



# the PLOUGH

TOWARDS AN IRISH WORKERS REPUBLIC

PAPER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST GROUP

Volume 2 No. 16

Calls for peace and reports of "peace" meetings have filled the front pages of the Press in recent weeks. The clerics took to the streets to lead demonstrations for this "peace" with renewed vigour during the Provisional ceasefire.

But these calls not only fly in the face of the realities of the situation in the North, they may prove actually harmful for the future of the Catholic population of the six counties.

The lack of reality in "peace" movements is nothing new. In 1971 an organisation calling itself "Women Together" became the darling of the British and pro-British press and its middle class leader Monica Patterson found her genteel calls for women to oppose "violence" much quoted. But the women of the Bogside and Andersonstown who were faced with the everyday violence of the British Army confronted these merchants of utopia with realism when Women Together tried to hold meetings in the ghettos. The local women's response was not as polite as Mrs. Patterson.

Following the loyalist strike last year, UWC leader Harry Murray left that organisation and joined a then newly formed peace group "People Together". It was not an inexplicable turn. Satisfied that the strike had saved the Northern statelet from sinking into the grey mists of an Irish Republic he was quite happy to talk of peace for it was now on his, loyalist ascendancy terms.

And the reaction of the Loyalists to the ceasefire was highly significant. Harry West of the Official Unionist Party and the UUUC set the style with his immediate comment that no one should be taken in with "fancy words and empty gestures". The IRA needed a breathing space echoed Craig and Paisley. The leaders of the UUUC, who by the vote at the October election represent over two thirds of unionist voters, rejected the cease-fire as an opening for any possible peace. The only "peace" they will accept is on their terms, with the political and, if necessary, physical crushing of the anti-unionist population of the North and the restoration of a Stormont type regime based on discrimination and repression.

This is the potentially fatal danger of the peace campaigns, the failure to recognise the unmistakable progress towards a hand over of the North to the Loyalists, and with it the failure to combat that threat.

The peace marchers obscure these fundamental facts. Anti-imperialists must be clear in their response. The "Peace with Justice" slogans of Provisional Sinn Fein mobilisations have been open to misinterpretation precisely because they fail to put the demand in the context of the actual Northern situation at its present stage.

## THERE CAN

## BE NO

## SOLUTION

## WITH



But "People Together" also collapsed and for some time the "peace" movement existed only as the occasional church-led meeting attended by a handful of unrealistic stalwarts.

The fact that Peace marches are now, particularly in Dublin, able to bring out large numbers does not make their approach to the actual situation in the North any more realistic.

"The people of the North all want peace" has become a popular catchphrase among politicians from Brian Faulkner to the Leinster House Parties. But do they? Undoubtedly the Catholic people of the North after five years of repression at the hands of loyalist assassins and the British Army long for peace. But there are other elements.

British Army officers quickly made their attitude to the ceasefire clear. They condemned it as a trick by the Provisionals. And Merlyn Rees continued to sign internment orders during the ceasefire itself, while making limited, highly publicised releases.

To talk thus of "peace" while ignoring reality is not to give service to a war wearied Northern Catholic population, but to offer illusions which obscure threats to their very existence.

The peace marchers are calling for is that of the British Army, RUC, British Government and Unionists. All have portrayed themselves as "peacemakers" at one time or another. Of course they have also reasoned, if a few rebellious Catholics who demand civil rights and thereby refute the right of loyalists and British Imperialism to control the North, have to be harassed, interned or murdered, that is unfortunate. But, after all, that would be in the interests of peace for the British and loyalist regime.

There is no short cut to lasting peace for the Irish working class. While the Northern state exists, inevitably based on loyalist sectarian privilege and anti-Catholic discrimination.

The subsidiary slogans calling for an end of internment and for British withdrawal have been turned upside down by the British propaganda machine, when it states the concentration camps would close and the British Army's numbers in the North reduced with an end to violence.

It is not by anti-imperialists coming to terms with the calls for a false peace or attempting to use the calls that a solution in the interests of the Irish working class will be found. There must be absolute clarity. Only by facing up to the sweep towards loyalist take over and the necessity of organising the mass defence by the anti-unionists of the North can this be done. The anti-imperialist answer to the peace calls is clear: The violence of partition and the Northern state precludes any peace for the working class; the anti-unionist working class must prepare for its own self-defence against loyalist take-over.

## WORKERS

## FACE

## WAGES

## ATTACK

The time has again come round to the discussion between the I.C.T.U. and the F.U.E. about a new National Wage Agreement. Many thousands of workers are due to finish the 3rd N.W.A. in March and are beginning to consider the possibilities of yet another N.W.A.

men and employers; the resilience of the workers built up in struggle over the last year. What results can workers expect from the Employer-Labour Conference.

relations.  
to lay down some basic rules for industrial  
It is quite obvious that the whole thrust of the Government and Employers is towards a much tighter arrangement — more of a social contract.

Vague unclear sentiments, plus a willingness to accommodate the employers in solving problems not of the workers making, are nothing but a substitute for leadership on the part of the trade union bureaucrats.

But many important factors have to be re-assessed; the rate of inflation; the "liquidity" problems facing the business

On the one hand, in the recent report from the C.I.I. Conference, the labour movement is issued with threats on the problems of the recession. "There can be no justification at all for the hands off trade unions attitude so loudly heard when governments feel the need

And the compliance of the trade union bureaucracy will do little to sharpen the teeth of the working class "The protection of jobs is now the supreme task and all other economic problems must be subordinated to a solution to the unemployment problem".

