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Women, 1982-85, the union is likely to slip even further behind in

ensuring equality unless the Labour Court rushes some more recommendations on equality.

Memory

SOME of the various marchers who gathered at Bodenstown this year must have pondered the same event fifty years before when the tentative steps taken by the newly formed Republican Congress to unite Roman Catholic and Protestant workers produced a minor riot.

By June 1934 the Republican Congress had organised clubs in Belfast ignoring any sectarian divisions but simply concentrating on workers' rights and conditions during the Depression. Two years earlier workers and their families from different religious communities joined forces for the Outdoor Relief protests which succeeded in winning limited reforms of the welfare scheme.

In 1934 a large contingent of Protestant workers were invited to honour the Republican hero, Theobald Wolfe Tone and happily did so — first stopping in Dublin to lay a wreath at Arbour Hill on the grave of executed 1916 leader, James Connolly.

The day out 'down South' turned sour when the Shankill workers reached the graveyard entrance with their large banner reading: Wolfe Tone Commemoration 1934, Shankill Road Belfast Branch, BREAK THE CONNECTION WITH CAPITALISM.

The more traditional nationalists weren't too impressed with this 'communistic slogan', and the Tipperary contingent took it upon themselves to destroy the banner which the Belfast men did their best to protect. The amazing scenes of Roman Catholic and Protestant workers fighting and punching one another at the grave of Wolfe Tone has remained imprinted on the minds of many who sought — and still seek — to break down sectarian divisions in the name of workers' unity.

Deadline

HOW LONG can the *Sunday Tribune* survive? While senior staff are busy trying to buy out each others' shareholdings, circulation continues to drop.

The general consensus is that October should see the demise of Ireland's least-read national newspaper.

THE ELECTION THAT NEVER WAS

APATHY, cynicism and indifference were the predominant responses to the European Elections. There was an element of poetic justice in this, as the responses fairly matched the approach of the Irish representatives to the first directly-elected European Parliament.

The major parties in the Republic wisely decided not to campaign on their record in Europe (which is generally accepted as being miserable), and instead fought a proxy general election campaign. This approach paid dividends for Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, who won extra seats at the expense of Neil Blaney and the Labour Party.

In Northern Ireland the three outgoing MEP's were re-elected, and Sinn Féin disappointed their media fellow-travellers by failing to make any further electoral advance.

Alienation

The low turn-out reflected a growing lack of confidence in politics as a means of change. It also reflected a deep sense of anger at the cynicism and opportunism of the major parties. And among sections of the urban working class — particularly among the young — there was further evidence of alienation and disaffection which was expressed in abstention and, to a lesser degree, in support for Sinn Féin.

The major parties were not unduly concerned about the low poll. Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael concentrated on getting their hard-

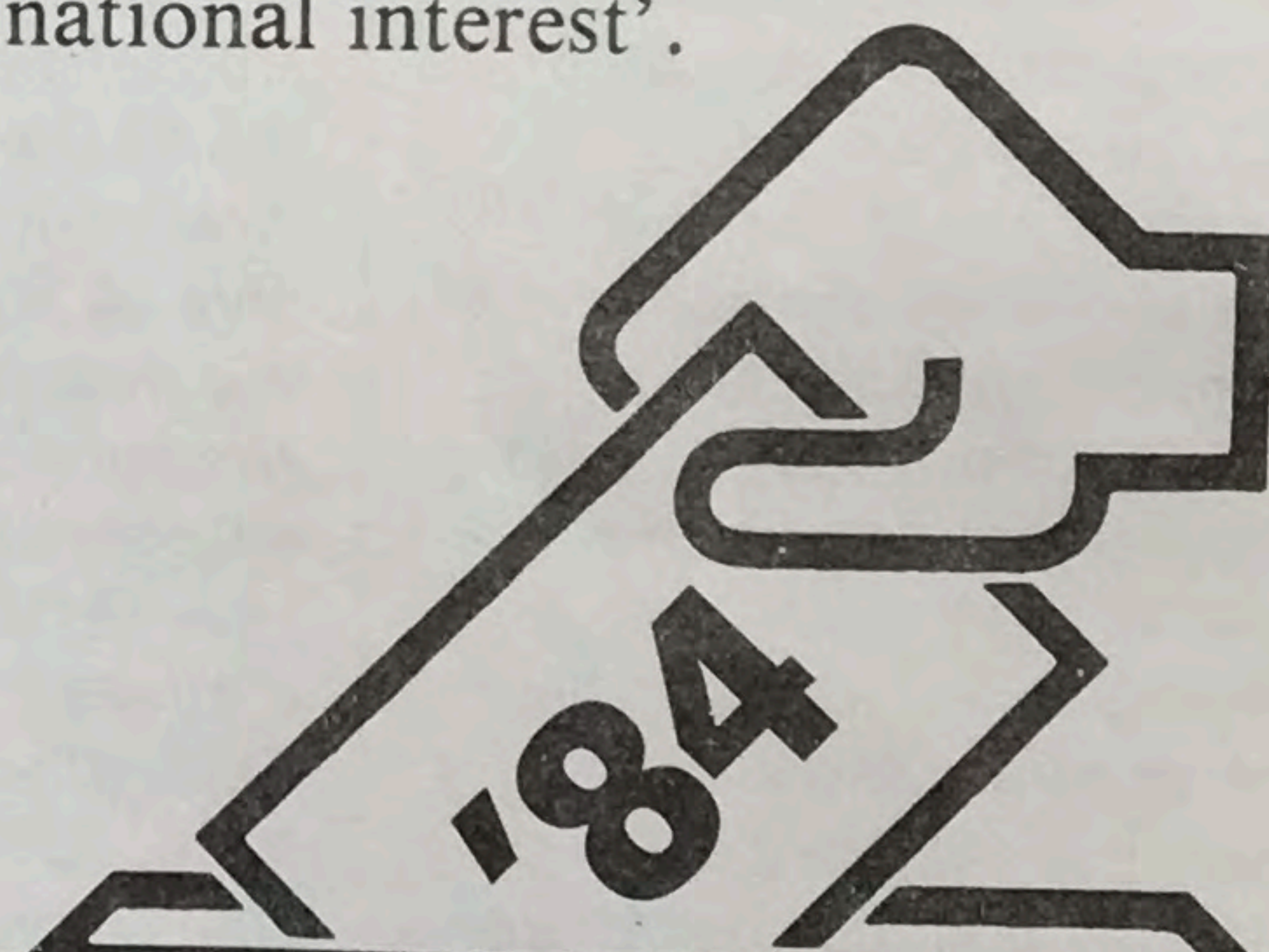
Less than half of the electorate in the Republic bothered to vote in last month's European Elections. In Northern Ireland one in three voters stayed away from the polls. PADDY GILLAN assesses the results.

core supporters out, but did little to interest the general public in the election. Both parties ignored European issues altogether, and campaigned on the charisma of their respective leaders. There was a conscious attempt on the part of Fianna Fáil to project Charles Haughey as a statesman — a corporate statesman, as it turned out — in order to counter the image of the rakish rogue which had emerged in recent years.

Issues

Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael were

assisted in their basic approach by the national media. Coverage ranged from the bland to the banal, and European issues were virtually ignored. As polling day drew near, voters were urged to vote in 'the national interest'.



Republic (Total valid poll: 47.5%)	
Fianna Fáil	439,034
Fine Gael	361,082
Labour Party	93,669
The Workers' Party	48,398
Others	178,373
Northern Ireland (Total valid poll: 64.3%)	
DUP	230,251
SDLP	151,399
OUP	147,169
Sinn Féin	91,476
Alliance	34,046
The Workers' Party	8,712
Others	22,264

A remarkable feature of the coverage by the national media was the almost total blackout on the Workers' Party campaign. This also was presumably in 'the national interest' given the party's opposition to the Common Agricultural Policy. It is ironic that the party's position will most likely be vindicated by the new Parliament given the inherent contradictions of CAP which are now widely acknowledged within the EEC.

Job creation and peace and neutrality were the other main planks of The Workers' Party programme. The major parties refused to address these issues in any serious way, and the media steered clear of them.

Despite the media blackout and the personality-orientated campaigns of the major parties, The Workers' Party increased its vote, and outpolled the Labour Party in many urban working class areas.

Labour loss

The Labour Party conducted a campaign 'independent' of its Coalition partner, and stressed its membership of the largest group in the European Parliament, the Socialist (i.e. Social Democratic) group. This failed to impress the voters, who took more note of Labour's membership of the Coalition government. As a result, Labour's vote dropped yet again, and the party lost the four seats it had held since 1979.

Labour in Dublin ran a particularly two-faced campaign. The party's candidate, Frank Cluskey, ran on an anti-Coalition ticket, while his Director of Elections was none other than Coalition Minister Ruairi Quinn. Cluskey's literature made no reference to Labour policy for Ireland in Europe, and would have been more appropriate to an Independent candidate.

The ploy didn't work, and the Labour Party said goodbye to a second Dublin seat, having surrendered the first prior to the election.

Simple message

Sinn Féin successfully exploited a mood of anger, despair and frustration in some urban areas, and

drew on the traditional reservoir of nationalism in the countryside. The Provisionals had lavish funds at their disposal, and no expense was spared in getting their message across or in getting out their vote.

The Sinn Féin electoral message was simple: a mixture of 1930's economic nationalism and 'Brits Out'. In urban areas, this message was further refined to read: 'Fuck the system'. This message did not of course appear in print, but it was the message received and understood by a large number of Sinn Féin voters.

Unemployment and urban deprivation assisted greatly in the reception of the Sinn Féin message. Also of assistance was the lack of local democracy in densely populated areas.

These are problems which must be remedied in order that anti-democratic forces make no further ground. And socialists must get the message across that the object of socialism is not to 'fuck' the system, but to *change* it.

Faction fight

Socialists had a difficult task getting their message across in Northern Ireland. The election was perceived and relayed by the media as an inter-sectarian faction fight: Hume versus Morrison, and Paisley versus Taylor.

Ian Paisley can thank Sinn Féin for the DUP's total of 230,000 votes, many of which were a direct response to recent electoral advances by the Provisionals. Sinn Féin ambitions for a European platform were thwarted ultimately by widespread tactical voting. This reflected a desire to keep Morrison out, rather than any massive confidence in John Hume.

The Workers' Party once again put forward the socialist alternative for Northern Ireland. The widespread positive response to The Workers' Party was not reflected in the final vote. It will take time for tribal moulds to be broken, and their breaking will be the making of class politics. This in turn will facilitate the emergence of The Workers' Party as a leading political force in Northern Ireland.

Conservative consensus

The main outcome of the election is

that the Irish working class will not be represented in the European Parliament for the next five years.

Working class interests will instead be *misrepresented* by a group of conservative politicians whose attitude to Europe was summed up by newly-elected Fine Gael MEP, Mary Banotti: '...I have a vision, which I do not believe to be an unobtainable dream, that one day all 15 MEPs representing the 26 counties community shall all belong to the same political grouping in Strasbourg and shall speak with a unified voice. Indeed, the aspiration must be that all the 18 Irish MEPs shall one day sit in the same grouping in Strasbourg and speak for all the Irish people.'

Ms Banotti's dream is well on the way to being realised. Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and T.J.Maher represent a conservative consensus which will seek to advance bourgeois interests in Europe. The great majority of 'the Irish people' simply won't get a look in.

Challenges

It is important that principled socialists should renew the challenge to the conservative consensus which dominates Irish politics. The extent of that domination is best illustrated by the fact that Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael between them won 71% of the vote in the Republic. Little wonder that John Kelly is anxious for a new kind of Coalition!

Socialists face another challenge in the support expressed for Sinn Féin in Northern Ireland and in the Republic. It would be foolish to over-estimate the importance of this support, but it should not be discounted. Any electoral progress made by the Provisionals undermines democracy, and should be a cause of concern to all democrats and socialists.

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing socialists is to stem the rising tide of apathy and indifference evident among working class voters. The politics of doom and gloom have clearly had their effect. The task of socialists is to revive the politics of hope, and to demonstrate that socialism represents the best hope for the great majority — the working class.

UNDERSTANDING LOYALISM

THE TERM 'loyalism' is such a vague and general one that it should not be used as anything more than a convenient shorthand. If it is not, there will be a dangerous tendency to treat Ulster Protestants as a basically homogeneous group. However, any serious analysis of the past history of this community, or of its contemporary politics, reveals no such simple unity.

It is crucial to grasp that the Protestant community has only been unified on one issue — opposition to inclusion in a 32 county Irish state. For Irish nationalists, of course, this is all it is really necessary to say. For them the only important contradiction is between the 'Irish People' and 'British Imperialism' — the Protestants are a misled 'loyalist' minority who support the enemy. Their anti-nationalism is regarded as sufficient justification for treating them as a unified group.

For Marxists the question of the nature of Protestant unity should be more problematical. After all, it should be well known that with its long history of capitalist industrialisation, the Belfast area has a powerful labour tradition in its trade union movement.

A serious marxist history of class conflict in Ulster from the 1890s to the 1950s has still to be written. But enough is known to undermine all attempts to treat the Protestants as one reactionary mass. From a materialist position one would expect that the existence of class conflict has had its inevitable effects

HENRY PATTERSON challenges the stereotype which portrays Northern Ireland Protestants as one bowler-hatted, marching mass of Orange bigotry.

on forms of Protestant politics and ideology. One might expect Marxists to start off with the recognition of the need to go beyond the obvious unity which is all the ideologues of nationalism are concerned with, and to be wary of accepting stereotypes which portray the Protestants as one bowler-hatted, marching mass of Orange bigotry. Unfortunately such expectations would be disappointed.

Marxism and Ulster

The potential student of Ulster politics has been faced, at least until recently, with 'Marxist' approaches to Loyalism which are written from within a simplistic nationalist frame of reference. Geoff Bell's *The Protestants of Ulster* is one example. From this perspective the Protestants have the unity of a 'problem' — they are an obstacle in the struggle to attain national unity. In fact the key question which such an approach can't deal with is the basis for the Protestant class alliance which came into existence at the end of the 19th century and which formed the basis for the Northern Ireland state throughout its history from 1921—1972.

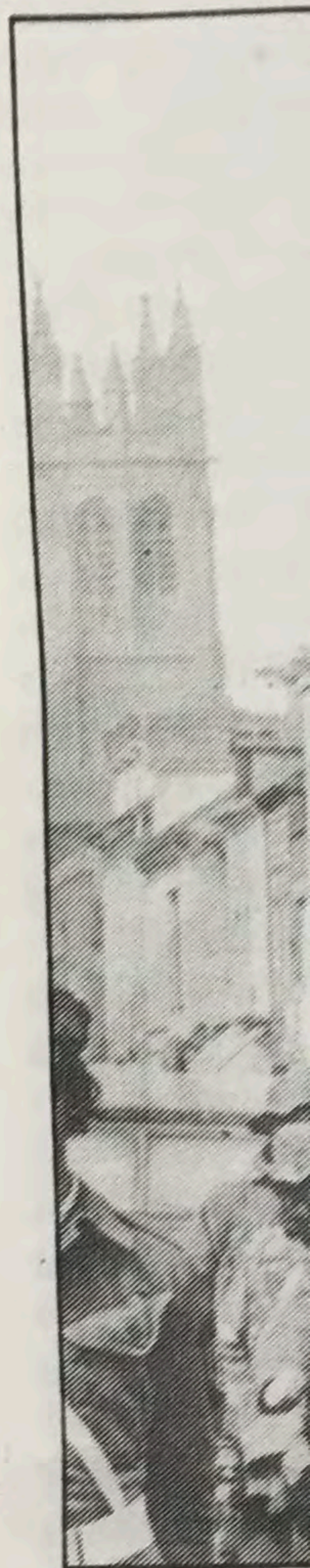
One of the reasons for this is the inadequacies of the 'master's' writings on Ulster. This is certainly the case for Marx and Engels — not

one of their many discussions on Ireland addresses itself primarily to the Ulster question, and in particular the uneven development of Irish capitalism which is important in any attempt to explain Loyalism, is simply not acknowledged.

