

COALITION WITH FIANNA FAIL.

## LABOUR SELL OUT!

In 24 elections since the civil war, only 7 have resulted in a single party majority. Most often it has been the Labour party that has bailed out the capitalist parties by supporting one or other of them in "the national interest".

With sickening regularity workers have rallied around Labour to strike a blow against FF and FG, only to become disillusioned by the self-seeking Labour and trade union leaders. The cycle usually continues with workers then abandoning Labour in the following election only to be lured later by the con of a Labour working-class party.

Since recovering from the 82-87 coalition, Labour has enjoyed the enormous advantage of a government wrecked by scandals (GreenCore, Goodman, etc.). Spring spoke out against a lot of them, enhancing his image as an honest broker with clean hands.

While FF boasted about its economic triumphs the working class and other oppressed groups were further hammered to the floor. As unemployment took centre-stage in the election, attention turned to Labour and their promises.

Spring has long prepared for coalition. Back in 1989, he cleverly crushed anti-coalitionists in the Labour party in order to pave a path on his road to power. Longstanding political objectives of the party, such as nationalisation of the banks, the democratic control and ownership of industry, and a 32 county workers republic were scrapped. In anti-democratic form, he neutralised the control of the leadership by the conference.

To push forward his right reform, and make Labour more attractive to the bosses, the Militant tendency had to be axed. Other Left wing elements like Stagg and Higgins had to be cushioned reasonably harmless, yet public positions, namely

Higgins as Minister of Heritage/ Communications.

Labour's reformism is now being shown in its full 'glory' in the coalition with FF. Labour's election manifesto had been based around such platitudes as creating "a more caring society" and putting "justice into economics and trust into politics". Can Labour, the so-called working class party, expect us to believe that capitalist economics can be just and that a capitalist political system can be trusted?

Labour's objectives, as paltry as they are, will now be at the mercy of the Department of Finance. In this regard, the Maastricht treaty is the major force in determining new policy. Much has been made of the £8bn from the EC, but this pales into insignificance when we look at the realities of Maastricht convergence. The budget deficit cannot exceed 3%, a stipulation which puts severe limits on borrowing. The ratio of national debt to GDP, presently 99.8%, must be reduced to 60% by 1996. These

restrictions imposed by the leading EC powers mean that Labour will have its hands tied and will be unable to deliver on even their most basic promises.

Indeed, the promises made by the Lab/FF government in its programme are very basic. The jobs fund of £250m is merely a token gesture when put in the context of the latest unemployment figures of 300,000 plus. The promise of 30,000 new jobs p.a. being phased in by 1997, with an initial 21,200 jobs next year, is a sham because the Social Employment Scheme, which offered part-time work to 15,000 adults last year, is being abolished.

Paltry increases in child benefits, local authority housing and disability funds as well as a token attempt at reducing hospital waiting lists will come nowhere near meeting the needs of hundreds of thousands of people. Divorce and the decriminalisation of homosexuality have also been put on the agenda, but even if these gains are made, we would only be catching up with the most backward of Liberal states in Europe.

So, what then is Labour doing in the basic areas of jobs, housing



# IMPERIALIST POLICE!

International



The media presents an image of the UN as a champion of law and order, "keeping the peace" in all the trouble spots of the world. We see blue berets "keeping warring factions apart" from the Balkans to the Middle East, from Indochina to Africa. All of this serves to sustain the myth that the UN is a force for peace, ushering in a stable "new world order". Nothing could be further from the truth.

Not once since its foundation has the UN opposed the interests of imperialism.

For example the UN did nothing when the Zionist state was being set up over the heads of Palestinians thrown out of their country. Nor did the UN act when the Vietnamese were being napalmed by the US during the Vietnam war. It did nothing when Israel invaded the Lebanon, nor when the US invaded Granada and Panama. Recent images of Israeli soldiers breaking the legs of Palestinian youths evoked no UN response.

## Talking Shop

The United Nations consists of the Security Council and a General Assembly, which is little more than a talking shop.

Within the 15 member Security Council real power lies with the 5 permanent members - UK, US, France, Russia and China. Each of these has the power to veto anything they oppose.

Ten temporary members are voted in every two years. If the five permanent members agree on something there is never any real difficulty in getting four votes to make up the nine needed to carry a motion.

## War Against Iraq

Two years ago when the US wanted the Security Council to vote for war against Iraq, US Secretary of State - Baker - went on a globe-trotting tour with only one purpose in mind i.e. to use any means necessary to twist the arms of at least four of the ten temporary member states to vote for war. Arm twisting methods included economic and political blackmail. The UN is not an independent, neutral and just peacekeeper, nor is it the voice of the world community. Indeed in a world where a handful of powerful states dominate the rest, there *cannot* be a democratic "world community".