Workers must be prepared to fend off all the moralist propaganda being unleashed at them, as they begin to struggle for a right to work, for a decent living wage. The problems of the capitalists must not be dumped on our back.

By all accounts an up swing in the international economic situation is expected at the end of this year. Given that Irish industry is increasingly export orientated, the government and employers are anxious to keep the economy ticking over till then so that advantage can be taken of the earliest opportunities offered by a revival of the world markets. A serious worsening of the recession here in Ireland would mean that valuable time will be lost in revamping the economy while in the meantime other competitors will have seized potential markets.

But the problem of keeping the economy on its feet in the next few months will be a difficult one. The politicians and businessmen have put their necks in a noose of their own making. In order to keep industry competitive their strategy has been to minimise wage increases. To achieve this objective they have had to make some gesture at curbing prices. Although the fruits of this latter policy have been negligible as far as workers living standards are concerned, it has had a crippling effect on many sections of industry. Since 1967 for example, it has been a generally established procedure that goods must be sold at prices which cover the cost of producing them. Of course, in the meantime inflation drives up the prices of raw materials etc. By the time the employer actually sells his goods he finds that the proportion of the selling price he had originally marked off to replenish his raw materials and other inputs is now not sufficient. He is therefore faced with a "liquidity crisis", i.e. a lack of cash.

This crisis could be overcome by eating into profits but that would be against the whole logic of capitalism. The only alternative is to borrow money. This the employers have already been doing to the tune of £75-£100 million last year. But in the long run such a course offers no solution because it increases inflation even more (by increasing the circulation of money faster than output) plus the fact that the borrowed money must be paid back sometime.

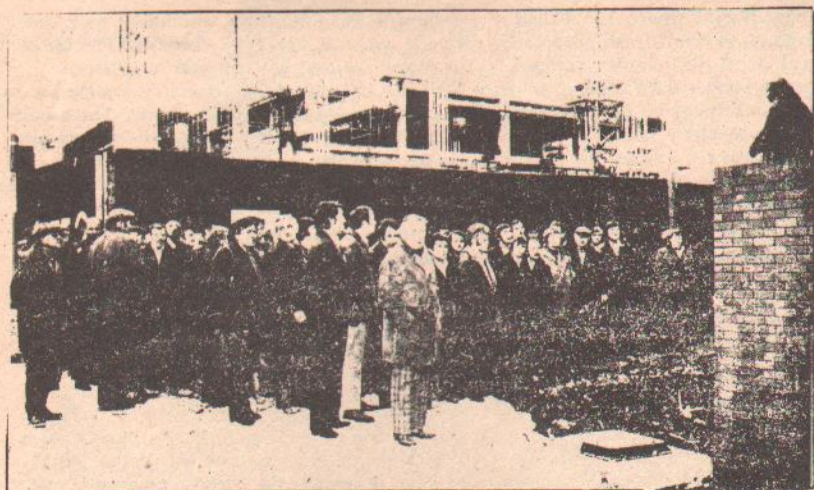
#### The Budget

The "liquidity crisis" of Irish industry is now reaching a stage where something drastic must be done to alleviate it. The January Budget offers an interesting clue as to how the government and employers intend to go about doing this. Initially it was expected that the Minister for Finance would introduce an unprecedented expansionary budget and that this would permit measures

#### S.P.S. Lays off Galway Workers

*Standard Press Steel Ltd., Mervue, Co. Galway, which employs approx 100 people has placed its workers on a three day week from mid December and made 11 workers redundant. So what's new? You might ask, in this time of world wide economic recession when multi-national corporations are closing down their outlying branches in an effort to economise on costs, while throwing thousands of workers out of their jobs.*

However, the case of S.P.S. Galway has some variations on this theme, since what has occurred there, was likely to happen at any time since the factory was set up. To see why this is so, we must go back to the arrival in 1960 of S.P.S. International to the Industrial Estate, Shannon, Co. Clare. It seems that this American Corporation came to save the natives from themselves by ensuring by every means that the 400 S.P.S. workers at Shannon remained unorganised for 14 years-but that is another story. The main business of the Shannon plant is making screws for the export market, while an increasingly important section is taken up in making machine tools for the Corporation's factories in Germany, Britain, the US and the plant in Galway and some outside customers.



#### Galway Factory Opens with no Job - Security

It is normal practice for companies in the bolt-manufacturing industry to be in a position to provide its customers with nuts if so needed. In 1966 S.P.S. decided to improve its competitive-

## the budget

to increase the amount of cash available to industry. In the event, the budget was only moderately expansionary (many economists thought that the Minister for Finance should have borrowed twice as much as he did to increase spending). The alleviation of the "liquidity crisis" was even less dramatic with the provision of £12 million in the form of tax concessions. And this concession was more than offset by an increase of £19 million in the employers contribution to social welfare benefits.

The governments decision not to make cash directly available to industry can only be interpreted to mean that they and the employers intend to solve the liquidity crisis by a three pronged attack on the working class which would involve 1) more severe wage restraint; 2) relaxation of price control 3) further unemployment.