For Lenin the Ulster question was significant mainly for its delaying effects on the granting of Home Rule — the limited form of self-government which the Liberals proposed before 1914. There was no basis in his approach for understanding the origins, support, durability and contradictions of the Protestant class alliance. It is clear that he lacked adequate knowledge of the situation referring to the Ulster Volunteer Force as an instrument of English landlords and its composition as 'armed gangs of Black Hundreds'. He consequently seriously underestimated its strength as a popular movement.

Connolly

James Connolly, the creator of Irish Marxism, despite his period in Belfast as a union organiser from 1911—14, has, in this area at least, left an unfortunate legacy for later generations of Irish marxists. He tended to treat the Unionist movement simply as a manifestation of religious bigotry instigated by the Belfast bourgeoisie to keep

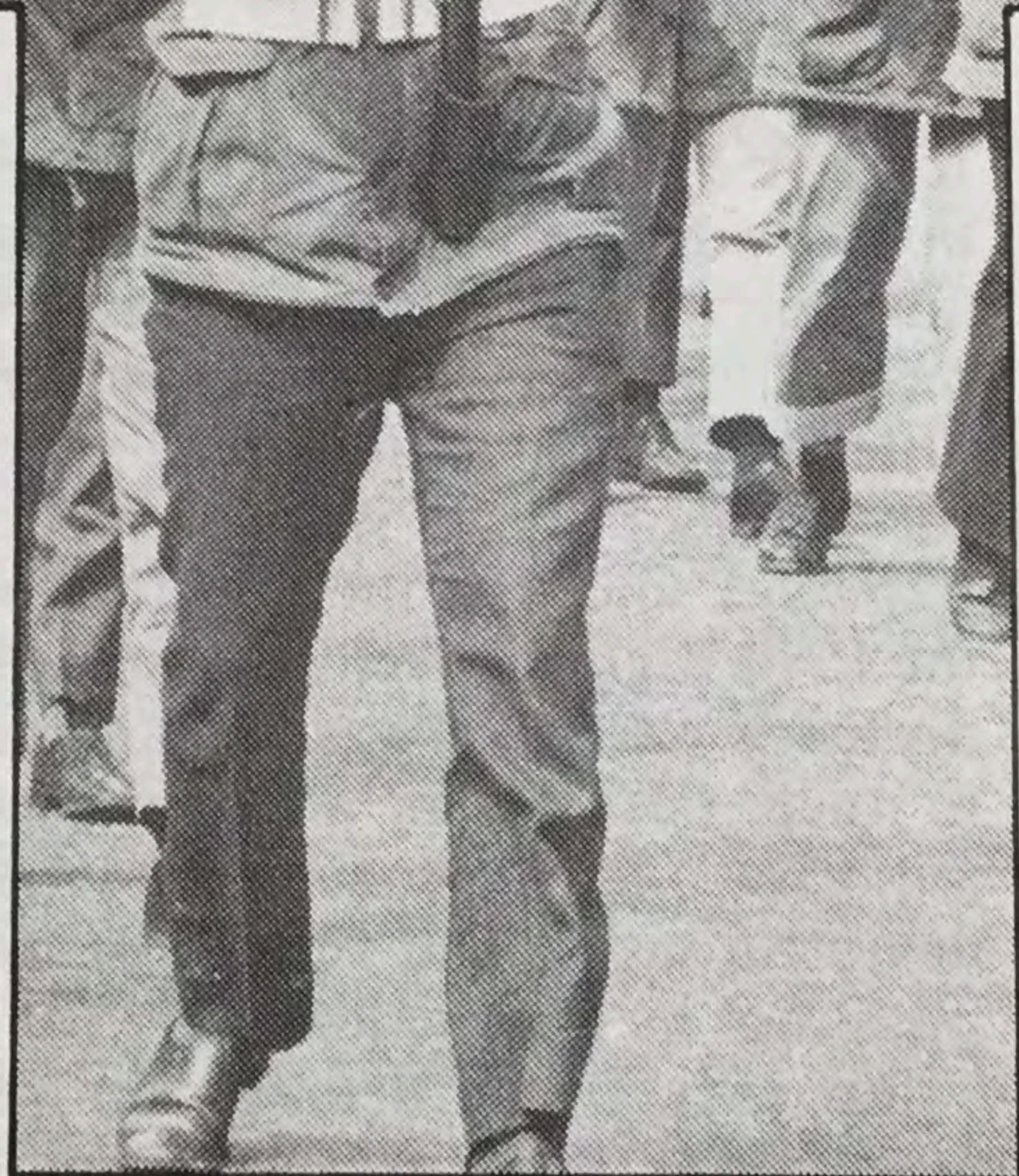


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The Ulster Defence Association on parade

Protestant and Catholic workers divided. By treating Unionist ideology simply as religious bigotry, he hopelessly underestimated its strength.

This strength arose from the fact that it wasn't simply lies and illusion, but gave a specific form of expression to a real structural division in the geographical entity called 'Ireland'. Ulster was dominated by a mode of production — capitalist machine industry — that was distinct from the dominant mode of production in the rest of Ireland — commercial capitalist agriculture. This of itself does not explain everything about Loyalism, but the tradition of analysis initiated by Connolly which did not take it into account can only be seriously defective.

A more critical approach to these writings of Connolly is necessary if there is to be any advance in Marxist analysis of Ulster.

Mysteries of Loyalism

The 'labour aristocracy' theory is much in vogue amongst 'critical' and uncritical supporters of the Provos 'anti-imperialist' struggle.

everything it explains nothing at all. The work of Hobsbawm, Foster and Gray has demonstrated that if the notion is to be used, then it must be done rigorously and with precision. Its use in explaining Loyalism is imprecise and reductionist.

Imprecise because it often slides from defining a specific section of the Protestant workers — skilled and unionised workers — to the Protestant working class as a whole. However in what way an unskilled or unemployed Protestant worker living in Sandy Row or Ballymacarret can be seriously regarded as a 'labour aristocrat' is never explained. However, even if the term was used a bit more seriously, to refer only to skilled workers it is beset with problems. There is the massive one involved in explaining the politics and ideology of the majority of Protestant workers who were not labour aristocrats. There is the question of its use to cover a far longer period of time — right up to the present — than serious Marxists have thought appropriate. For Lenin and contemporary Marxist historians like John Foster, the labour aristocracy was the

Despite its superficial Leninist gloss, it departs fundamentally from Lenin's injunction that the 'living soul' of Marxism was the "concrete analysis of concrete situations".

Its point of departure is the undeniable existence of a differential between the Protestant and Catholic communities in areas like jobs and housing. However, this fact is then abstracted out and becomes the key to unlock all the mysteries of Loyalism. In fact it is used in such an imprecise way that in explaining

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temporary product of a particular phase in the development of British capitalism.

It is a sign of the bankruptcy of much that passes for Marxism in Ireland and Britain, that the most basic questions of the periodisation of capitalist development in Ulster have not even been raised.

The other fundamental objection to this theory is its crude reductionism which violates a central component of the Leninist use of the term. For Lenin, the labour aristocracy was not simply defined by a privileged economic position. Its formation was also linked to the development of specific ruling class policies towards sections of the working class. In other words, its classical use was inseparable from an analysis of the state. But to analyse the state is to analyse all the main conflicts and contradictions in society, for the capitalist state is the fundamental weapon by which the bourgeoisie attempts to control and resolve these conflicts in its own interests.

The labour aristocracy theory produces a crude and one-dimensional history of the Northern Ireland state. The Protestant masses have supposedly supported this state through thick and thin because it defended their privileges. What is missing from this is any notion of the *struggle* involved in the Protestant bourgeoisie gaining and holding power. Its victory here was one not only over Ulster Catholics, but over the traditions of secular labourism and class consciousness in the Protestant working class. This had manifested itself in the mass strike of shipyard and engineering workers in 1919 and has reappeared at intervals throughout the history of the state.

The strategy of the ruling class was to endorse, accentuate and develop sectarian and discriminatory traditions amongst sections of the Protestant population including the working class. The result was the infamous 'Protestant Parliament for a Protestant People'. It was a state where policies, particularly in the field of employment and law and order, favoured Protestants at the expense of Catholics.

However, just because the

Protestant masses were not simply the bearers of sectarian traditions, but also of class conflict, the ruling class could not always rely on sectarianism to maintain its dominance. After the Second World War and at the end of the fifties under the pressure of working class dissatisfaction and potential and actual defections to the Northern Ireland Labour Party, the government had to adopt new policies on welfare and planning which were very unpopular with its own bourgeois supporters.

Political implications

The labour aristocracy theory, by assuming an un-problematic unity based on privileges, is incapable of registering divisions amongst the Protestant masses. This has disastrous political implications. For an essential prerequisite for the development of progressive politics is to build on the traditions of labourism and class awareness amongst Protestant workers, and in this way to undermine the Loyalist traditions of sectarianism and discrimination.

This does not mean 'economism', for it is essential that the left takes up a position on the 'national question'. This would involve recognition that re-unification has little more than sentimental value for the majority of workers in the Republic, and that the impetus for the Civil Rights movement amongst northern Catholics was for an end to their position as an oppressed minority — for a substantial democratisation and reform of the state, not its destruction.

But even if the demand for re-unification had a much more

'While Loyalist sectarianism should be opposed, Protestant desires to stay within the United Kingdom have to be respected'

substantial basis of support amongst the Catholic masses, north and south, no democrat could support a demand which could only be implemented by the forcible suppression of the Protestant population. As far as Marxists are concerned, the national question is subordinate to the task of creating the best possible conditions for the struggle for socialism. By arguing that the national question has primacy in the North, some Irish Marxists are blind to the fact that as long as the existence of the Northern Ireland state is contested, the constituency for radical politics amongst the Protestant working class will be a very limited one.

A prerequisite for socialist advance in Northern Ireland is a separation of the question of democracy from the national question. Whilst all manifestations of Loyalist sectarianism should be opposed, Protestant desires to stay within the United Kingdom have to be respected.

If this was done (and as yet only The Workers' Party have moved far in this direction), the left could hope to take advantage of the important divisions that have developed in Loyalist politics since the imposition of Direct Rule in 1972. The dominance of the Unionist Party up to 1972 had been crucially tied to its control of the central and local state apparatuses. When this control was lost after 1972, the party entered a period of strategic disarray which allowed Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party to set the tone of Loyalist politics. The predominantly negative reasons for Paisley's successes are obvious — the weaknesses of Official Unionism and the fears and insecurities created by the continuance of the Provo campaign.

Exaggeration

However, in recent times the Official Unionists have begun to call a halt to the rise of Paisley and the DUP. In fact, it is probably some sort of tribute to the man's abilities of self projection that there has been a consistent tendency in the media to exaggerate the influence of Paisleyism in the last decade.

It was not until the Westminster Election in 1979 that the DUP increased its share of the twelve

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Northern Ireland seats from one to three. The two seats were in Belfast North and East. The 1970s did not see a steady rise in DUP support. In fact between 1975 and 1979 its vote declined from 14.2% to 10.2% (32%), whilst that of the OUP rose from 25.8% to 36% (43%). The 1979 figures are for a general election where the traditional unionist pressure for accommodation to keep the 'enemy' out will tend to exaggerate the degree of its decline.

However, after the failure of the Convention, the DUP's blistering demands for a return to devolved government or else, culminating in the debacle of the 1977 loyalist strike cost it Protestant support. Paisley's triumph in the 1979 Euro Elections, and his party's major gains in the 1981 Local Government elections (between '79 and '81 its vote rose by 160%) were taken as an indication that the DUP was destined to become the predominant party in Protestant politics. The Euro vote in part was high because it gave supporters in areas never contested by the party a chance to vote, and also because of the weak OUP candidates and that party's internal divisions. The 1981 results were clearly linked to the effects of the H-Blocks hunger strike and the resultant increase in sectarian tension, and also to Protestant fears generated by the secrecy surrounding the Thatcher/Haughey talks at the end of 1980. However the results of the Assembly and 1983 elections demonstrated an incapacity of the DUP to hold on to the extra support generated by these specific conditions.

Problems

Since 1981 the difficulties faced by the DUP in trying to overtake the OUP have become clearer. The increased representation on local councils proved a mixed blessing. The sabbatarianism of some DUP Councillors has turned off a lot of Protestant voters. There is tension in the party between this element and those who feel that too close a link with the Free Presbyterian Church is holding the party back in Protestant working class areas. Some, like Peter Robinson, favour a



King Billy: held in high esteem

more secular image, with the party combining a hard-line security policy with more radical social and economic policies. But even this strategy has its problems as Paisley's tendency to demagogic demands and comic opera mobilisation on security issues has damaged the DUP's image in the past.

The party has also had problems with its eager embrace of first the Atkin's initiative, and later Prior's Assembly. In both cases it was not difficult to predict that the British government would not consider significant devolution of powers without the precondition rejected by both major Unionist parties — some kind of power sharing. The willingness of the DUP to participate in both has laid it open to charges that it is prepared to put office before 'principle'. The OUP position, which despite a degree of internal division, has been much more stand-offish has seemed to have done it good with the electorate. In the future, if the low key approach which has been adopted by the British government — at least as far as political initiatives are concerned — is maintained, it is difficult to see

how the DUP can dramatically improve its position. Militant opposition to direct rule — as long as Protestants do not see direct rule being used to sell them out — will not be popular.

Hopeful sign

The beneficiaries of this will be the OUP, the party which has done least to contest the effects of Thatcherism in the North, and which tends to be in social and economic terms, much more traditionally conservative than the DUP. It is clearly open, therefore, for the DUP to attempt to improve its position by taking up a more populist line on these types of issues. It will be operating in a situation where the demise of the NILP as a serious political force leaves only the UDA's political wing as a populist alternative in Protestant working class areas. However for a number of reasons, particularly its popular association with murder and gangsterism, and the notion of independence as a solution, it is still not a significant competitor.

Thus in Protestant politics the party representing a sort of populist challenge to the traditional political leadership has not undermined its dominance as much as the Provos have done to that of the SDLP. The fact that the more strident sectarianism of the DUP is still a turn-off for many Protestants is, given the depth of the sectarian polarisation of the last ten years, a hopeful sign. Support for the OUP is still support for the status quo in terms of communal division and for reactionary social and economic policies, although the party's recent policy document did indicate certain changes of tune.

As Thatcher's policies accentuate Northern Ireland's already chronic problems of unemployment, poverty and urban decay, Loyalist politics and ideology could be increasingly questioned by sections of the Protestant working class. But economic crisis will not by itself destroy the power of Loyalism. This demands a coherent political strategy on the part of the left. And such a strategy will demand a much more serious analysis of Loyalism than most of the left in Ireland and Britain has yet produced.

WHAT PRICE IRISH INDEPENDENCE?