Far from being the impartial instrument of the international community, the UN is a prop of imperialism, a global system of economic slavery, hunger and bloody war.

## CONTINUED...

and health? All they are doing is throwing insulting tokens at the hundreds of thousands of unemployed, sick, poverty-stricken and homeless in Ireland.

Coalition is a total betrayal of workers. To ask them to rely in any way upon the mechanisms of the bosses is to trample on independent working class politics. Coalition verifies the Labour party as a middle-class workers party, capitalist in programme and leadership, but voted for and funded by workers.

The following demands must be made. Failure to meet them will show Labour in their true colours as a party that is committed to reforming little bits of capitalism to fool the masses, but never challenging it or leading workers to overthrow it.

### Demand:

- A 35 hour week without loss of pay as part of a European wide struggle.
- Vast schemes of useful public works through direct labour at union rates under workers control.
- Strike action to stop and reverse the cuts and to end redundancies.

A fight around any or all of these demands must have as its focal point the call for 'Labour out of Coalition'. The realities of this betrayal will soon be exposed as Labour continues to work to create not 'a more caring society', but a society that couldn't care less!

# OCCUPATION at TCD

In the last issue of Fightback, the shameful problem of overcrowding and lack of facilities in UCG was highlighted.

Recently, the same issue has come to prominence on a national scale due to the action of Trinity College students.

The student occupation at TCD, which lasted for three weeks succeeded in winning several gains for the students before it was called off on Feb 15th. The occupation was against overcrowding, lack of library space and access to books, shortage of computer terminals and locker spaces and a bad and worsening staff student ratio.

As the long occupation was called off the TCD bosses gave commitments to longer opening hours for the library and to re-opening the 1937 library for student use.

Much more could have been won if the occupation had become more massive and if the delegations sent to other colleges had insisted on addressing general meetings of students rather than just talking with the full time officers.

Nevertheless the gains won, though small, show that militancy pays and that the tactic of mass occupation can force concessions. Students at UCG and RTC and in other colleges, North and South, should take a page from TCD's book and OCCUPY NOW!

And TCD students need to keep up the pressure by organising weekly general meetings to hold the TCD management to their promises. This will also be the surest way to ensure that TCD reaffiliates immediately to USI.

# PAPER SOCIALISM?

Last term the Irish Worker's Group took a lead in fighting to get abortion action groups in RTC and UCG to adopt the slogan of free and legal abortion in demand.

We argued that it should always be the woman's unconditional right to choose to end an unwanted pregnancy. We argued also that abortion should be made fully available free on the national health service here.

However we did not lay this down as an ultimatum. We were willing to fight alongside students who took any serious step towards this position, while persuading them in the course of struggle of the necessity of this demand.

Unfortunately the Socialist Workers Movement, rather than give a lead, acted in the RTC as a drag on the action committee. Despite the fact that a growing number of students became convinced of the need to fight for free and legal abortion on demand, SWM blocked with the more conservative students and argued *against* this, on the grounds that this demand was too extreme and that the students weren't ready for it.

The IWG challenged the SWM as to whose duty it is, if not revolutionary socialists, to make students ready for the slogan of 'free and legal abortion on demand'. Their excuse for their refusal to lead was that most of the RTC students came from rural areas and therefore couldn't be won to it. Such an argument was demonstrated to be

completely wrongheaded, when an IWG working woman from outside the college addressed a general assembly of RTC students and got applause from a sizable minority for arguing the free abortion on demand slogan.

In UCG SWM played the same passive role leaving IWG students to fight for the free and legal abortion demand on their own.

So what *was* the SWM willing to fight for?

Goretti Horgan, at an SWM meeting in November, argued that we should restrict ourselves to fighting for No Yes Yes in the referendum. No one, including the IWG, denied the importance of rallying the maximum possible vote for No Yes Yes. But should socialists restrict themselves to this lowest common denominator? Wasn't a restriction to this single demand in the referendum a sell out on the thousands of women who are banished to Britain every year to get abortions? Horgan could only evade this awkward question.

Strangely, we find her arguing for

free abortion on demand in the pages of Socialist Worker. Is it that this correct position is only suitable for the pages of Socialist Worker but too advanced for the masses of UCG, RTC, or for city public meetings?

SWM leaders are not revolutionary Marxists but centrists who suffer from the political disease of hovering in the centre between abstract revolutionary phrasemongering and opportunist practice. They reject theory as a guide to action and constantly zig zag on principles. In a nutshell they act as the tail of every struggle.