#### New attacks

The framework for keeping down wages is already in existence in the form of the national wage agreements which may be developed into a more comprehensive "social-contract". The employers are determined to use this framework more



ness in the bolt market by doing just this. Even though it would mean selling nuts at cost price, the improvement in bolt sales brought about by this convenient service to its customers would make this a profitable venture indeed. Then in what might appear to be a great bungle by a management "dedicated" to looking after its workers it set up a plant for the sole purpose of manufacturing nuts - S.P.S., Mervue, Co. Galway - a completely instable industry which gave its workers no job security. Could it be that the company was more interested in the I.D.A. grant for a new factory? Unthinkable, you might say, but even allowing their falling for this temptation for just a moment, the jobs in Galway could have been made some way secure with just a little cost and slight inconvenience. It would seem that the natural thing to have done would have been to transfer some of the bolt making machines (which make a product for which the Corporation has secured a fairly guaranteed market) to Galway from Shannon and place some of the new Nutmakers in Shannon thereby giving a better balance to the Galway plant. Because this wasn't done, we now have the contradictory situations of S.P.S. making workers redundant in Galway while they enlarge the workforce at their Shannon plant. The Company claim that due to cut throat competition on the world nut market, they are encountering difficulties marketing their product.

## RYANS NEXT PHASE



effectively than in previous years. In both its Autumn and Winter reports the Central Bank has warned that wages must be kept below the rise in cost of living i.e. that there must be a cut in real wages. And the 'Irish Times' reporting on the decision of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to open talks for a new national wage agreement, commented:

"The employers are not as keen on another national agreement as they were in the negotiations preceding those of 1970, and 1974. They have found that the current agreement is more costly than they had anticipated. . ."

In addition to the growing intransigence on the wages front there are definite moves afoot to weaken price controls. About six months ago when reports of this were "leaked" to the Press there was such an out-cry that the government had to retreat. But now the employers and the government are again mentioning the need for price relaxation and this time Donal Nevin, the I.C.T.U. economist and member of the National Prices Commission has publicly accepted the need for such relaxation. The impact that such a move will have on workers' living standards

can be judged from the fact that the National Prices Commission estimates that last year, it save the consumer about £30 million. Put another way this means that it stopped the consumer price index from jumping at least another 5%. So while it is obvious that the N.P.C. isn't very effective in stopping inflation any relaxation in price control will result in consumer prices shooting forward still more.

Finally to offset any detrimental effects that further inflation could have on profits (though not on the consumer!) the government and employers intend to allow unemployment increase to at least the 10% mark. This is having and will continue to have, the effect of reducing the "volume of demand" in the economy i.e. the amount of wages available to buy things. By this it is hoped to reduce imports, improve the balance of payments situation and minimise inflation which is mostly introduced from outside. In accordance with this plan the budget deficit for 1975 was only £60 million whereas economics professor Martin O'Donoghue, in the 'Irish Times' (16th of January) estimated that a deficit of up to £120 million would have been necessary to expand industrial production sufficiently to begin reducing unemployment.

Under these conditions, another national wage agreement would be detrimental to the interests of workers. What is needed instead is an independent trade union campaign for substantial increases in real wages, safeguarded by a sliding scale of wages, to fight inflation, rank and file consumer protection committees to control prices through militant action; and a campaign to reduce working hours without loss of pay, and provide a project of useful public works at nominal rates of pay, to reduce unemployment.

## SHANNON WORKERS V MULTINATIONAL

argument that the Galway plant cannot be run at a loss. They see the Galway plant in isolation. In the short term, the workers of both Galway & Shannon must demand that their Union (I.T.G.W.U.) put pressure on the Co. to subsidise its Galway operation from the huge profits made from its Shannon plant. This pressure should be brought to bear through the Union's branches at Shannon & Galway, its international connections and especially through its Transport workers. S.P.S. depends as do nearly all the companies on the Shannon Industrial Estate, on organised transport labour to move its goods. The Union's threats to black all S.P.S. goods was the decisive factor in the recent successful fight by the Shannon workers in S.P.S. for union recognition.

#### Workers Unity - Key To Success

The T.U. officialdom has shown its complete disregard for workers' interests. This can be witnessed all over the country as more and more factories close down with no attempt being made by the union bureaucracy to protect these jobs. In a number of cases the workers have given the lead to their fellow workers threatened by redundancy, in occupying their factories and seizing the stocks. Unfortunately, this has ended in isolation of those involved in a number of cases, notably the Danus Occupation in Limerick. The reason for this being the complete unwillingness and failure of the T.U.

hierarchy to lend support to these struggles by organising solidarity and support. The majority of redundancy notices come to workers who are completely unaware of such a situation of crisis existing within the industry they work in and as well as this a lot of firms will use and have used the present economic recession to carry out long threatened rationalisation plans. To combat this and to safeguard workers' jobs, the Union should demand that the books be opened to the workers to enable them to see how secure their job actually is.

If this had been done in S.P.S. in Galway the Workers would have been forewarned and could therefore have prepared to fight the lay offs and short time. As it is, the Galway plant is in danger of being phased out completely. To ensure that this does not happen, the Galway workers need the support of their fellow-workers in Shannon. To put this in concrete terms, the workers of both plants should set up a liaison committee to fight redundancies. It was management who deliberately set up an instable industry in Galway and they did this with the connivance of the I.D.A. and the T.U. Officials. S.P.S. must now be forced to give some kind of balance and stability to the Galway factory by diversifying the production there i.e. making bolts as well as nuts. Why this was not insisted upon in the beginning is just another example of the few qualifications demanded by the I.D.A., when handing out grants to industrialists.

Joe McGuinness.