WHILE the Reagan visit revealed nothing at all new in terms of United States policy, it disclosed something significant about American thinking to the Irish journalists assigned to cover it. One of them summed it up aptly in a conversation with a colleague in Mulligan's pub, while watching the final fanfare at the airport on telly: 'If that's what they're like in Ireland, a small, friendly country, can you imagine what they're like in Honduras?'

He was not, of course, referring to Mr and Mrs Reagan, who appear to have left little impression on anyone who came close enough to see them, but to the President's private army, the coterie of secret service agents and security personnel who successfully staved off assassination during the four day visit.

To be fair to the Americans, their obsession with the President's safety is very understandable. In view of their experiences in this line, it is only to be expected that every nail hole on the presidential route and most of their operation was viewed with fascination but without disapproval. The soldering of the manhole covers, the specially imported pint for the Reagan sip, even the debate as to whether the baby could remain in the room during the Ballyporeen pub scene was seen as tolerable enough, under the circumstances.

Assumption of powers

What has caused the reverberating shock is the bone-chilling, impersonal way in which the whole operation was carried out, and the

In the wake of the Reagan visit, F.J.MAGUIRE considers the US attitude to 'friendly' countries, and the implications for Irish sovereignty.

assumption of powers which were apparently authorised, and certainly agreed to, by our own Government.

On the first point, most of those reporting events allowed their reaction to the secret service agents to slip through only in the occasional adjective: 'humourless', or 'stony-faced'. One or two reports simply gave a flat detailed account which probably told more without description. Eugene McEldowney's narrative on the trip from the Phoenix Park to Dáil Eireann, for instance, listed some five different security checks for the same group of journalists, and painted a Bonnie-and-Clyde picture of the motorcade, with five agents, two with guns drawn, in the car behind the President's car, which was in turn behind the 'dummy' car set up to draw any fire that might have been aimed at Reagan.

The most telling incident on that journey took place at Dáil Eireann, where an RTE technician who had somehow got it wrong was refused admission until a high ranking Irish government official was summoned to vouch for him. What actually happened was that McEldowney himself saw the agent speaking to the RTE worker, not overly politely. 'You are not getting in,' he said. McEldowney approached to see if he could help out and was swiftly informed: 'And if you want to get in sir, get in now.'

'Higher authority'

Journalists comparing notes after assignments were agreed that 'please' or 'thank you' or anything in the line of normal courteous exchange was absent. Handbags were, literally, seized for the searching; electronic detection devices routinely slipped over bodies. Freelance journalist Paddy Clancy stood firm requesting to be searched at Dublin Castle by a member of the Irish security forces, but another journalist who inquired on what authority the American personnel were searching him was simply told 'on a higher authority'.

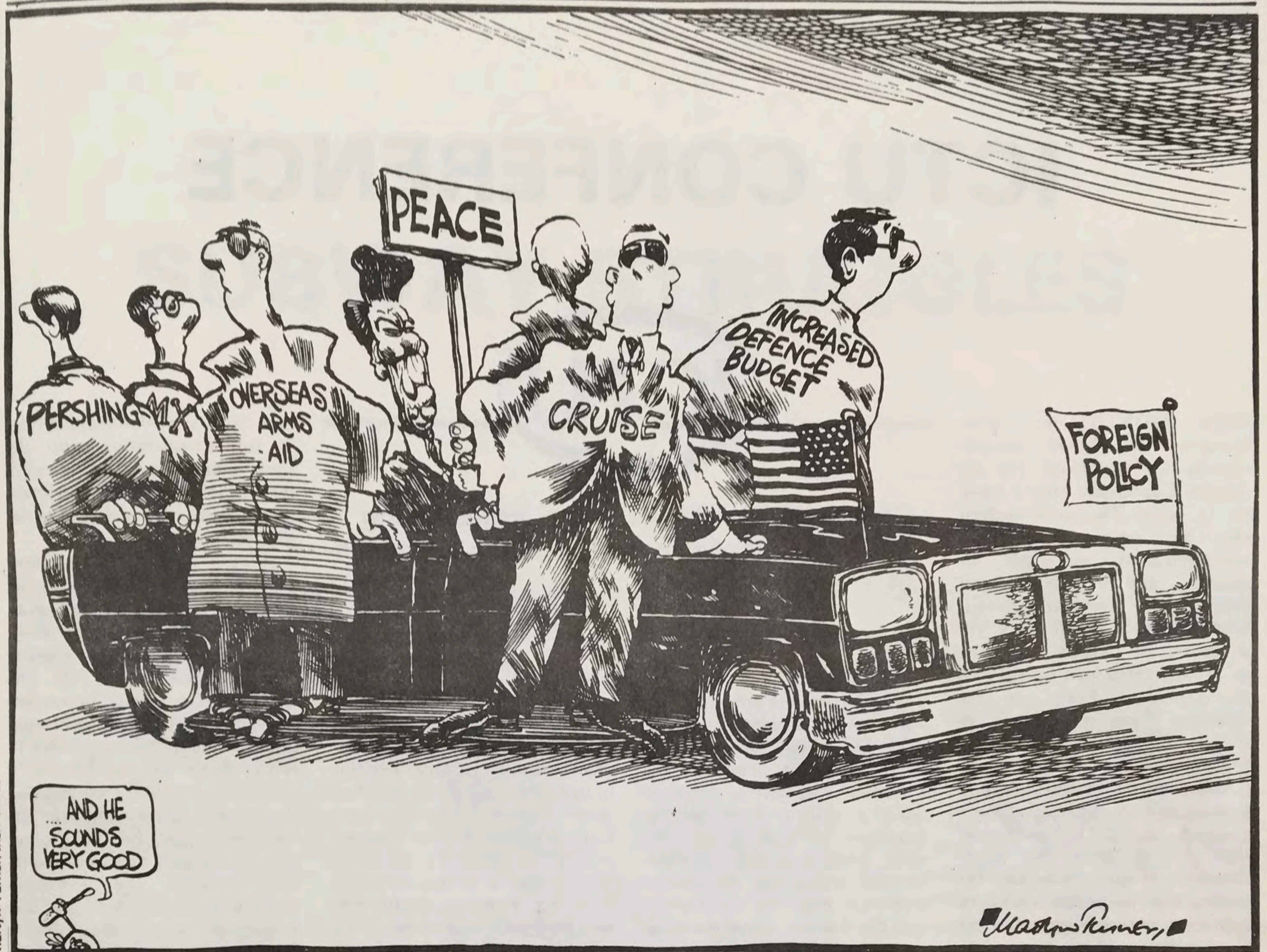
Calculated insults, or ordinary bad manners? Not that, either way, anyone could be blamed for hesitating to remonstrate. According to American reporters, those who guard the President are not merely armed but highly skilled athletically. Certainly they were all very fit — the woman in charge of the pub event was promptly christened Diana Riggs by the RTE crew — as well as impeccably groomed, and trained to show neither fatigue, boredom, hunger or any interest in their surroundings and its people.

Which begs another question — how much training, how much undisguised and fairly fundamental lack of concern, mounting to contempt, for the world's people?

Martyn Turner/Irish Times



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Martyn Turner/Irish Times

The fact that a deadly serious security operation requiring hundreds of personnel is needed to mount what would look on a television screen like a folksy homecoming was lost on no one. Dr David Nowlan speculated in his column in the *Irish Medical Times* as to what kind of 'freedom' it is that President Reagan is touting, given the military restrictions which were needed to engineer his few minutes in the open air.

It is the invasion of whatever freedom affords in this country we might usefully consider. Security precautions demanded for an open air, and ostensibly public, visit such as Reagan's was, are the worst the American corps have to deal with. Peter Murtagh, writing in *The Irish Times* points out that this kind of operation is what they themselves call a 'goat fuck'; a singularly interesting phrase; who is the goat, and who is doing the fucking?

As Pat Kenny observed on RTE after the whole circus has finally left

town, could we imagine an Irish Taoiseach, arriving in Washington on a state visit, insisting that his private troop of Irish security men take precedence over whatever national arrangements the host country might have in mind? Surely, if even only for diplomacy's sake, Irish personnel should have been seen to have been involved at the same level as the Americans?

Democracy suspended

The fact is that the Irish forces were permitted to patrol only the outer ring of security. They got to stand — 70 to a street corner — along the route of the protest march on Sunday night and to man the first checkpoints cars passed through to the Castle. That no pretence at all was made of being in charge of, or responsible for, the security operation may make us at least more honest. But it does raise very serious questions about our relationship with the United States in all other areas.

One of these is the legality of permitting members of a foreign service to carry arms openly through public streets, without so much as a Dáil debate on the subject beforehand. What if the man who held the CND pin aloft at Ballyporeen had brandished it just a bit more fulsomely, would he have been simply grabbed, as he was, or dispatched more thoroughly? Supposing that the student who was felled by our own special branch man on the quays had alarmed someone with a gun? In hindsight, it's almost more remarkable that nothing more serious than these two incidents took place — and in both cases, the offenders were released without charge.

The gardaí who told the peace women protesting in Phoenix Park — also dismissed without charge — 'democracy has been suspended for the week-end' made the final statement on the whole visit. That is exactly what happens in Honduras, too.

ICTU CONFERENCE



THIS MONTH the Irish Congress of Trade Unions returns to Waterford for its Annual Conference after a lapse of 32 years. The south-eastern city has been blighted by unemployment and job insecurity, and has experienced bitter rivalry between different trade unions in recent years. On a larger, all Ireland scale, the ICTU delegates have to face up to similar problems as the delegates from more than 90 unions assemble in the Ardee Hotel.

Under the presidency of retiring Belfast AUEW secretary, Jimmy Graham, the ICTU Conference will try to meet the angry demands of many delegates for determined industrial action to influence government policy on employment and taxation, while preserving the very close and cooperative relationship developed by successive Congress leaders with different governments.

The local trades council in Waterford has tabled a hard-hitting motion seeking a series of one-day work stoppages commencing next October, and leading up to the Budget with local demonstrations on the same day each month. If it proves ineffective they want the Congress to withdraw all co-operation and participation in government committees.

In view of the failures of last year's tax and jobs protests, the union leadership is not expected to initiate any stoppages on a monthly basis even if the motion should be adopted. The larger Dublin Council of Trades Unions has also backed the demand for 'a full one-day national work stoppage later in the year'. The conservative National Association of Transport Employees has poured cold water on these 'demo demands', claiming that they have achieved nothing in the past and wants Congress to examine more effective tactics.

GERRY FLYNN looks at the issues facing this year's conference of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

35 HOUR WEEK

The influence of European trade unionists for a shorter working week will be felt when the Tass section of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers seeks a priority campaign to introduce a 35-hour working week, while Letterkenny Trades Council is seeking a statutory minimum wage for all workers and the Tailors' union wants to curb overtime working, as well as reduce the working week during this period of record unemployment.

Areas of growing concern to many trades unions include the loopholes in Company Law which allows employers to go into liquidation at the expense of the limited company's workers, and fears that short-term work experience projects are being exploited for political benefit and to dampen wage rates. The Federated Workers' Union, Women Workers and Tax Officials' Union have each presented separate motions seeking amendments to the Companies Act.

The Women Workers want to curb tax evasion by companies and abuse of limited liability protection. They have also called for the implementation of the EEC Fourth Directive on disclosure of company information which should have become law four years ago. The Tax Officials will remind delegates of the specific recommendations for reforms of Company Law made by Congress to the Minister for Finance, Alan Dukes, in April 1983 and condemns the Coalition

government's lack of action.

Both Cork and Galway trades councils will reopen the debate over the controversial Employment Appeals Tribunal decision to uphold the dismissal of a New Ross teacher during the year. Galway delegates want Congress to ensure that its nominees should sign a pledge to resign from the Tribunal should they lose the confidence of the ICTU in spite of being appointed by the Minister for Labour. Cork delegates will insist that all trade union nominees 'act in accordance with trade union principles' at all times for the protection of all affiliated union members.

'NATIONAL SCANDAL'

The very powerful and influential ITGWU condemns Coalition government economic policy and 'the national scandal that 1984 has seen the number of unemployed workers in the Republic rise to a quarter of a million'. The ITGWU leaders accuse the Labour-Fine Gael government of 'callous indifference to the human misery experienced by more and more working families, to say nothing of the economic waste resulting from such vast numbers being condemned to unproductive idleness'.

The 48 ITGWU delegates are expected to criticise the 25 per cent cut in IDA grant expenditure as well as increasing the tax burden on PAYE workers and the 'niggardly social welfare increases which fall short of this year's rate of inflation'. They advise the government to under-

take 'serious economic planning' in full co-operation with the trade union movement to solve the problems of unemployment, high income tax and low social security payments.

ICTU General Secretary Donal Nevin will tell delegates about the special arrangement to allow the controversial Civil and Public Services Staff Association return to the Congress fold. The troubled civil service union has had to accept into membership those young people suspended in recent years and to tolerate 'a temporary monitoring committee' to watch over its leadership and consider complaints against their decisions. Two months ago Congress decided to lift the three year old suspension when the CPSSA indicated that it would accept the restrictions.

He will also report on the protracted dispute between the Distributive Workers' union and the ITGWU during the Clery's strike last summer. At that time the IUDWC requested Congress to initiate the expulsion of the ITGWU for poaching members, but the ICTU executive members were inclined to drag their feet on the issue. In September last year they decided to establish a special committee to examine the dispute but the IUDWC declined to take part, regarding the 'special committee' as no substitute for immediate action and expulsion. Since then both unions have signed a 'peace pact' outlining agreed areas of influence but it is being currently put to the test in the Ford's redundancy negotiations in Cork.

The loss in real wages, increased unemployment and inter-union disputes may set a cloud over this year's ICTU Conference, but the 500 delegates will probably draw some comfort from the knowledge that if there were no organised trade unions the economic and social plight would be worse.

SUBWAY STRUGGLES

GERALD O'REILLY recalls the struggle to organise New York subway workers in the 1930's.

WHEN I first applied for a job at the IRT (Interborough Rapid Transit) office at 165 Broadway, I was told I must join the Union and was given an address on Anderson Avenue. I went over and joined what I found out later was a Company Union whose office was on IRT property, Anderson Hall.

I had previously been employed by the Alex Smith Carpet factory in Yonkers, New York. The conditions there were terrible. The women workers did the wool work on a piece-work basis. The men did all the heavy work, moving machinery etc. I had expected conditions to be better on the IRT but found they were deplorable.

I was appointed a conductor in March 1928. All the employees of Transportation, (motormen, conductors and guards) worked a seven day week. The big percentage of runs was what was known as 'Swing'. The work would start at 5.00am, you would make one or two trips, and finish up late at night.

I started as an extra. I reported at the terminal at 5.00am or 4.00pm and remained at the terminal on call for three hours. If I was called to replace a conductor who took off or reported sick, I was paid the hours his run called for though I might have gotten the run just before my three hours were up. If I was not called, NO PAY. The Union Dele-



Gerald O'Reilly in 1937

gate did inform us that we were entitled to get an assignment on the fourth day. Our one hope of always having money for our room and board was the possibility of getting work on Saturday or Sunday when old timers might be off without pay. This meant we never had a Sunday off.