To the scores of very fine militants in the Socialist Workers Movement who are searching for a revolutionary socialist way forward we say join us in joint action and frank and fraternal debate with your leaders on all key issues facing revolutionaries.

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IRISH WORKERS GROUP/  
FIGHTBACK

Students Meeting on

'The Rise of  
neo-Fascism  
in Europe'

WEDNESDAY 10th MARCH

1.10 pm

VENUE: see noticeboard

**ALL WELCOME!**



"IF YOU'RE NOT DYING, YOU DON'T NEED ONE!  
IF YOU'RE NOT SUICIDAL, YOU CAN'T HAVE ONE!  
IF YOU HAVE TO ASK HOW MUCH, YOU CAN'T

# NAZI TERROR GROWS!

A wave of Nazi killings and violence is sweeping through Germany. In one month alone, last year, almost 500 attacks were reported. Immigrants from Turkey, Vietnam and eastern Europe have borne the brunt of this racist terror. The fascists are operating on fertile ground.

The recession and, in particular, the effects of the restoration of capitalism in the East, have led to widespread disenchantment and despair amongst sections of working-class youth and the middle-class.

In former East Germany traditional industries have collapsed, leading to high unemployment. Gross domestic product has slumped by 45% in the last two years. Young people can see that the new Germany they were promised after the wall came down is in reality a nation of bad-housing, joblessness and hopelessness - a system without a future. The collapse of East German Stalinism has led to the emergence of strong nationalist feelings across Germany as people search for a new and distinct identity. The Nazis have cashed in on the prevalent mood of confusion and disillusionment to offer an illusory way out, through racist terror, national self-aggrandisement and the brutal anti-working class

traditions of the Third Reich.

Recent polls show an alarming level of support for extreme right-wing parties in Germany - more than 10% of the electorate nationally. In the regions of Baden-Wurtemberg and Schleswig-Holstein, the fascist parties are the third largest and hold seats in local government. Across Germany the rise of racism creates conditions in which the fascist killers can be tolerated, even admired, by passive observers. For the major democratic parties most concern is for the damage being done to Germany's image. The victimisation and terror of asylum-seekers has been widely treated as of secondary importance to the German 'dilemma' of how to cope with the immigrant 'burden'. Restrictions on access to the country for refugees are routinely proposed by politicians (in fact only about 5% of the world's refugees appear each year in Western Europe as asylum seekers). By defining the problem as the nuisance value to

German society, rather than the violation of human rights, a 'solution' which is itself racist is deemed acceptable by mainstream politicians. In other words they argue that to stop fascism you have to give in to it!

There is however a real way to stop the Nazis - through working class action. Germany's trade union movement is the largest in Europe. If their leaders chose to act in unison, the DGB union federation, the Social Democrats, the East German Party of Democratic Socialism and the thousands of revolutionary and anarchist youth could scatter the Nazis to the four winds. Since the police have already proved more willing to attack anti-fascist demonstrations than actually stopping the fascists themselves, the solution obviously does not lie within the confines of legality. The German labour movement must build anti-fascist defence squads to defend immigrants and the left, and move swiftly onto the offensive against the very existence of the Nazi organisations. The need for a workers united front against fascism in Germany, committed to physically smashing the fascists, without reliance on state bans, is urgent.

## Letters

Write to:  
S.Keane,  
Ugbool,  
Moycullen.

Dear Fightback,  
I would like to point out to readers the problems faced by a student having to work in order to continue with his/her education. More and more students are forced to work during the college year as fees and the cost of living increase. This is a major concern as a job will provide a less reliable income to a student than a regular grant and will leave the student in a prime position for exploitation. Employers know that students need work and many will thus

offer low wages, poor working conditions, and also possibly harrass students. Any working student will need to clock up at least 20 hours per week in order to guarantee a reasonable income. This means much less time for study, and means that the weekends will be taken up, a major problem when it comes to exam times. Students are often given the most unreasonable hours to work, as in restaurants which can have them working well into the early hours. Holidays and visits home are also curtailed by the need to work. Where students with grants would be able to go home on holiday time, working students will have to stay on at work or else they could lose their jobs. It's not right that students

should be placed in the clutches of greedy bosses in order to obtain an education.

A working Student.

**FB** The fact that students have to work in order to survive their years of education is disgraceful. Having to work means not having enough time to study and socialise/expand your horizons. What is needed is the demand for free education for everyone obtaining a college place. A full living grant, equal to the average industrial wage, must be made available to everyone, regardless of parental income. Means testing cannot be allowed as it ties certain students financially to their parents. These financial ties mean greater parental control.

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