#### Union Bureaucracy Refuse To Fight

As in similar situations all over the country, the Trade Union officials seem to be all too willing to understand the Company's difficulties. Being completely imbued with the ideology of Private Enterprise, they accept the Corporation's

# Right -wingers Unite against Truce

## RIGHT-WING FORCES UNITE AGAINST THE TRUCE

The ruling classes in Ireland and Britain hesitated in the face of the Provo ceasefire moves. But a right-wing offensive within these ruling classes has directed their response onto a firmer 'no concessions' line than might at first have been expected. Elements in the North, in the South and in Britain have found common cause against a peace that would give any political advantage to the Provos.

The right wing was at first on the defensive. The editor of the Daily Telegraph William Deedes, speaking on British T.V. appeared painfully conscious that his insistence that there should be no talks with the IRA would find little response in a British public that lacks confidence in its government's role in Ireland.

The Unionists, for the most part, played it cautiously, aware that the rules of the 'Peace' game had been altered; only the apoplectic Paisley was caught in the offside trap. And in Dublin Conor Cruise O'Brien was held in check by his team-mates, who waited in anxious silence as they nursed their wounded pride.



### New initiative by Right Wing

But on January 5th the Sunday World revealed the existence of a behind-the-scenes campaign to break the truce politically. Although it did not name names, the report gave the main details of the right-wing grouping that was already playing a leading role in influencing the actions of the Dublin and Westminster governments.

The line-up included "two serving generals" in the British Army and "a former senior army officer who signed himself out of a hospital to take part in the campaign. Another is a prominent English Catholic M.P."

The retired officer is Brigadier Thompson, who was recently injured when his helicopter was shot down by Left-wing guerrillas in the Yemen (see The Collaborators). The Sunday World mentions that "the cabal have held at least one of its meetings in the board room of a Fleet Street newspaper". Brigadier Thompson is a defence correspondent for the Daily Telegraph. The English Catholic M.P. is right-wing Tory, Biggs-Davidson; and one of the "two serving generals" is General Sir Peter Hunt.

### Significance of Francis Green's assassination

An important piece in the jigsaw of the right-wing offensive was the assassination of Francis Green by a special task force of the British Army (possibly with personnel from both the SAS and the UDR).

By the very nature of their operations, which are more consciously political — that is, counter-revolutionary — than the operations of the regular army, the SAS have close links with the most right-wing elements in the B.A.'s top brass. To suggest, as at least one Irish newspaper did, that the task force involved would have been unaware of the political significance of their action in relation to the ceasefire is clearly ridiculous.

### Parallel with moves during UWC Strike?

The right-wing line-up against the ceasefire shared some of the features of events around the Ulster Workers Council strike. Then, a speech by British P.M., Harold Wilson, announcing that the army would smash the Loyalist strike, was vetoed by General Sir Frank King. Order to dismantle UDA barricades were neutralised by a British Army 'work-to-rule' policy of standing by while barricades were rebuilt a few yards away.

### The response of the minority

In their response to the ceasefire, the British government have refused to be moved from the central objectives of their post-Sunningdale strategy. The political lesson of the UWC strike was abundantly clear; and only the mass mobilisation of the oppressed minority can alter the political balance of forces away from the process of rebuilding a Stormont-type regime.

This places the Provos in a dangerously isolated position. While there is no doubting the conviction of Provo rank-and-filers that what they are fighting for is the Workers'

Republic, they exist within a movement whose leadership is incapable of developing a revolutionary programme for winning the historic aims of Republicanism. Lacking a revolutionary programme, the Provo leadership can only switch between the options of a reformist political policy which proposes to modify but not abolish capitalism, and an elitist military struggle which is increasingly alienated from the political objective of a 32-County Workers' Republic.

### Double standards

An important role in breaking the ceasefire was played by a top man at the Northern Ireland office, James Allan, whose attitude to the Protestant para-military groups is similar to that of the Army. As a UDA leader said: "He is on the phone to us so often, he is like a brother". Such a relationship contrasts sharply, of course, with the willingness of the British government to see the ceasefire collapse for lack of an effective link with the Provos.

The eagerness of the Dublin government to see the truce break down was embarrassing even to some of their own supporters. Naive Church leaders even issued a public rebuke. But as the offensive gathered momentum O'Brien no longer needed to threaten resignation. The Special Branch were given free rein not only to arrest any possible Provo negotiators they could get their hands on, but also to prevent meetings taking place by a policy of close observation and harassment. In addition to these measures, a provocation was launched at Portlaoise which continues with the hard-line response to the hunger strike.

In the height of the right-wing offensive, O'Brien represented the 'Irish dimension' (!) at the SDLP conference, while Fitt spoke explicitly on behalf of the British government; Paisley praised Rees and Allan chatted with the UDA. The right had united against the Provos.

### Only mass action will beat the Right

In the context of the crisis of perspectives in the anti-Unionist population and the disorientation and demoralisation which has deepened since the UWC strike, British imperialism and the SDLP see the opportunity to gain ground on certain crucial issues. Thus the most active intervention on the streets in the New Year was the movement of the RUC into areas they could not enter before the ceasefire. Both Rees and the SDLP are conscious of the importance of the issue of policing in the overall strategy of rebuilding Stormont, and they can be expected to concentrate much of their efforts around the question in the coming months.

And for revolutionaries the key initiatives will be to build resistance to the RUC. It will be vital both to denounce the SDLP surrender on policing and to engage actively in building the resistance. In this way, it will be possible to develop the idea of mass self-defence in a very practical way, and to begin to rebuild the combativity and confidence of the Catholic masses.