These old-timers were men in their late sixties and some even in their seventies who were still working because they had no pension. There were no holidays and no sick leave. We were called to a special meeting of the Company Union in 1931 and were told that we had to accept a 10% cut in pay which would benefit the unemployed in

New York. I was on the extra list for 17 months. When given my first run, I reported at 242nd Street in the Bronx at 6.45am and finished at New Lots in Brooklyn at 7.14pm with a swing of four hours. We learned from the old-timers that they had gone on strike in 1926 to try to organise a genuine union but failed and lost their seniority. They also pointed out that all the younger men with good seniority now, were 1926 scabs. I remember on one occasion when a subway train ran into an El train at 167th Street and Jerome Avenue, the subway motorman was killed and his body placed on the station platform by the police, a group of us were passing by on our way to work and an old time motorman remarked upon seeing the body: 'Well, there's one scab who is out of the way'.

Regulations called for us to wear uniforms which we had to pay for. The IRT selected the uniform outfitter. We had summer and winter inspections and the inspector was from Schreiber and Myers, the uniform company. Naturally, he always made sure that we needed a replacement; if not a complete uniform, a coat or pants.

St. Patrick's Day

An incident which happened in 1929 vividly stands out in my memory. Six of us decided we would enjoy watching the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade we had heard so much about it in Ireland. Figuring that we would get no work as it was a weekday, we requested to be excused but

LABOUR HISTORY

our request was denied. We decided among ourselves that we would take off anyway. The following morning the dispatcher informed us that we were suspended, and to report the next day to the General Manager at 165 Broadway. We reported at 9am and were told to sit on a bench until we were called. At 3.00pm that afternoon we were called into President George Keegan's office. When we explained why we were there, the gentleman told us we did not come to the United States to look at parades, we came to work. But, he stated, 'since you are interested in seeing the sights, go to see Grant's Tomb, the Statue of Liberty, the many museums of New York City and the Bronx Zoo. And, so you can see all these sights, I am suspending each of you for ten days. Then come back to me and I will give you the okay to work.'

We were advised by our co-workers to visit the Union and protest the ten day suspension. We went there and saw our Conductor Delegate, a Mr Grasso. We explained our visit and his comment was: 'You're lucky that Mr Keegan didn't fire all of you.' Naturally, since we were suspended our passes were lifted, so we could not afford to see all the sights suggested by Mr Keegan.

Organising

On leaving Ireland I was given a transfer from the Irish Republican Army to Clann na Gael in the United States. This organisation helped a number of us financially, and in getting jobs. I became active on arrival, and at the monthly meetings met with subway workers who were members of the IRA and were now active in the Clann. Among these was one man in particular whom I got to know well — Michael J. Quill of the Austin Stack Club. Following our Clann meeting in Tara Hall on 66th Street, we would go to a restaurant and have coffee and discuss incidents in Ireland, conditions on the job, a good place for rooms, (or digs as we called them), etc.

On one particular occasion Mike Quill and Michael Lynch mentioned the possibility of organising a union. Quill suggested that we begin to think along the possibility of

'It was explained that the AOH took no part in labour activities'

picking out reliable workers in our different departments with whom we would meet in our own homes, in a manner something along the lines of the IRA in Ireland. Quill explained how previous efforts to organise the Union were always beaten by the Company 'Beakies' (undercover company police) who got to know the most active membership before the movement got organised and had the key men fired.

Quill also explained that James Connolly had tried to organise a union on the subway and was unable to obtain the support needed. Following Quill's advice, we began to get groups and small branches organised all over the subway. For almost a year our key members held meetings in the home of Vic Bloswick, a machinist in the 168th Street yard who lived on Kelly Street. We then selected a reliable key member in each group and that body would meet in Tara Hall. We decided to have an initiation fee of one dollar (\$1) and weekly dues of ten cents. It was then realised that we needed money for publicity for a monthly bulletin and for leaflets to be distributed at shops, barns and terminals. The names I remember as most active then are Gus Faber, Michael Lynch, Mark Kavanagh, Gerry Norris, The Labash brothers, Paul Muschalik, Douglas McMahon, Patrick Cunnane, Johnny Nolan, Harry Childs, Jim Hughes, Thomas O'Shea, John Gillen, Tom Phayre, Joe Dyak, Paddy Fitzgerald and John Thomas.

Bloswick's boss was a Mr Gregory who was suspicious of Bloswick's Union activities. Gregory kept transferring Bloswick from midnight to am shifts, then to days, hoping, as he thought, to keep him out of touch with the men.

Years later, Gregory met Bloswick as a TWU union officer and said: 'Well Bloswick, you did a great job in organising the Union.'

'No,' Bloswick replied, 'you did Mr Gregory.' Gregory asked what he meant and Bloswick said, 'By changing my shifts all the time, I met many more men than I would have if I had stayed on one shift.'

Seeking help

A committee headed by Michael Clune was assigned to visit the officials of the Ancient Order of Hibernians to explain that we wished to form a Union because of the desperate conditions and would appreciate financial help. The effort had no success, and it was explained that the AOH took no part in labour activities.

Another committee was then formed to visit the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick for the same purpose. That committee had one official explain that the President of the IRT, Mr George Keegan, was a member of their organisation and therefore they could not get involved.

In 1933 Jim Gralton, a retired World War I veteran who had been living in Ireland was deported from there for Socialist activities. On arrival in New York he organised Irish Workers' Clubs in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Manhattan. These clubs arranged for lectures and publication of the teachings of James Connolly. The membership of these Clubs were helpful in giving out leaflets at subway terminals and bus depots.

It was then suggested by Tom O'Shea that we visit the Communist Party headquarters at 13th Street. Our Committee got an appointment with the Executive Officers of the Party — William Z. Foster, an old-time active official of the IWW, Israel Amter, Rose Wortis and other party officials.

William Foster knew all about the failures of trying to organise the subways — 1905—1910—1926 etc. He agreed that Quill's idea on organising was marvellous to get the movement going. It was agreed at the time that we would get financial aid to start the organisation of the Transport Workers Union.

A long discussion took place on what was needed and after many other meetings it was decided that the Party would assign members who could be wholtime actively

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engaged in helping to build the Union.

We were assigned Harry Sacher as a lawyer, Maurice Forge as the editor of our Bulletin, Leo Rosenthal, known as 'Bubbles Lee', to run the mimeograph machine, as well as Austin DeLoughery and John Santo. All these individuals, who were not on the IRT payroll, could work openly at shopgate meetings at terminals, depots etc. It was all to be paid for by the Party.

Majority

In the months that followed, we began invading the Company Union meetings and under the leadership of Michael J. Quill, began taking over the meetings. The President of the Company Union was Paddy Connelly and at one of the big Company Union meetings, which was held in Anderson Hall where we were in the majority, Connelly called down from the platform 'Don't you know your leader Mike Quill, sitting there is a Red'. Quill stood up and said to Connelly, 'I'd rather be a Red than a rat'.

Some months later, at a well-attended meeting at Tara Hall, on 66th Street, it was agreed that Mike would take off and become a full-time official for the Union with the assistance of Michael Lynch and Douglas MacMahon. Austin DeLoughery was an engineer and applied for and received a leave of absence from the engineering company that he worked for. In order to safeguard that job, he changed his name to Austin Hogan and later he became so well known as Austin Hogan that he had it changed officially.

At the first convention held in New York City, in 1937, John Santo, Austin Hogan and Maurice Forge were elected officers of the Transport Workers' Union.

Throughout the organisational activity, we were continually attacked as Communists and Reds, mostly from the Company Union officials, the IRT bosses and the New York *Daily News*. One supposedly friendly newspaper advised subway workers against joining the TWU and had an editorial headline, 'Don't Kill the Goose that Lays the Golden Egg'



'Go see the Statue of Liberty'

First contract

On May 16, 1937, we won the right of having our membership elect their own Union. At the 14th Street Armory, the 13,000 IRT workers overwhelmingly voted for the TWU. Then followed the visit of John L. Lewis, who with Michael J. Quill and the Union leaders, won our first contract that gave us a pay raise and improved working conditions.

One of the first controversial issues to come up before the membership was the Union leaders' demand that the Company allow

blacks to be hired for all positions. At this time, blacks could only be porters. At a special meeting called to get the proposal accepted by the membership, there was an exceptionally large attendance present to oppose the proposal. Quill, MacMahon and Gustave Faber spoke strongly on the issue. Quill reminded the very large Irish membership present that it wasn't so many years back that 'We were denied many rights of free citizens'. The majority then voted with the leadership.'

In 1936, a black porter was arrested with Mike Quill for Union activities on the property at Times Square. This was Clarence King, who was later elected the first black Executive Board Member of Local 100.

With the passing of the Wagner Act, the TWU became an organisation of over 40,000 transit workers, and won better working conditions, wage increases, pensions and vacations in the years that followed.

Preparation for the 1946 contract called for Mike Quill, then a Councilman, to meet with Mayor Bill O'Dwyer. Mayor O'Dwyer agreed that the workers were entitled to a wage increase, but stressed that the nickle fare would have to be increased to a dime. Quill agreed. At a special meeting of the TWU officers and the Communist officials at the Fordham ALP Club, Congressman Vito Marcantonio pleaded with the Party leadership to agree with Quill's position. He pointed out that so much depended on a wage increase. The Party officials would not agree. The meeting broke up, and many of us were removed from office.

Afterwards, we realised if the TWU had sided with the Party we would have had no Union. When many of us were back in office, we were glad to see Mike Quill still a radical and never a Red baiter. We were proud to be with him in the 13 day strike of 1966.

Quill was jailed, but we won one of the best contracts ever. He had the guts to call a strike of Civil Service employees which paved the way for other civil service workers to get their rights such as the New York Police and Fire Departments.

PINNING DOWN DEMOCRACY

IN THE USA, the financial centre of gravity shifted from the declining 'smoke stack' industries of the East Coast to the new, 'sunrise' ones of the West in the mid-sixties. Because political power in the US is a product of capital, this was similarly transferred from East to West. The old East Coast political establishment, based on the capital from coal, steel and chemicals and in which the Kennedys figured prominently, lost out to the electronics, aircraft and armaments of the 'Sunshine States' with their political frontmen like Richard Nixon (The Orange County Boy) and Ronald Reagan. It is interesting to note that at around the same time there was a similar shift of power within the Mafia as the rackets in California and Nevada became the bigger earners.

In ensuring its political power, the West Coast establishment brought together marketing, computers and the media, (all specialisations that the region dominated), to form something new to democratic politics — electorate monitoring and management. Cynics would say they added the other thing the West was famous for — cowboys.

The best electorate monitoring and management system in the world works for Ronald Reagan. At its heart (or rather brain) is a system of programmes called PINS (Political Information System) which runs on two DEC Vax computers in Washington and California. PINS continuously simulates the behaviour of the

Ronald Reagan often gives the impression that he doesn't know what he's talking about. He doesn't have to. Why? Because he's got the best electorate monitoring and management system in the world working for him. PAUL BAKER reports.

American electorate as it responds to events and the performances of political figures — the monitoring part; and subsequently informs the favoured politicians which actions will elicit which responses — the management part.

PINS depends on a huge database made up mainly of the two-yearly US population census and the voting history figures from every county, but continuously updated with attitude and political polls and data from the 37 federal statistical agencies. PINS employs a social classification of the American electorate of 110 categories and sub-categories on a county by county basis and refined polling techniques, which remove the two problems which plagued previous simulations — variability of data and subjective judgements.

Each new piece of information fed into PINS is used to review previous predictions and fine tune the coming ones. The PINS system has been under development since 1968, but it has only been in the last ten years that computers have become available which can handle the huge databases required.

Charting a course

Through PINS, Reagan's advisors

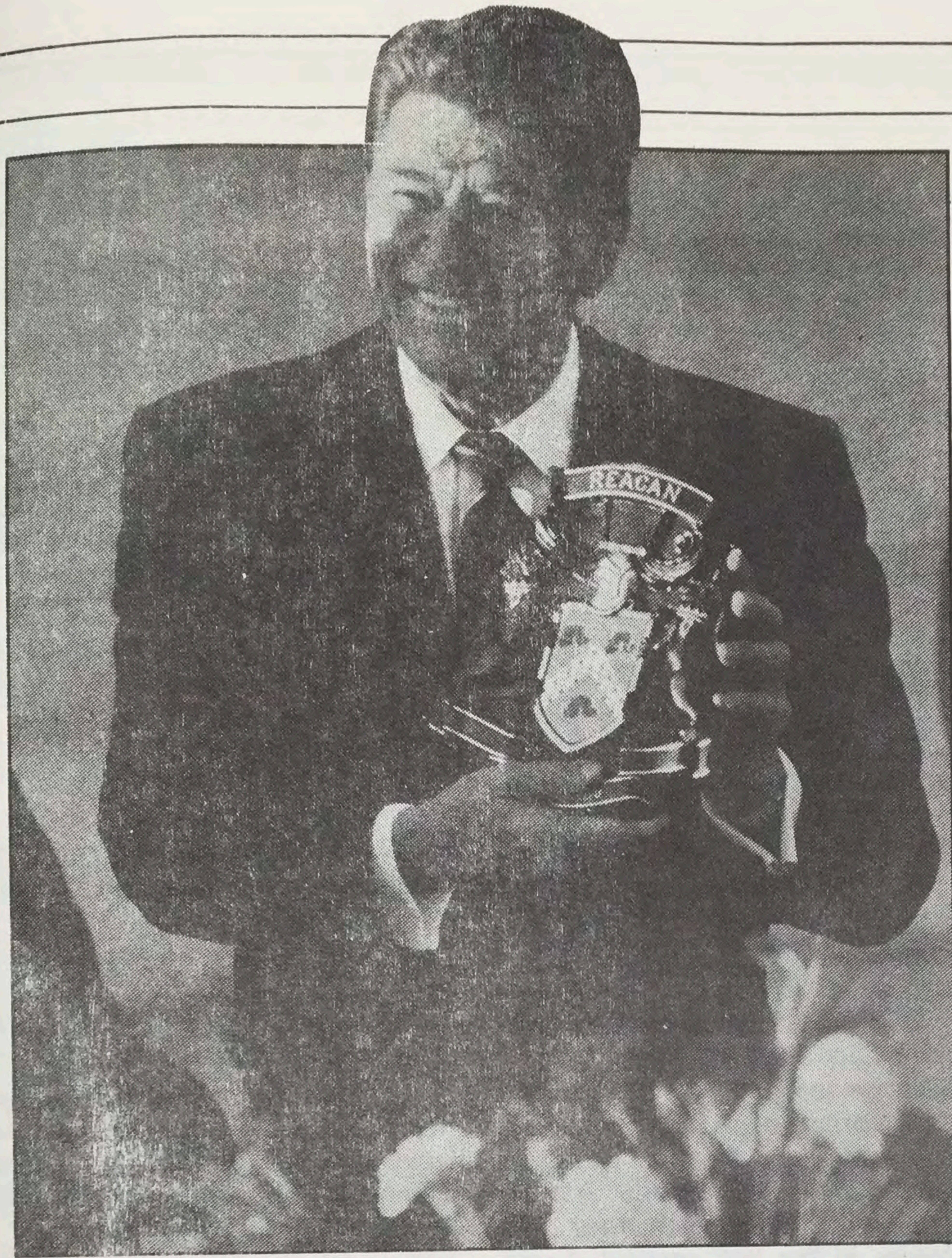
have accurate information on the views of Americans on every aspect of social, economic and political matters affecting the nation. To use it to simply pander to what they know the nation wants would be a crude application indeed. Instead, it has been used to chart a course for the main goals of the Administration: What kind of public support can be expected along the way to those goals, what issues have to be sold hard in the media, and the optimum manner those issues can be packaged for public consumption. PINS is the controller which plugs into the media network: establishing issues and their relative priorities and monitoring its own performance for future adjustments. It was recently disclosed that a direct mailing company working for the Republican Party which was mailing to PINS-selected social groups in key counties gave contradictory Reagan policies for the same issue to different social groups. That is, PINS devised the optimum policy for each social group.

In Ronald Reagan PINS has got what can be called in computer jargon a 'plug compatible' President. Like any good computer output peripheral, his function is to

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politic
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Advan
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WORKERS WORLD



The 'plug compatible' President

read the printout exactly as given and not to pass any judgements on the content. When reporters ask questions not on the PINS-selected menu, Reagan behaves much like a peripheral disconnected from its central processing unit. This potential system fault has now been eliminated by the Reagan team restricting Ronnie to prepared speeches and previously submitted political questions from selected journalists. The smart West Coast money realised early on that politicians were obsolete in the new set-up — the future technology would simply require actors.

Advantage

PINS gives Reagan's backers a winning advantage over their political opponents: something akin to running in a race against blind men. There is no reason besides cost why those opponents in the US cannot overcome this disadvantage and develop and run their own PINS, though it is debatable how-

ever, whether they can plug into the media as directly as the Reagan team.

Electorate monitoring and management systems will spread throughout the western world with immediate advantages accruing to the party first in with the system — invariably the one with the most money behind it. Tory Central Office in London already has a large computer installed and the systematic way in which they approached the June '83 election shows the Tories have grasped what is required.

American computer equipment was shipped to El Salvador before the last election there in a hurried, but unsuccessful, attempt to get some form of PINS system operational on behalf of the US candidate. However the lack of regular census data and government statistics in Third World countries such as El Salvador is a major block to the Reagan Administration using PINS to ensure the puppet govern-

ment of their choice. It would be no surprise to learn that a great deal of US aid to Third World countries is being used to set up statistical gathering agencies, not for the benefit of economic or welfare programmes for the indigenous population, but for future PINS systems.

Threat

The socialist parties of Western Europe will be directly threatened by PINS systems in the near future, as Europe probably has more available social and political statistics than even the US. By their very nature, individual socialist parties lack the capital to develop and maintain such systems. However as computer hardware becomes cheaper and more powerful, European parties of the Left could jointly fund a system which would have in-built advantages in a Europe-wide database. As always, socialist parties will not have the same control or direct access to the media as their capitalist counterparts, but the electorate intelligence capability that PINS would provide may soon be something which no party can afford to be without.

At present, it is still difficult to gauge just how much of an election-winning guarantee a PINS system is. The developed version of PINS has only been tried in the last US election. Many people suspect that the programmes are based on the implicit assumption that the balance of economic and social forces which have existed in the Western World since 1945 will continue indefinitely, and the system might not be able to handle the massive realignment of economic and class forces that a capitalist crisis would produce.

Also, it still remains to be seen how far a totally discredited capitalist party can survive solely on scientifically based media massage — though many are currently exploring the limits. The history of elections in industrialised societies has shown that the ruling capitalist minority has usually managed to counter by some device the inherent advantage of socialist parties; that is that they represent the majority of electors. PINS is the latest device but why should it exclusively serve the interests of capitalism?

DESERT WAR

HUNDREDS of Irish tourists soaking up the sun in the Canary Islands this summer will be unaware that one hundred miles away in the Western Sahara a bloody liberation struggle by the Polisario Front against Moroccan occupation enters its ninth year.

Since the hasty withdrawal by Spain from its former colony of Western Sahara, neighbouring Morocco has devoted most of its resources to annexing the sparsely populated desert territory which is nearly as large as Britain. The struggle for self determination by the Polisario Front has divided many African countries, and caused increased embarrassment to international bodies like the United Nations.

America has come to the aid of Morocco by supplying 'military advisers' and F-5 jet fighters in exchange for US air bases and radar stations. This American presence has angered most North African arab countries, including Algeria and Libya, who have increased their support for the Polisario.

Claim

Morocco, under King Hassan has always promoted an ultra-nationalist claim to a mythical 'Greater Morocco' to include the Western Sahara and neighbouring Mauritania. As in Ireland and many other countries, this irredentist expansionism is widely promoted during periods of economic crisis to curb internal dissent.

In Morocco it has had remarkable success with nationalists, royalists, socialists and capitalists all backing the King in his war to annex the Western Sahara. The only problem is that the war is eating up half the country's gross domestic product and has little to show except for dead Moroccan soldiers roasting on the hot sands near the border fortifications. The Polisario fighters travel huge distances across the desert in their Algerian supplied jeeps, and claim to have killed 900 Moroccan soldiers and wounded a further 500 in the past two months.

As the tourists hop and bop in the

GERRY FLYNN looks at the the background to the Polisario Front's liberation struggle in the Western Sahara

discos of Las Palmas, the Polisario shuffle closer to victory and acceptability. Two years ago the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) summit in Tripoli broke down when Morocco tried to over-rule the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (the official name of the former Spanish Sahara colony) membership of the OAU secured in February 1982. All the Moroccans succeeded in doing was to further split the OAU and highlight the diplomatic success of the SAWR and its Polisario resistance.

Spanish domination

This poor and barren north-western desert corner of Africa was once fertile and one of the most powerful Islamic areas of North Africa. During the European race for colonies in the last century, Spain declared the Western Sahara a protectorate. In 1885 at the Berlin Conference the other European powers accepted the Spanish domination and let them get on with exploiting its people and resources unhindered.

During the 1950s as Algeria engaged in a bitter struggle for independence from French rule the Sahrawis were doing much the same with the Spaniards — forcing them to retreat to the coastal ports and later seek French military aid to regain limited control. As the process of decolonisation grew throughout Africa the United Nations got round to discussing Spanish Sahara in 1963, and the General Assembly called on Spain to leave the territory.

In the face of repeated international demands to quit the Western Sahara, Franco's Spain made vague promises and redoubled its efforts to exploit the valuable phosphate deposits. By 1970 a small independence movement was officially formed representing the Sahrawis, and within three years

they organised large demonstrations in the capital, El Auin which were severely repressed. The killing of hundreds of demonstrators and harassment of others provided the impetus for a new liberation group the Polisario.

Their title is an acronym for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro, and by 1974 they had sabotaged the phosphate conveyor belts and captured some Spanish soldiers. Within a year the Spanish government was persuaded that independence mightn't be so bad, but both neighbouring Morocco and poverty stricken Mauritania announced that they wished to carve the country between them with the two northern provinces becoming part of King Hassan's 'Greater Morocco'.

Self-determination

In October 1975 a UN investigation reported that the majority of Saharans favoured independence, and the World Court ruled in favour of self-determination. The Moroccan response was to send a crusade of 350,000 unarmed civilians to literally walk over the locals. Within a few weeks it all proved too much for the Spanish who hastily agreed to hand over the country to joint Moroccan and Mauritanian rule in 1976. Algeria backed the Polisario Front. The Moroccan army then entered Western Sahara and occupied the capital, El Aaiun in December 1975. Within a month the Spanish troops packed their kit bags and let Morocco and Mauritania share the spoils. Meanwhile the Polisario proclaimed the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) on 27 February 1976.

The war then started in earnest with the Polisario fighting both Moroccan and Mauritanian armies. The tiny ill-equipped Mauritanian army was soon in difficulties, and

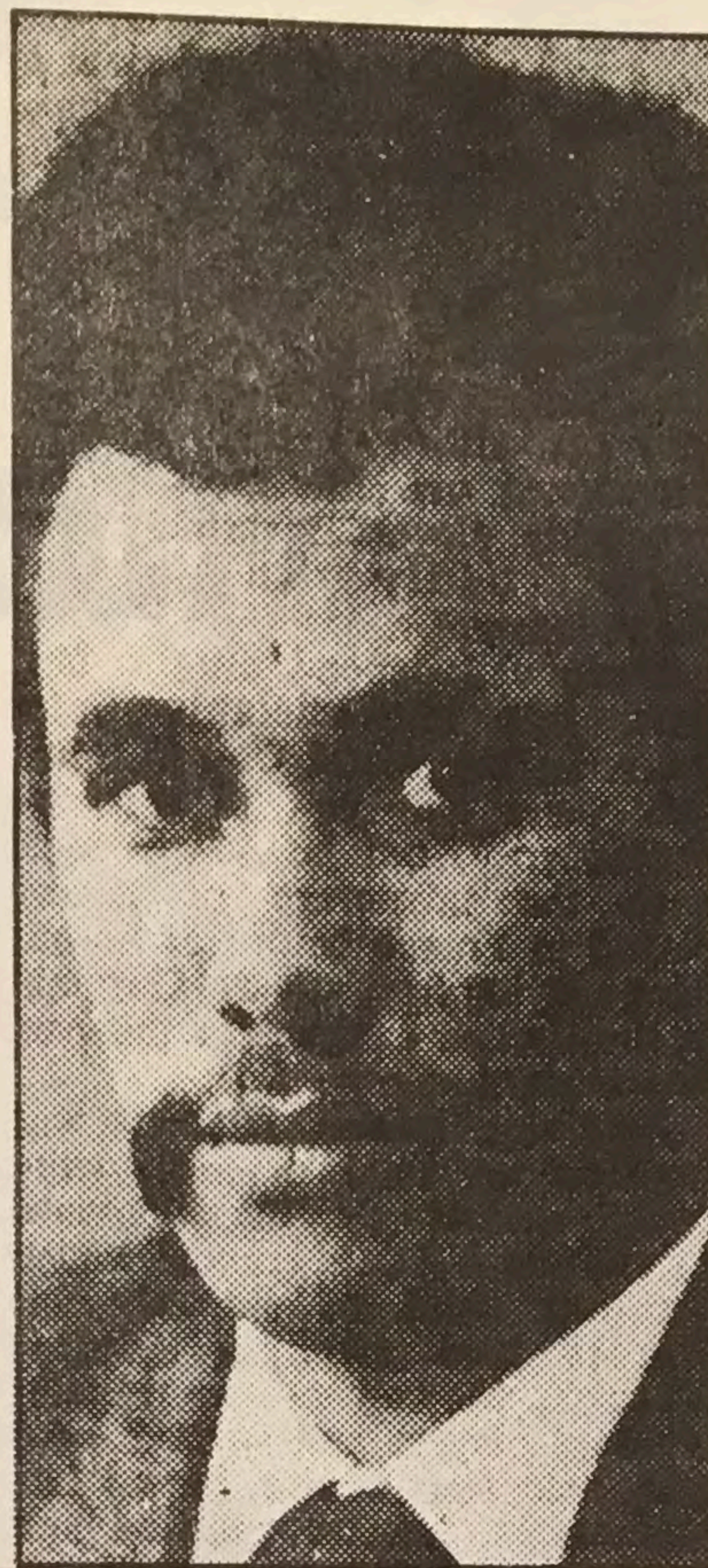
had to sign a joint defence agreement with Morocco after successful Polisario raids inside Mauritania. France then came to the aid of Morocco, but Mauritania could not cope with the war. The strain on the vast desert country with a population of only 1½ million (mainly illiterate small farmers and nomads) was too much, and led to a coup in July 1978 when Colonel Ould Salek assumed the presidency. He was keen to make peace with the Polisario but feared the reaction of Moroccan troops stationed in his country.

Negotiations for withdrawal from the southern province broke down as the coup leaders became less popular at home and Mauritania became more divided between the minority blacks and the Islamic arabs in the north. In July 1979 the Polisario broke off their ceasefire after a year because of the delays in handing over Tiris al-Gharbia province. Col. Salek resigned before he was pushed and the new premier Lt. Col. Ould Heydalla signed a peace agreement with the Polisario and Algeria before introducing long overdue reforms such as the official abolition of slavery in 1980. It's that kind of country.

Recognition

The Moroccans then occupied the whole of Western Sahara and the current on-off war started in earnest, with Polisario attacks on towns well within Moroccan borders. This helped unite the Popular and Democratic Party, the Progressive and Socialist Party, the Constitutional Democratic Movement into a National Defence Council backing King Hassan. Yet the Moroccan army continued to come off second best in the war, and for the past four years have been restricted to a defensive triangle near the capital El Aaiun and its nearby phosphate mines. Libya's Col. Ghadaffi took a renewed interest in Polisario and said he'd like to see a strong united Mauritania and SADR to block Moroccan expansionism. He backed this aspiration with increased military assistance.

On the diplomatic front, the Polisario succeeded in winning official recognition from 55



Lamine Baali, a representative of the Polisario Front, who visited Ireland last month

governments. Unfortunately, the Irish government has mostly sat on the fence, and has neither recognised the SADR or called for the withdrawal of Moroccan troops. According to the Department of Foreign Affairs Ireland supported the unanimous resolution at the last UN General Assembly, adopted without a vote, calling for direct negotiations between the Polisario and Morocco and a referendum under UN auspices to establish the state's future government. The Moroccans will only accept a referendum if it is related to continued allegiance to King Hassan which runs counter to the socialist and democratic aspirations of the Polisario Front. Another point of contention is voting rights for the 300,000 SADR refugees living temporarily in Algeria.

The conflict has some similarities with that in Namibia with the United States backing the aggressor, and UN calls for peace initiatives being ignored because of the wider conflicts with neighbouring states. France is aiding Morocco because it wants to limit Algerian influence and America has such a blind spot over the boisterous Libyan leader Col. Ghadaffi that money is no object

when backing his indirect enemies.

Withdrawal proposals

In April this year, encouraged by increased US support, 30,000 Moroccan soldiers tried to expand their fortified triangle on the Moroccan-SADR borders, and the ensuing battles led to 900 Moroccan deaths according to the Polisario Front in London.

The continuing conflict and divisions within the OAU and the embarrassment of aiding a country like Morocco which flies in the face of repeated UN resolutions surfaced in the US House of Representatives which earlier this year sent a study mission to Algeria and Morocco. The mission concluded that 'the continuation of the war and the unresolved political status of the Western Sahara poses a challenge to our commitment to self-determination, itself an important asset in our international diplomacy.'

'We also endorse the thrust of efforts to decrease military aid and increase economic assistance to Morocco, to encourage the administration to use its leverage in Morocco to promote a more forthcoming position on the Western Sahara, and to help to establish direct diplomatic contact with the Polisario Front as a means towards heightening the momentum towards peace.'

These sensible conclusions proposing withdrawal from a nasty expansionist war and recognition of the Polisario's popular support has had little influence on President Reagan. Just as he told Irish audiences that they knew little or nothing about El Salvador compared with his CIA briefings, so he tells American audiences that the man they love to hate, Col. Ghadaffi is about to over-run a little African country which Morocco just wants to help get on its feet.

The reality is, as always, quite different. Thousands of Sahrawis are forced to live in exile in barren desert supported by the UN and the Algerian Red Crescent waiting for world pressure to force Morocco to return their towns. Yet not one EEC or Western power has recognised the SADR which must rely on the socialist and non-aligned countries for aid.

PAX AMERICANA

'In Nicaragua the revolution that overthrew the hated Somoza regime has been captured by self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninists.'

- POLITICAL PLURALISM
- A MIXED ECONOMY
- POPULAR PARTICIPATION AND MOBILIZATION
- NATIONAL DEFENCE AND NON-ALIGNMENT

These elements taken together constitute the political philosophy of the current government in Nicaragua.'

The first quotation is from the Report of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America, headed by Henry Kissinger, and dated January 1984. The second quote is from the Situation Report released about the same time by the Nicaraguan Embassy in London on behalf of the Nicaraguan Government. Clearly, the situation in Managua as seen from Managua differs more than somewhat from the situation in Managua as seen from Washington.