# COLLABOR -ATORS COL.

## Prospective Collaborator of the Month

Who is the latest applicant for membership of the SDLP?

Who stopped the Republican Labour Party going headlong with Gerry Fitt into the SDLP? Who was it, who after the McGurk's Bar bombing correctly fingered the British S.A.S. for their role in the bombing?

The answer, regrettably, to all three questions is the same. Paddy 'I wouldn't cross the road with Gerry Fitt' Kennedy, former Republican Labour Party MP at Stomont from Belfast Central.

Mr. Kennedy, who once described Gerry Fitt as somebody who "would sell his mother for 6d and then kneel down and thank God that he had a mother to sell", has now signed an application form to join the SDLP.

The scene of this conversion was not the road to Damascus but the main dining room of the Burlington Hotel just before Xmas.

A crumpled copy of Paddy's application was last seen in the left-hand pocket of Paddy Devlin. Where Gerry Fitt's hand was at the time is not known.

The price of Mr. Kennedy's conversion is believed to be the promise of an SDLP nomination for a Convention seat in an area adjacent to his former constituency.

Arch-collaborator Fitt is attempting to block the conversion, but providing the two Paddys can reach an amicable arrangement with Dessie Gillespie, Fitt's opposition will go the same way as his expectations of the Governor Generalship of Mauritius.

Or so I am told.

## THE OMAN CONNECTION

Recent reports in the British Daily Telegraph of the imminent victory of British forces over Arab forces makes strange reading when one considers that Brigadier Thomson, the Telegraph's defence correspondent has only just been released from the hospital to which he was admitted when his facility helicopter was shot down by Left-wing guerrillas within 30 miles of the Oman capital.

Watch out for more brilliant dispatches from the gallant Brigadier, announcing the imminent victory of the British Army in the Oman. These hospital bed dispatches are not unconnected with the dramatic decline in morale inside the British Army.

Cynics in London are comparing the Brigadier's dispatches with the London Times report of the 'Fall' of Sebastopol.

## THE GERMAN CONNECTION

What is the connection between traffic accidents and British Army morale?

Early last year, Roy Mason, British Minister for Defence, indicated that the "Horrific" scale of B.A. casualties in Ireland was destroying morale and hitting recruitment. About three-and-a-half thousand have been killed or wounded.

In March of last year, the Observer newspaper reported that British soldiers killed in action have been "flown back to Britain" in some cases listed as traffic fatalities.

Over the year there has been a great reduction in British Army casualty figures, and a mysterious increase in the number of soldiers killed in German road accidents.

An example of the faking of road accident figures was reported in a local German newspaper, the Westfälisches Volksblatt. After a road accident in heavy rain on the Autobahn between the town of Bielefeld and the British Army base at Heford, when an Army transport lorry overturned, the B.A. issued a statement claiming that 10 soldiers were seriously injured.

However, the local German Fire Brigade Unit which came to the scene, reported that a total of only 6 soldiers was involved.

## COLLABORATOR OF THE YEAR

The award for Collaborator of the Year must be shared this year, - between Gerry Fitt and Conor Cruise o'Brien.

Gerry Fitt has gone so far for so long that there can be no role for him outside of British politics. He is looking for the kind of reward that used to be reserved for Unionists.

Most of the details of the Cruiser's amazing meal of insults with certain press correspondents have appeared in one newspaper or another. Such as the toast: "To democracy and all the repressive legislation necessary to maintain it", and so on.

One detail I haven't seen reported anywhere was his constant reference to the Irish people as "my little people".

# Portlaoise Prisoners

## - STOP PRESS!

As we go to press, the prisoners on hunger strike in Portlaoise face "continuing silence from the Free State government to their demands. Today 1 of the hunger strikers have been removed to the Curragh military hospital; what will happen to them there has yet to be revealed. Cooney seems determined not to concede to any of the demands. The knowledge of the disgraceful conditions these men have endured is only now seeping through the media.

Republicans and socialists must mobilise in solidarity with these hunger strikers. As political prisoners they are in the front line of the repression of the Free State and British Imperialism.

SOLIDARITY WITH THE  
PORTLAOISE HUNGER-STRIKERS!

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**Could you describe how the split from the Official Sinn Fein, which led to the establishment of the Irish Republican Socialist Party, took place?**  
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I think, it's unfair to call it a 'split'. Although the majority of the people who originally formed the organisation were from the Officials, it wasn't a split in as much as issues were not raised inside the Officials in any concrete sense which enabled people to leave en masse over a particular issue.

What really happened essentially goes back to 1972. At that time, the reformist tendencies of the Officials really began to manifest themselves, and decisions taken at the Ard Fheis [conference] with respect to the struggle against imperialism and the national question were not in fact carried into effect by the leadership of the organisation. At the same time many other aspects of the struggle as they saw it, which had not been argued out or agreed to at an Ard Fheis, surreptitiously found their way into the movement. So many members of the Republican movement (of which I wasn't one) increasingly found it more difficult—and ultimately impossible—to continue to work inside the organisation. They left because there was no revolutionary alternative for them. They remained as independents, playing a supportive role for demonstrations, but unorganised and therefore ineffective in any real sense.

People like Seamus Costello and a number of others who did attempt to raise issues inside the Officials were expelled, generally on non-issues, so that again the political issues never came to the fore in the movement.