The Commission

The Commission's 11 ordinary members were chosen from both the Republican and Democratic parties in an attempt by the Reagan administration to muster bipartisan support for its Central American policy, and thereby prevent U.S. involvement in Central America from becoming an issue in the U.S. presidential election in November.

Of those 11 members, only two

KIERAN FUREY analyses the Kissinger Commission Report on Central America.

bear recognisably Latin American names: Cisneros and Diaz-Elejandro. In addition to the 11 ordinary members there were two others: Executive Director Harry Shlaudeman and Chairman Henry Kissinger. Shlaudeman is Reagan's roving ambassador in Central America. His other claim to fame is that he was deputy head of the U.S. mission in Chile when President Allende was overthrown in 1973. That's Harry.

Then there's Henry, who got his country into Vietnam and collected the Nobel Peace Prize for helping to organise the retreat. One searches in vain for a peer for Henry. Great statesmen like Idi Amin, Pol Pot and Dick Nixon stride across the world stage only to vanish into the wings. But Henry never goes away. His presence at the heart of U.S. policy formulation on Central America helps guarantee that the veteran vultures of Vietnam will be around to try again much nearer to home. And this time, they mean to succeed.

The Commission spent nearly six months 'studying the situation in Central America'. Of that time, they spent *six days* in Central America. That includes flying over it, sitting in airports, sleeping, showering and shaving in hotels, etc. There are five countries in

Central America. So, give or take a little the gentlemen spent on average about a day each in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

They talked to all the right people, of course — at home and abroad. Including President Reagan and 'all three living former presidents'. Dick Nixon is still alive. The mind boggles. As for Reagan, he's the one who said, in 1966: 'We should declare war on Vietnam. We could pave the whole country and put parking stripes on it, and still be home by Christmas.'

The Report

So what does the Report say? It says that the United States should be guided by three broad principles in its relations with Central America.

The first principle is 'democratic self-determination' (meaning the election of U.S. or Western European-style governments friendly towards the U.S.)

The second is 'encouragement of economic and social development that fairly benefits all' (meaning rapid capitalist development with the help of U.S. investment). Panama is held up as an example: that country's leaders 'are studying the experiences of Hong Kong, Singapore and others in an effort to imitate their success as leading



Martyn Turner/Irish Times

producers for export.'

'The third principle is cooperation in meeting threats to the security of the region.' An admirable principle, if taken at face value. But wait. It doesn't mean the use of French mine-sweepers to clear the infernal machines planted by the CIA in the waters around Nicaraguan ports. Nor the use of Soviet weapons or Cuban advisers by the Nicaraguans to help them meet the constant invasions by Somocistas trained, armed and financed by the CIA.

It means many thousands of U.S. troops in Honduras, and a thousand

more in Costa Rica. It means U.S. warships off both coasts of Nicaragua. It means U.S. planes supplying the armies of Honduras and El Salvador in pursuit of the Reagan/Kissinger-inspired Vietnamisation of Central America.

Carrot and stick

The Report doesn't quite put it like that, of course. Indeed, the Commission chooses to dwell mainly on socio-economic matters. It's a case of holding out a big carrot in one hand, and keeping a big stick behind the back in the other hand.

The carrot would take the form of eight billion dollars in economic aid over a five year period beginning in 1985. (This idea has already taken a bad mauling in Congress.) The Commission envisaged the money being used to stimulate the private sector, subsidise loans, provide trade credits, and generally boost these desiccated economies in the direction of Hong Kong, South Korea, etc. The Report wants to see the 'development of strong and free economies with diversified production for both external and domestic markets'. The Central American countries are urged to

WORKERS WORLD

'improve the climate for both domestic and foreign investment'. Doubtless with a little help from the U.S. troops and helicopter gunships in Honduras, and the U.S. advisers and weaponry in El Salvador. The Somocista counter-revolutionaries are also doing their bit to improve the climate for investment.

The Report suggests a programme of 10,000 Government scholarships to bring Latin American students to the U.S., incorporating 'mechanisms to encourage graduates to return to their home countries after completing their education'

'Because of the important implications which the training of a country's future leaders has on its political development, we believe this would represent a sound investment of U.S. assistance funds,' says Henry's Report.

A particularly touching paragraph is headed: 'We recommend expansion of the International Executive Service Corps (IESC).' The paragraph reads: 'The IESC is a private, voluntary organisation of retired American (read U.S.)

business executives. An expanded IESC effort in Central America, perhaps with some support from the U.S. Government, should give particular attention to training managers of small businesses. This would strengthen the economy, while also contributing to the development of the middle class.'

Military aid

Now we know the solution to the Central American problem: just send in Nancy's boys in pinstripe and khaki, with a briefcase in one hand and an M-16 in the other...

The Commission recommends increased military aid to El Salvador, to enable the armed forces and village militias to operate in accordance with enlightened U.S. counter-insurgency strategies. (These 'village militias' are responsible for very, very many of the deaths attributed in fashionable European liberal and Left circles to mysterious 'death squads').

Even more extraordinary levels of U.S. involvement in Honduras are advocated in the Report, as is

military aid for Guatemala 'under suitable conditions'. Understandable. After all, 'we are engaged in El Salvador and Central America because we are serving fundamental U.S. interests that transcend any particular government.' So what are these interests? Why is the U.S. in Central America?

U.S. security

Central America looms large in U.S. economic and geo-strategic calculations. The Report puts it better than I could: 'Of all U.S. private investment in the developing world, 62 per cent is in Latin America and the Caribbean. Latin America is a major trading partner of this country, accounting for more than 15 per cent of our exports and about the same share of our imports. Our consumers and our industries depend on the region for coffee, iron, petroleum and a host of other goods. The Panama Canal is a vital artery of our international commerce.'

'Central America's crisis is our crisis,' says the Commission blithe-

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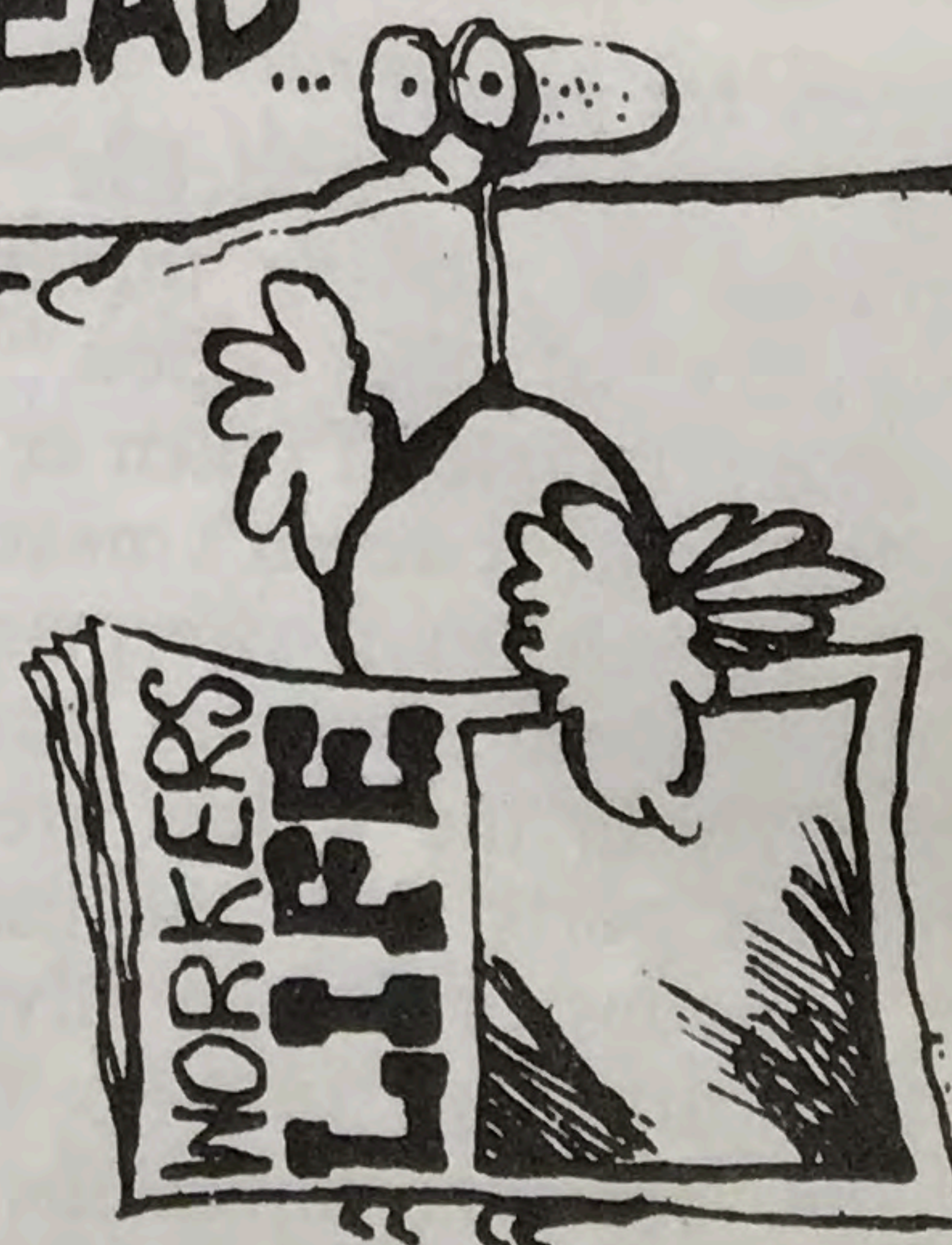
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"ONE OF THREE IRISH
PUBLICATIONS THAT I
WOULD PAY MONEY
TO READ"



ly, and without any hint of being aware of the irony of the statement. Throughout the Report, three names occur again and again as representing the most unimaginable threats to U.S. security. These three names are the USSR, Cuba, and Nicaragua.

We are told that the two former countries have 'designs for the hemisphere distinctly hostile to U.S. interests' and then, in language and sentiment worthy of an Elizabethan tragi-comedy, we learn that 'the people of Central America are sorely beset and urgently need our help'.

In regretful tones, the Report admits that 'Excluding Soviet involvement in Central America altogether — extending to trade, diplomatic relations, and the gaining of some influence in individual countries — is no doubt impossible.'

On page 123 comes a truly frightening paragraph: '...the Commission sees little promise in negotiating with the Soviet Union over Central America. The Soviets would almost certainly use negotiations to legitimize their presence in the region. They would welcome discussion about super-power spheres of influence, which would prompt Soviet assertions of primacy and the need for U.S. abstention on the Soviet periphery, in such places as Eastern Europe and Afghanistan. For the United States however, such a concept of spheres of influence is unacceptable. Should the United States now accept that concept, the Soviet Union would reap substantial gains.' (My emphasis).

The message is clear. You stay out of my neighbour's cabbage-patch, but I'm already in your neighbour's patch and I'm staying there.

Challenge

The Report resembles a John Wayne movie in that it's permeated everywhere by an overpowering sense of challenge (the word is used repeatedly). The good guy (Uncle Sam) is faced on all fronts by challenges from the baddies. There are social, economic, political and military challenges. Above all, there is the Soviet challenge. Henry sleeps with one eye open, for the USSR is



Sixth Avenue, Guatemala City's main shopping street: a blur of transnational neon.

right there under his bed.

In a contest of two tough characters, the good guy has to win, especially if the script has been commissioned by Ronald and written by Henry. 'Beyond the issue of U.S. security interests in the Central American-Caribbean region, our credibility worldwide is engaged. The triumph of hostile forces in what the Soviets call the "strategic rear" of the United States would be read as a sign of U.S. impotence.'

Good ol' Ron. 73 and not a bit impotent. Look at the way he responded to the come-on from Eugenia Charles over Grenada.

Against Nicaragua, the Report employs a combination of distortions and threats: 'From the outset, the Sandinistas have maintained close ties with Cuba and the Soviet Union. There are some 8,000 Cuban advisers now in Nicaragua, including at least 2,000 military advisers, as well as several hundred Soviet, East European, Libyan and PLO advisers. Cuban construction teams have helped build military roads, bases and airfields.' (Wonder what a 'military road' looks like).

In this context, I would make two points:

(1) By all other (non-U.S.) accounts, these figures are fantasy.

(2) Even if Nicaragua had invited a million foreign advisers, so bloody what? Nicaragua has been a sovereign country since 1979, to invite whom it pleases.

The Commission daubs the writing on the wall, in war-paint: Re Nicaragua: '...we do not advocate a policy of static containment.' Equally chillingly: '...after the U.S. actions in Grenada, Managua has hinted at some accommodations in its external and internal policies' (my emphasis). And bluntly, on page 119: '...Nicaragua must be aware that force remains an ultimate recourse.'

Tough talk

This tough-talkin' Report even has a rap on the knuckles for Western Europeans: 'Some European (read Western European) governments and political organisations have taken actions inimical to U.S. — and indeed, to European — security, such as supporting the Sandinista government or the Salvadoran insurgents'.

Elsewhere, the Report mouths about the need for 'Commitments by all countries to pluralism, to peaceful political activity, and to free elections in which all political parties would have a right to participate free of threat or violence'. Yes, sir. Remember Chile.

I do not like thee, Dr. Kissinger. Your Commission spent six days in Central America, and presumes to have answers to the political, social, economic and military crises there. The answers come in two packages, labelled one with the sign of the dollar, the other with the sign of the gun.

I spent ten months in Central America. Not long enough to pretend that I have the answers to the problems of the region. But long enough to know that the answers must lie in the minds and hearts of Central Americans, and not in Wall Street, Washington, or Fort Langley.

But it may well be that it is Henry's answer that will prevail. Probably a lot of Central Americans can be bought, and many of the remainder killed. Pax Americana. If the world allows it. I am not sure the world will.

WORK & CULTURE

Running Guns for Mother Ireland

Paddy Gillan

WHEREVER Sam Briscoe went, trouble wasn't far behind. The uncle who greets him at Aldergrove Airport is found two days later with his throat cut from ear to ear. The bar he delivers a message to in Queens, New York, is blown up minutes after he leaves, and the owner killed. There's more ...much more. Obviously a case for the cops. Or even Mike Hammer. But Sam Briscoe is a loner, into Do-It-Yourself. And anyway, if he'd called in the cops or Mike Hammer, Pete Hamill wouldn't have gotten to write *The Guns of Heaven*.

Some of the best writing in this book is to be found in the back-cover blurb: 'A nightmare of kidnapping, treachery and murder pursues him (Briscoe) from Belfast's smoking streets to Manhattan's seething steel canyons — where a sinister plot is timed to turn a citywide celebration into a horrifying bloodbath.'

The 'nightmare' begins when New York journalist Sam Briscoe visits Belfast to interview Provisional 'hard man' Commander Steel. A Protestant and a former Civil Rights activist, Steel joined the Provisional IRA to avenge the murder of his wife and son. He wants 'the killing to stop, once and forever', and is coldly and efficiently killing 'the right people' in order to get what he wants.

Following the murder of his uncle by the UVF, Briscoe comes to accept this twisted logic: 'I understand better why so many of the young men of the Provisional IRA had acted so

BOOKS

THE GUNS OF HEAVEN by Pete Hamill; Bantam Books; \$2.95

THE PATRIOT GAME by George V. Higgins; Ballantine Books; \$2.95

often as if they were truly mad. They had good reason. They were mad. They had been driven into that high white region of the mind where the grays of reason no longer exist, and you want to hurt, maim, destroy, obliterate... It was now my war, too.'