There were also people like myself, who had worked as independent socialists, supporting the various organisations and taking our own line, who felt we could never join an organisation because all the existing organisations divided on which was the more important—the national question or the class question. And you had a position where from 1972 the Officials, in an effort to bridge what they called the 'sectarian gap', more and more dealt in reformist policies of a working class nature: dealing with wages, or issues like the Ring Road

In order to make any progress on those questions they began playing down the national question. The people who would be involved on the ground in housing or employment issues to all intents and purposes pretended that they weren't Republicans, so as not to interfere with that level of progress.

On the other hand you had the main thrust of the direct anti-imperialist struggle being waged by the Provisionals, who, in an effort to produce the broadest possible anti-British struggle, completely abandoned any allegiance at all to the class question.

Many of us have felt for some time the need for an organisation which had the correct analysis as we saw it: that the national and the class question were *one and the same question*—that the only way to fight British imperialism was through the class struggle, and the only way to fight the class struggle was through the fight against British imperialism.

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**What will your immediate demands be?**  
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Our immediate demands are for an immediate declaration of intent by the British Government to withdraw militarily and politically from Irish affairs, and, having made that declaration, to then immediately set about taking their troops out—withdrawing them to barracks, taking them out of Ireland.

We also call for the immediate release of the internees and sentenced prisoners; an amnesty for all other persons convicted for playing their part in the anti-imperialist struggle; and an amnesty for all the people involved in the resistance struggle, whether that be people who are on the run, or people who are financially in debt because of the civil resistance rent-and-rates struggle.

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**In a sense these are very similar demands to those of the Provisionals. In what way will you bring what you see as the class element to the fore?**  
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The difference is not in the demands—there is no-one who would disagree with those demands—but in the effort to bring those demands onto the streets and involve people in the struggle for those demands. This is different from the Provisionals, who adopt a completely military point of view. They think that in

order to get the British out, all you have to do, essentially, is conduct an armed campaign, which does not involve the working class, although it may be done on their behalf.

In raising those demands, it's necessary for us to point out what we mean by the withdrawal of Britain. We don't simply mean that we don't see her—that she can simply withdraw the troops and continue economically and socially to dominate Irish affairs, both North and South. In raising that demand we've got to explain and organise people around what it *really* means: tell them what in fact the British involvement is in Ireland, in terms of government structure and in terms of industry, as well as its most obvious aspect, the repression and the military presence.

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**In what ways will you be seeking to force British withdrawal from the North of Ireland?**  
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The only way that we can effectively do it is by organising the working class. We are committed to a principled broad front of all the organisations involved in the anti-imperialist struggle. But we would not, for example, co-operate with organisations like the SDLP, because we feel that while they would raise the same demands they have entirely different implications for the members of the SDLP.

Where we would differ with many of the other organisations is that we are convinced that the only people who can make those demands *and* actively work towards them are the working class in independent action.

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**What does this mean in terms of your attitude towards the armed struggle?**  
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As we see it, the working class of Ireland are entitled to the ownership and control of Ireland. If repression by means of arms is used against us then, as we retain the right to self-determination, the right to our own country and the right to our own future, so we retain the right to fight for it. The working class has more right to armed struggle than our oppressors. We are not a pacifist organisation.

Our argument with the Provisionals is not that they conduct an armed struggle, but the manner in which they do it, the political

# An interview with Bernadette McAliskey of the newly-formed Irish Republican Socialist Party

'The British worker has got to understand the nature of the British military's role in Ireland. And in doing so, understand even more the nature of the class struggle in



'The national and the class question are one and the same question—the only way to fight British imperialism is through the class struggle, and the only way to fight the class struggle is through the fight against British imperialism.'

The formation of a new organisation, the Irish Republican Socialist Party, is an important development for the Irish revolutionary movement. Given their rejection of the Officials reformist path, and their declared commitment to link the national struggle and the class struggle, their emergence is undoubtedly a healthy phenomenon. Although they haven't yet produced any comprehensive policy documents we can begin to evaluate them through examining their evolution through the Official Republican Movement. From this evaluation we will point out a number of possible courses they could take and the obstacles they will face as a revolutionary organisation.

These militants unfortunately drew the wrong conclusions from this awareness. Instead of calling on the movement to advance the struggle for democracy, into a struggle against the state itself, they called for a dropping of democratic demands in favour of a concentration on economic demands which would politically unite the workers (an impossibility when the workers were divided on basic democratic questions).

The second example concerns a motion at the 1973 Ard Fheis from a cumann in Bray which called for less emphasis on Marx and Lenin and more on Connolly and Mellows. Firstly, it should be stated clearly that this motion does not mean that the Officials are Marxist and the I.R.S.P. are anti-Marxist, but rather that the crude and vulgar "Marxism" of the O'Murchu's and the O'Hagens is seen by genuine militants to be irrelevant to the needs of the real struggle in

Ireland. However these militants should realise that it was precisely because Connolly had a real and deep understanding of Marxism, because he was influenced by Lenin, that he was capable of seeing the objective interests of the working class over and above their immediate economic needs, so that when the Great War broke out, Connolly like Lenin, took a revolutionary stand while the crass "economists", the Walkers, the Hyndman's and the Kautsky's lined up behind their own imperial powers.