The 'war' follows Briscoe to New York, via Switzerland (where he visits his daughter), and Spain (where his daughter is kidnapped). In New York he becomes involved in gun-running, and in a running battle with a group of 'born again' fanatics who are in league with the UVF in a plot to discredit the Provisionals. The plot consists of blowing up the Plaza Hotel where the 'Four Horsemen' and a thousand other Irish-Americans are to celebrate St. Patrick's Day.

Heady stuff. But *The Guns of Heaven* is not just for intellectuals. There's a girl: 'Her ice blue eyes stared over a long aquiline nose and high cheek bones. She had brushed color onto her pale skin to accent the cheek bones. Her breasts were large for a thin girl, moving under a tight green blouse set off by the white straps of her apron.' Mickey Spillane

couldn't have put it better.

Briscoe beds Sheila Rafferty before he discovers that she's in league with the 'born again' fanatics who are in league with the UVF. When he does, all hell breaks loose: 'I whirled and kicked the albino in the balls, and then hit Sheila with the hardest right hand I'd thrown in years. She crumpled and fell, with blood pouring from her nose. The albino moaned. I put the M-16 on the table and hit him over the head with a chair.'

When it comes to violence, Sam Briscoe is clearly no sexist. He's no Marxist either to judge by his description of Michael Farrell's *The Orange State*: '...one of the best books on Northern Ireland written by an Irish Marxist, but crammed with reliable facts and figures.' The American readership of *The Guns of Heaven* are thus reassured that while Farrell's 'Marxism' may be a bit dodgy, the 'facts and figures' are definitely 'reliable'.

Briscoe's explanation of the Northern Ireland conflict is bound to strike a chord with Irish-American readers: 'The IRA is fighting a war against the

British Army. The UVF is fighting Catholics. When the IRA kills a British soldier, the UVF goes out and kills a Catholic. Maybe two. Not an IRA man, necessarily. Any Catholic will do...'

There you have it. A line guaranteed to go down a bomb in South Boston, an area which provides the background to George V. Higgins' *The Patriot Game*.

Pete Riordan, the hero of *The Patriot Game* is not into running guns to the 'Ould Sod'. He is a federal agent whose job is to stop guns being run. He likes his job, and has no sentimental attachment to Mother Ireland.

He is a patriot, though, and fought for his country in Vietnam. He prefers not to complicate his life by asking why his country found it necessary to wage war in South-East Asia. He probably bought the 'domino theory', a bizarre version of which his superior officer quotes Riordan in reply to a query: '...we do know what crime's been committed. It's gun-running, to an all-out terrorist organization with definite Marxist connections and a strong and sympathetic underground in place in this country. If they can achieve their objectives in Ulster, they'll attack Dublin the same way, and if they win there, they'll be poised to begin activities in the United States with the complete cooperation and encouragement of Moscow. This is a real potential and serious threat to our national security...'

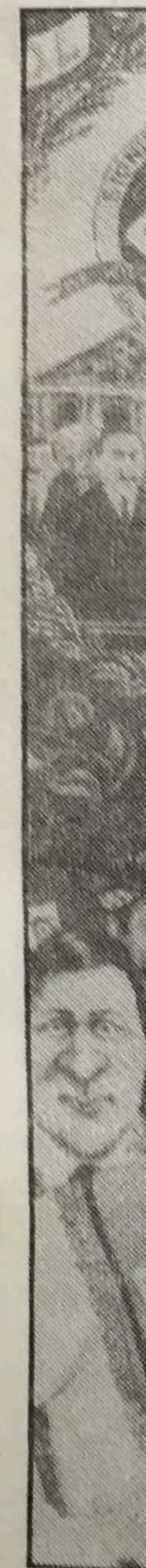
Could it be that Ronald Reagan is a Provisional sleeper?

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(After all, he claims to be a Republican). Or is it that the Right Honourable Member for West Belfast has designs on the White House? Not really. It's simply that George V. Higgins is way out of touch with events in Ireland. And he's not too hot on geography either: Riordan keeps confusing Ulster with Connaught.

Higgins, however, is good on his home ground. His depiction of the world of Boston politics — religious and secular — is both witty and to the point. In previous books — particularly in *The Friends of Eddie Coyle* — he accurately portrays the almost symbiotic relationship between lawmen and outlaws. And his

portrayal of Provisional IRA supporters in *The Patriot Game* has the ring of truth: 'They're a bunch of well-nourished American kids with strong teeth and good clothes and plenty of milk and good food. Some of those kids are old enough to be adults, but they never made it.' *The Patriot Game* doesn't

quite make it either. As with *The Guns of Heaven*, its treatment of the Northern Ireland conflict is dangerously simplistic. The only real difference is that Higgins writes from a Right-wing perspective, whereas Hamill puts forward a left-Liberal view. American readers will be entertained but misled by both books.

The Loyalist dimension

ULSTER'S UNCERTAIN DEFENDERS: Loyalists and the Northern Ireland Conflict by Sarah Nelson; Appletree Press; UK£4.95.

THIS BOOK is essential reading for anyone trying to understand the full dimensions of the Ulster conflict as it has unfolded since the mid 60s. It is particularly important for its focus, which is on the nature of the popular Protestant response to the crisis of 'their' state. It deals a severe

blow to many inaccurate clichés about the nature of Protestant politics in the period — e.g. that the Protestant working class are the most reactionary section of the Protestant population; that Paisleyism is a phenomenon of the lumpen proletariat; and that a significant phenomenon of Ulster nationalism developed in the period.

Sarah Nelson has met and interviewed a lot of Protestant 'hard men', and she wants to show that very few conform to the classic image of 'Taig-hating' psychopath. The politics of most she found, was a mixture of populism, authoritarianism, militarism and a degree of class

consciousness. This is central to her explanation of the ease with which conventional Unionist politicians, whose dominance appeared to have been severely undermined during the Ulster Workers' Council strike, were able to reassert their leadership in the ensuing months.

In this context her technique of using interviews to reveal the attitudes of various groups is often revealing. An Alliance member's reaction to the strike is redolent of class snobbery and fear: 'The strike wasn't just a blow to everything we believed in and fought for. For a lot of people it was the last straw because they had to take orders

from yobboes in the middle of the street. Some of the types I know thought there was a red revolution coming. Talk of a middle class exodus isn't a fantasy — I know quite a few people who are packing their bags and quitting Northern Ireland.'

At the time, various groups ranging from the Northern Ireland Office to a section of the leadership of the Provos held completely unreal hopes about the radicalising effects of the UWC strike on the Protestant working class. What had developed amongst a minority of Protestant workers and paramilitants, as Nelson is careful to point out, was a type of class consciousness which was still firmly within an anti-nationalist framework. If this was to have had the opportunity to develop and influence much wider sections of the Protestant working class, the activities of the Provisionals and the British government would have to have been profoundly different.

Overall what the book shows is that the radical changes in the Unionist state and the consequent instability this introduced to the overall 'constitutional' relationship with the rest of Britain, produced a Protestant 'backlash' which had positive as well as negative aspects to it. Many Protestants found the basis for their traditional political loyalties shaken to the roots. However, as the decade wore on, the incapacity and unwillingness of the British Labour government to do more than 'manage' the situation, and the continuation of the Provo campaign, ensured that any progressive possibilities that existed because of the collapse of the traditional unionist regime were dissipated. There is only one major criticism I would make of the book and that is that, like the thesis on which it was based, it ends in 1976. I would have liked at least a concluding postscript on how she interprets developments since 1976.

Henry Patterson



Illustration shows detail of 'The Twelfth' by Rita Duffy, from the cover of 'Ulster's Uncertain Defenders'.

WORK AND CULTURE

A challenge to Left and Right

WHAT IS TO BE DONE ABOUT LAW AND ORDER? by John Lea and Jock Young; Penguin Books; UK£2.95

THE PHRASE 'law and order' is, in Britain at least, one of the most potent weapons in the ideological armoury of conservatism. And, as is shown by the startling ease with which the British police have been able to invent new powers for themselves in the course of the miners' strike, the defence of law and order is all too often invoked as an excuse to legitimise the curtailment or abolition of hard-won civil liberties.

It must be admitted that the Left has, traditionally, tended to preface its discussions of this subject with a paragraph like the one above: in other words, we have seen the question of law and order as primarily one of protecting individual and common rights against the State. After all, the State apparatuses charged with the control, investigation and punishment of 'common crime' are the same ones whose job it is to provide for the ultimate security of the State itself, and to respond adaptably to any threats to the stability of the social order. Historically, it might be hard to tell which of these functions — repression of crime, or protection of the rulers against the ruled — came first.

So the first instinct of radicalism is to begin from the premise that the State is ultimately an adversary, leading to a certain hostility or defensiveness towards questions of law and order, including crime and punishment.

But does your average citizen naturally tend towards the same order of priorities? Does a comfortable majority, a common consent, the Plain People — the public opinion battleground of ideas between Left and Right — start from the same premise of defensiveness against the State? Apparently not; not in Britain anyway, where half of the working class votes Tory, reads the *Sun*, and thinks hanging's too good for muggers and vandals. In that strange country (as, I believe, in this), the spontaneous response of the average citizen to the question of law and order arises from an instinct of self-defence against

crime, that arbitrary danger from which the State, God bless it, defends us. In Britain, and to a lesser extent in the Republic (even — lesser still — in the North), the police enjoy, by and large, a favourable public image.

Political philosophers, from Hobbes onwards, have argued that without the repressive powers vested in the sovereign State, organised civilisation itself would collapse, with nothing to guarantee the rights of persons and property against the untrammelled free play of competing individualist wills. But the ideological distinction between anti-social 'crime' and other, more political forms of 'deviance' is a product of historical change, a process which continues day by day. The Tolpuddle Martyrs, for instance, were 'common criminals' in their time; we might also consider the campaigners for women's suffrage, householders refusing to pay Ground Rent, or even (less nobly) TDs who openly dodge betting tax as examples of illegal political action rather than simple lawbreaking for private gain.

But let us leave aside these kinds of lawbreaking and other questions of 'politically motivated' offences — terrorism, counter-terrorism, prison struggles and so forth. If we look just at common crime and its control, we will recognise a subject about which the Right has had much more to say, and with greater political effectiveness, than the Left.

Nonetheless, as these authors demonstrate, it is a subject of very great political importance and one which really ought to engage the imagination and compassion of socialists. This excellent book looks at crime as a social and political problem in the context of present-day Britain and outlines a socialist response to the Right's successful — because unchallenged — monopolisation of the politics of crime control.

Far from echoing the 'moral hysteria' of the law and order lobby or succumbing to the puerile 'left idealism' which regards crime as a problem for the ruling class alone and fails to confront the issue of crime against ordinary people, Lea and Young set out to construct a 'left realist' approach. This involves recognising that working-class people are also crime victims; that crime 'divides the poor' against the poor, both in a real sense and in the distorted ideological sense repeated by the mass media that the real enemy is

crime and not the inequitable nature of our society'. The crime they are concerned with is anti-social, but its roots are very definitely social and an adequate response to it must focus on the social conditions which give rise to it and must involve the public at large, not just the repressive agencies of the State.

Whilst this book is based on a study of British conditions, with references to the USA, it will nonetheless be of special interest to Irish readers and particularly to the Irish Left. A decade ago — 'when it was neither profitable nor popular' — the Republican Clubs produced a discussion document (*The Police and You*) on an acceptable, accountable form of civilian police service. More recently, the 'community policing' proposals of the Association of Garda Sergeants and

Inspectors were well received by The Workers' Party in the Republic. Dublin's drug abuse crisis, which may have faded from the headlines but is still very much with us, places a greater responsibility than ever on the Left to explore and develop its strategic thinking on law and order.

A careful, critical reading of this book, without losing sight of the fundamental differences between England and both Irish states in terms of history and current practice, would be a valuable exercise for anyone concerned with this debate — community activists, social workers, political groups and all concerned citizens. Police officers, too.

Mike Mullan

Backgardens

Like wornout toothbrushes in a plastic cup
The tree vegetates,
Naked as a silhouette;
Its limbs were lopped for the fire.

Green cream pale blue washing:
A quiet suburban painting, swaying
On an orange life-line
From stump of branch to hook in house.

Old doors rotten chipboard and rusty wire
Mark off everyone's territorial mess,
Long grass for Mam to moan about
Like she did about hair in our teens.

Birds an' babies an' dogs an' cats
Blend with the twilight.
The only ones watchin' are the rats;
They'll rummage in the night,
And before morning will have hopped to hiding,
Away from the deadly domesticity of it all.

Harry John

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'REEL' HISTORY

FILMS

DAVID ARCHARD reviews Edward Bennett's 'Ascendancy' which was shown last month on Channel 4.



A scene from 'Ascendancy'

'ONE THOUGHT overwhelms me — that this horror goes on and on for ever.' These, the last words spoken in the film, immediately precede its final image — the speaker, Connie Wintour, being force fed as the result of her hunger strike. Made in 1982, the film depicts the Northern Ireland of 1920—21. No one, surely, can misconstrue the intended connection. Indeed, the whole purpose of the film — lavishly praised on its release and recipient of the Silver Bear award at the 1983 Berlin Film Festival — is to show the Northern Ireland 'troubles' of the present as comprehensible in terms of its past. More particularly, these 'troubles' are, according to the film's 'logic', rooted in the condition of the Northern Ireland State's creation, and these conditions are, it is strongly suggested, reproduced even today.

In an interview, the director, Edward Bennett, confessed himself impressed by the fact that the Belfast localities for various violent incidents do not appear to have changed in the last 100 years, and he concluded: 'In Belfast you don't feel that history progresses in a straight line, but rather goes round and round.' It is a depressingly familiar historical circle that Bennett chooses to turn in; one that is sketched by means of gross political simplification and crude metaphor; and one whose solution is argued to be found only in violence.

The film depicts the events surrounding the formation of the Northern Ireland State in the years 1920—21, and their metaphorical reflection in the 'Big House' of Wintour, an outwardly benign patriarchal shipyard owner who ends the film reluctantly pressed into political service as a Unionist M.P. in the first Northern Ireland Parliament.

We follow events 'inside' and 'outside' largely through the character of his daughter Connie. She, obsessed by the memory of her brother killed in the Great War and to whom she persists in writing letters, suffers from a hysterical paralysis of her right arm. Provoked by a confrontation with Ryder, a cynical young British officer and

reminder of her dead brother, Connie flees the house only to see for the first time in Belfast the reality of the world outside. The experience resolves her hysteria, she regains the use of her arm, but opts now for a self-imposed protest of silence and starvation.

The message is clear. A State formed in war and violence can be met only by a war of reactive violence. Connie's violence (which even her father explicitly recognises to be an unacceptable importation into the house from the real world outside) is directed against her own body. But, as Bennett helpfully explains, this is only because 'she's a woman... If she was a young man she could have done something romantic like gone off to fight for the Republicans.'

Further 'romantic' simplifications concern the film's depiction of representative events and political forces surrounding the State's formation. Thus, the expulsions from Wintour's shipyard are shown simply as the violent exclusion by loyal Protestants of good politically-conscious trade

unionists. The latter are suggested (falsely in view of the evidence from the actual 'expulsions') to consist solely of Roman Catholics — a suggestion reinforced by juxtaposing their expulsion to that of Rose, the solitary Roman Catholic servant, from the Wintour household. The sectarian violence is given no context and thus appears only as random brutality mainly directed against Roman Catholics.

The role of the British Army is seen as that of supposed arbiter which degenerates into the arming of the newly formed Specials and collusion in the latter's brutalisation of Roman Catholics. Unionism itself is represented through Carson (part of his July 12th, 1920, speech is reproduced verbatim), and a cynical coalition of local capital and populist politicians. A dinner party scene on the eve of the first election crudely juxtaposes sectarian bigotry ('We'll have a free hand here soon, then we'll have a proper clean out') with Wintour's profit-seeking pragmatism ('I don't want my men off chasing Fenians all day'). The Protestant

'bloc' is metaphorically realised in the Wintour household — feudal patriarch at its head, manipulating and benefiting from the blind sectarianism of its lower orders (the butler participates in the murder of a Catholic).

To this crudification of history is added its representation as irreducibly violent and circular. The war motif is insistently underlined by image, dialogue and even a martial drum beat on the sound track. To show that Irish history ever repeats itself the director gives us the well-known signs of the current troubles (street riots, assassinations, a shooting attack on the British Army, evictions, the banging of bin lids), and adds the metaphorical lesson of Connie's illness. Paralysed by her past and the appropriate forms of remembrance, Connie is finally 'cured' by a willed violence which springs from an understanding of this past and the realisation of what now has to be done.

Perhaps most objectionable of all is the extent to which the film reveals that sadly familiar 'Brit' angst which resigns itself to serving (by implicitly supporting) the sentence of violence to which it is believed Irish history has condemned the guilty oppressors. Connie's final letter speaks of her realisation of 'the role that you (her brother) and I have played' in what has been happening. The English cannot be innocent since a 'war' is going on and sides must be taken. In the same interview, Bennett concludes: 'Ireland's not a problem you can solve in an English democratic way... Connie wakes up to the horror of this. She realises that talking, good intentions and kind ideas are not enough. It happens to be one of those parts of history that are about fighting.'

This is intellectual fellow-travelling Provoism at its very worst — obeisance from afar to violence in deference to a distorted and simplistic sense of historical guilt. And whilst the film maker beats his breast, others have their heads blown off. Whilst real history is travestied in such 'reel histories', the former will continue to travel in sad circles.

'GIMME BACK ME JOB!'

The Coalition Government announced last night that there would be no more elections. Government Propaganda Chief, Mr Peter Flabbergast, said there were a number of reasons for the decision. The main reason, he said, was that the Labouring Party was completely opposed to elections of any kind except in certain trade unions where they could arrange the outcome. Secondly, Mr Flabbergast claimed that elections brought what he termed 'unnecessary difficulties' to the Labouring Party.

Asked to elaborate he said the Cabinet was again in turmoil because the Bearded Butcher wanted his Ministry back. He quoted Mr Cluskey as saying in a letter to the Tanaiste and Labouring Leader, Big Dick: 'Youse got me to resign on the guarantee that yous would elect me to the European Parliament. I agreed on good trade union principles: I would earn more in Europe, hold onto my job in the Dáil and the travel would be unlimited. Attley and Nevin were signatories to that agreement with yourself and Arty O'Brien. You said yourself that the agreement was a real Charlie style stroke for the Party. And I thought it was a fair stroke for myself. Well, yous didn't keep your bargain. Now I want my job back and fuck Dublin Gas. Tell Garret to send that shaggin' baldy-headed architect to Brussels or somewhere and gimme me job back or, by jaysus, there'll be more gas.'

Mr Flabbergast said that the Tanaiste was having the contents of the letter explained to



him by someone from Dublin.

The Propaganda Chief went on to say that there were altogether 'more civilised reasons' why the dominant partner Fine Gael went along with the decision to permanently cancel elections: 'Garret is so besieged', he said off the record 'by unfulfilled middle-class ladies who want to become candidates for the Party and leave their "executive positions as social workers" to become Junior Ministers or go to Europe that he can't possibly satisfy them all. There are literally thousands of Mary Banotti's in this city, all of whom care. In fact they care so much that we must call a halt. Anyway, Paddy Cooney said he was positively excited by the idea of no elections and said it

reminded him of the Thirties.'

When asked if this decision did not deprive Fine Gael of its most cherished ambition Mr Flabbergast answered: 'A majority Fine Gael Government? But this *is* a Fine Gael Government!'


When interviewed at his Galway home the Ancient Hippy said he was aghast at the announcement. 'As far as my party is concerned, the decision not to hold elections is a temporary expedient only. Obviously we don't want local elections and clearly our Cabinet Ministers will only agree to a general election after they have qualified for a Ministerial pension. My advice to political correspondents would be to prepare for our withdrawal from Government anytime after November '85 and certainly *before* the local elections of June '86.

'Ali we have to do,' smirked the Chairman of the Labouring Party, 'is to find a major issue of principle.'


'But I thought that the local elections were only postponed to June '85 not June '86?' said one journalist.

'Not at all,' replied the Chairman. 'The people are tired of elections, and you know this business of local government reform is *far more* complex than the people think. No local elections are possible before '86. *Everybody* knows how concerned I am about democracy. By the way, how do you like my Bobby Dylan T-shirt? I had it specially made for Slane Castle. Dick Spring needn't think that he'll upstage me!'

The Bookshop

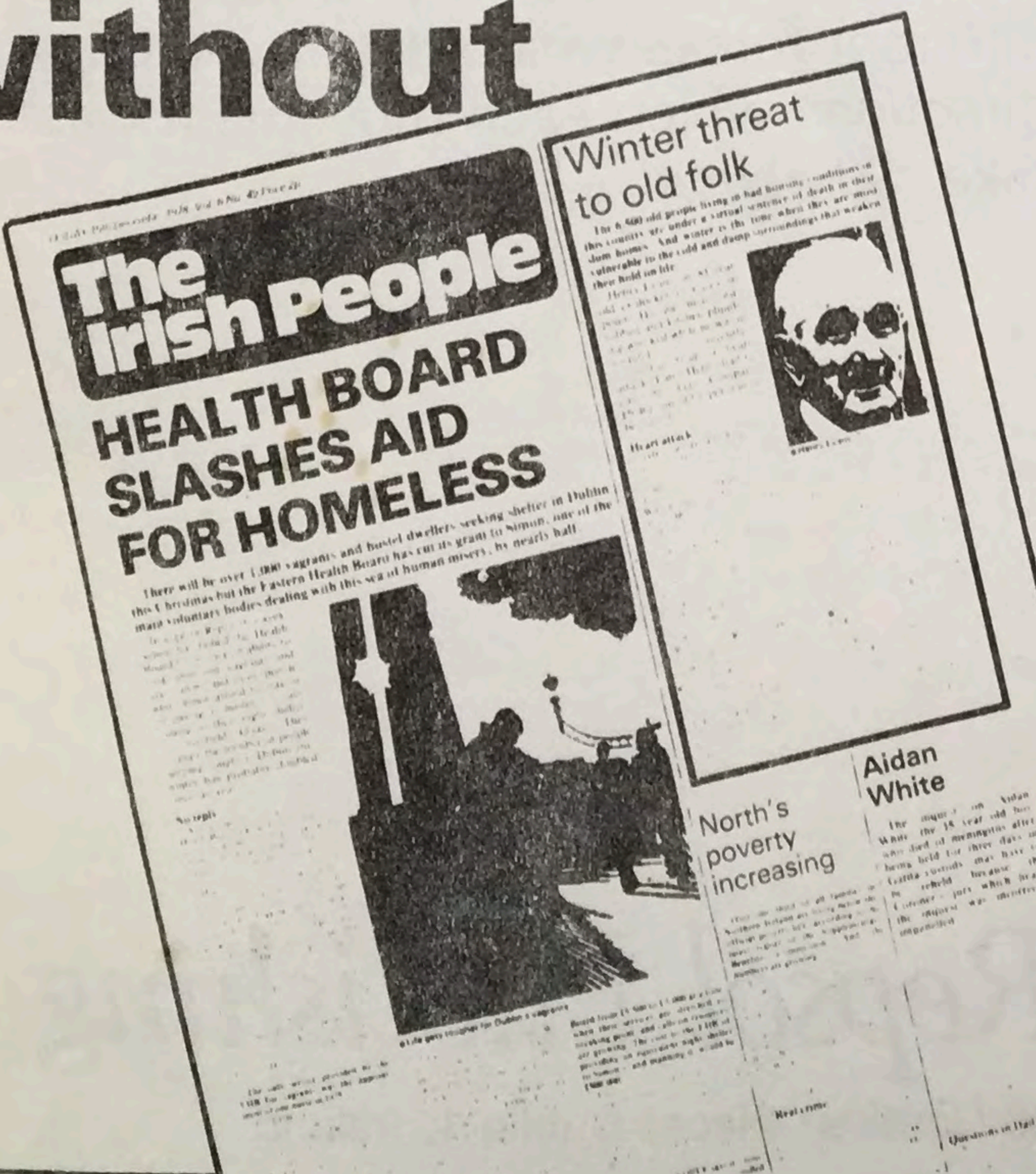


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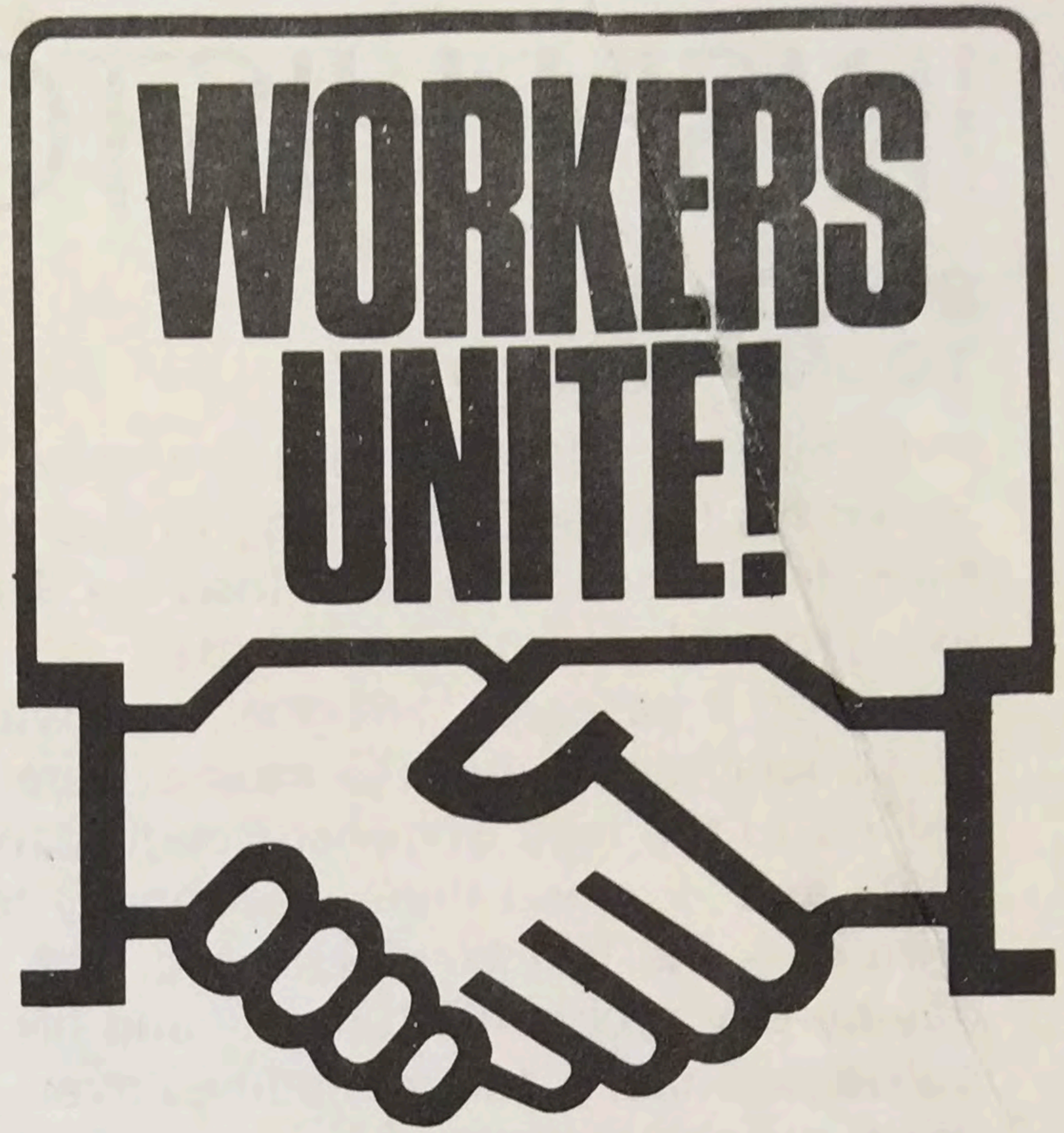


The Irish People
HEALTH BOARD SLASHES AID FOR HOMELESS

Winter threat to old folk

North's poverty increasing

Aidan White



THE OBJECTIVE of The Workers' Party is to win the political support of the Irish working class and ultimately to lead the working class to state power.

Our party will never be content with a society in which the rich and privileged, the landlords and speculators tell us how to live our lives, determine the future of our children, and dictate the narrow boundaries within which hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens are to exist.

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IRISH HISTORY IN PRINT

Sean Cronin **YOUNG CONNOLLY**

In Dublin from 1896 to 1903 Connolly tested his theories by seeking to apply them to the actual facts of Irish life. His experiment has not received the attention it deserves. His goal, as always was social revolution. His means were limited to the Irish Socialist Republican Party and — when there was money to print it — the *Workers' Republic*. The day-by-day problems Connolly and his colleagues faced and sometimes overcame are the subject of this short study.

'Essential reading for anyone wishing to understand Irish socialism and republicanism... a very honest book.'

Sunday Press

'A short and attractive study of Connolly's first phase in Irish politics.'

Irish Independent

'This fine book is one to be read, thought about and read again.' **Irish Times**

Paperback; £2.40

V.I. Lenin **THE IRISH QUESTION**

The Irish question is still very much an important part of European politics. Any serious effort to understand its modern dimensions will be helped considerably by reading this selection from Lenin. In particular, his ability to cut through the nationalist smokescreen of the period 1913—1916 and identify the interests of the Irish working class, is an important corrective to any suggestion that what is happening in Ireland today will be of future benefit to that class. The present trend of right-wing nationalism and terrorism threatens to bring about fascism rather than a society governed by the principles of peace, democracy and socialism. *90 pence*

James Connolly **WORKSHOP TALKS**

Workshop Talks was first published in America in 1909.

The author, James Connolly, was a Marxist, Socialist revolutionary, trade union organiser, writer and military commander of Ireland's first worker militia — the Citizen Army. Connolly was executed following the 1916 Rebellion.

Workshop Talks is unlike Connolly's other writings. It is no exaggeration to state that while it is a political tract, it contains elements which prefigure the lyricism, humanism and ironic humour of the great Soviet revolutionary poet Vladimir Mayakovsky. *90 pence*

John de Courcy Ireland **IRELAND'S REVOLUTIONARY TRADITION**

Dr John de Courcy Ireland, a noted Irish historian and one of Europe's foremost authorities on maritime affairs, delivered this lecture in Co. Cavan in 1971.

In it he traces the contradictory aspects of the Irish revolutionary movement in the 19th and early 20th centuries, both in national and international terms. Dr Ireland demonstrates a thorough grasp of the different forces which determined the directions which each movement was to take. *90 pence*

Repsol Publishing

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