## Republicanism and the Left

Because the national revolution has never been completed in Ireland, discontent among the working class and other oppressed layers tends to express itself, at a political level, as revolutionary nationalism i.e. republicanism. But because republicanism (at least in its traditional form) has not been able to carry through the national revolution to its conclusion, the republican movements tends to take up the question of socialism, shift empirically to the

Left. This was the case in the thirties and again in the sixties when the I.R.A. tried to develop a socialist program. The shallow Marxism of the Irish Left was of little help to them; under its guidance the Republican Movement acquired a dogmatic conception of the relationship between the national revolution and the socialist revolution. The "stages" theory of revolution which they developed was incapable of dealing with the situation which arose following the repression of the civil rights movement in the post-August '69 period—as a result the movement split. Having failed to carry through the civil rights demands of the oppressed Catholic minority into an all out assault on the Northern state, the "Left-wing" of the Republican Movement, the Officials, turned to economism, the national

struggle was irrelevant and divisive; instead, they turned all their attention to that fashionable abstraction of all mindless Leftists—working class unity.

## The Opposition in the Officials

While the Catholic minority in the North the Provisional I.R.A. was carrying out a struggle against the Northern State and British imperialism, the Officials, despite their jargon became more and more counter-revolutionary practice. It was against this background that opposition within the Officials emerged, but did so in an uneven and very often, in a confused way. While the basic criticisms of the leadership by the oppositionists were from a revolutionary standpoint, some of their criticisms only helped to increase the confusion of the rank and file. We'll take two examples. Among the Officials militants in Derry there was an awareness that the Northern state was incapable of granting the democratic demands of the civil rights movement.

The complexities of the Irish political situation which have their basis in the peculiar social and economic development of Ireland, make it necessary for revolutionaries to have a very clear conception of their tasks. The failure of the Officials to develop a revolutionary program or a revolutionary practice was not due to an innate reformism among its individual leaders. It was because the method they used to deal with the problems raised in the course of the struggle was not a revolutionary method. In particular, they must point out a number of basic questions which the Officials couldn't cope with, and which now face the I.R.S.P.

1. The relationship between the unfinished national revolution and the socialist revolution. This is the basic question and a misunderstanding of the character of this relationship leads to the other misconceptions. In the epoch of

imperialism the capitalist class is unable to carry out the tasks of the national revolution; only

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standpoint from which they do it, and the political effects of their strategy. In terms of the defence of Catholic communities, in terms of defence of the class, in the event of a fascist takeover or a loyalist takeover which would attempt to impose its will and to impose anti-working class positions on us, then we would have to fight. The fact that the organisation, which was a fascist organisation imposing its will on us, was unfortunately composed of loyalist workers wouldn't make our resistance sectarian. We would have to fight them - you can't just say 'they're working class people, we won't fight them'.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Will you be seeking united fronts with other anti-imperialist organisations?

\*\*\*\*\*  
We will. The kind of front we're talking about would be one where organisations in the anti-imperialist struggle, agreeing with the basic demands we have put forward - which we feel most of them would - would commit themselves as organisations to a broad front on those demands. This would not mean ourselves or any other organisation having to submerge their own identity or their own struggle or their own independent action.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Do you foresee the possibilities of joint action with the Provisional Sinn-Fein?

\*\*\*\*\*  
If they are prepared to agree to the demands - which they ought to be since they have for some time put forward such demands themselves - we would certainly be prepared to work with them. I don't see what principled objection they could have to working with us. But we haven't discussed with them yet.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Do you think it's possible to involve the Protestant working class in the fight for a 32-county socialist republic?

\*\*\*\*\*  
We've got to face facts with regard to the Protestant working class.

There is no purpose in attempting to fool the Protestant workers into being nationalists. The only approach you can make to them is on the principled basis of a socialist republic. They have got to understand, and can only understand when the facts are properly put to them, that the only way they can make progress on class issues is through the national struggle.

But you make no real progress until you have at least a declaration by Britain to pull out. Because as long as Britain maintains her presence and insists that she is staying here what she is really saying to the Protestant working class is 'so long as you refuse to open your mind to any question of your class position, or the nature of the British role here, so long will you be protected by us.' Once Britain says she is going then that complete, artificial loyalty to Britain will go with it.

This doesn't mean that the Protestants will become socialist Republicans overnight, but at least you have the potential for arguing the real issues with Protestant workers. I can't see how you would get any sizeable group of Protestant workers to envisage working for a socialist republic until you get that declaration.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Do you think it's possible to win over the British working class to support of the Irish national struggle?

\*\*\*\*\*  
I think there is every possibility, although it has been made more difficult by the Birmingham bombings, which have made it easier for the mass media and the Government to represent us as an alien struggle which has nothing to do with the class struggle in Britain, and to represent us as people who are against the interests of the British people, rather than fighting the same cause.

This makes things more difficult, but not impossible. With the growing economic crisis, the ground is very fertile for increasing solidarity.

The 'Troops Out' movement has been moving in the right direction. When people, through the 'Troops Out' movement, were demanding the withdrawal of British troops they were doing so on a solid class basis, understanding the nature of imperialism. Whereas people who demand the withdrawal of troops because of the bombing campaign do it out of racial prejudice - their attitude is 'well let them kill each other'.

I think the 'Troops Out' movement has done tremendous work in view of the difficulties facing them, and I think that that is the way forward - the British worker has got to understand the nature of the British Government's role and the British military's role in Ireland. And in doing so, understand even more the nature of the class struggle in Britain.

As the class struggle heightens in Britain I think that you are going to find British soldiers, with their background and training in the north of Ireland, being used against British workers. They are already setting the ground with legislation, using the Irish situation as a starting point. For example, in Northern Ireland we have legislation which effectively prevents rent strikes, because they can simply take the money out of your family allowance. It's a very simple step to put that, when necessary, onto the British statute book. We can see this from the 'anti-terrorist' legislation which has now been adopted in Britain.

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What is your view of the relationship between the struggle in the north and the situation in the south?

\*\*\*\*\*  
There does not exist in Ireland at the moment an organisation which organises the working class on a class basis to fight the anti-imperialist struggle. One of the results of this has been the almost total neglect of fighting the struggle in the south of Ireland.

The working class in the south of Ireland by and large believe themselves to be a free and independent nation, which of course they are

not. They are totally unaware of their own dependence on the British Government, of the complete control the British economy has over their everyday lives. And there doesn't exist an organisation which will relate their immediate class problems - their immediate problems of unemployment, their immediate housing problems, the question of the mines - to the national issue.

At the moment people see them as two isolated issues. No organisation has ever attempted to bring the point home to workers in the south of Ireland that they are one and the same problem - that their problems in the south are directly related to the naked presence of British imperialism in the north.

\*\*\*\*\*  
So you will be seeking to mobilise people in the south in support of the struggle in the north, and combining this with work on the social and economic problems?

\*\*\*\*\*  
Yes, I think the failure in the past to mobilise any great strength of support in the south for the struggle in the north is proof of the fact that nobody has ever related it to the problems of the people in the south. They essentially do not see it as their problem, and they have so many immediate problems that if you simply take it on a purely national issue of creating an independent Ireland, driving the British out of the north of Ireland, and creating a 32-county state, then people in the south really don't want to know.

All they do know is that facing a position of such great unemployment at the moment, the last thing they want is another million and a half mouths to feed. They don't see it in terms of changing the whole structure of the south. And unless their immediate problems are related, and they can see the relationship between the problem in the north and the south, then they'll never be interested.

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working class can successfully do so. Furthermore the consciousness of the Irish working class is determined by the unfinished national revolution. Class struggle in this country takes the form of a national anti-imperialist struggle. But the national revolution cannot be completed within the framework of capitalism. If socialists do not take the lead in this struggle they condemn it, and lead all other types of class struggle to inevitable defeat.

2. The relationship between the working class and other (potential or actual) anti-imperialist forces.

Revolutionaries must struggle on the one hand, against currents which advocate that the working class should fight on its own and on the other hand, against currents which subvert the interests of the working class to those of any other class. The working class (and its revolutionary organisations should be foremost in this, must support all progressive struggles and take the leadership of all anti-imperialist strata.

3. The nature of the southern state and the southern bourgeois

The Southern state is a neo-colony, completely dominated by international capital (imperialism). The southern capitalist class is not a national bourgeoisie but a comprador one i.e. it is almost totally subordinate to imperialism and it itself involved in the exploitation of the most underdeveloped countries. There can be no possibility of any alliance between the southern ruling class and the anti-imperialist forces; on the contrary the position of the southern ruling class is very unstable because any anti-imperialist upsurge threatens its very existence.

4. The nature of the Northern state, the protestant working class and Loyalism. Imperialism created and fostered a caste system in the North whereby the descendants of the settlers (the Protestants) were privileged and separated from the native population (the

Catholics). This caste system was in fact strengthened by the lopsided industrialisation of the North and was institutionalised by the foundation of the Northern state in 1922. The protestant working class has always put caste interests before class interests and has always been dominated, in the final analysis, by the reactionary ideology of Loyalism. Only when the material conditions for the caste system disappear i.e. only when the Northern state has been completely smashed, and if necessary the Loyalist para-military organisations as well, can any major sector of the protestant working class come over to the side of the progressive forces.

The questions which we have raised above are ones which face all revolutionary organisations - and which the I.R.S.P. will have to come to terms with in the immediate future. Until they do it is impossible for us to define issues of political agreement or disagreement with them. Either way we are confident that they will assist in the defence of the oppressed minority in the north and in mobilising the working class on political and economic questions. In this we will be willing to work alongside them.

IAN MC LEAN



# I.R.S.P

# WHICH

# WAY

# FORWARD?

# AN OPEN LETTER

# TO THE

# S.W.M.

OPEN LETTER TO THE SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT

Dear Comrades,

In the December issue of THE WORKER, you state, in an article on Armstrongs: "It is essential to prevent fully assembled Opels coming into the country - the appeal to dockers and the idea of sending a delegation to Rosslare are steps in the right direction . . . The original decision of car workers to maintain the assembly industry must be pushed and acted upon, with prevention of car imports 'on wheels'".

In the same issue, in an article on Smiths in Wexford, you attack dumping of bogus 'Irish-assembled cars', and report with approval the Dublin car workers call "to car workers and dockers not to handle imported assembled models as a means of supporting their action to

resist redundancy and unemployment in the industry". And you report that the Smiths workers were "well supported by the dockers in Rosslare Harbour who refused to handle any goods for the car assembly industry."

Similarly, in an issue of the GALWAY WORKER (no date), you state: "At the moment Ireland is becoming a dumping ground for floods of very cheap clothes and shirts. Shirts are pouring in from Hong Kong, Roumania, South Korea, Portugal, etc. They can be sold here at such knock down prices because of the paltry wages of workers in these countries. Workers in the clothing industry must fight this dumping . . . It is through the Federation of Shop Stewards and Rank-and-File workers

committees that general demands for the blacking of 'dumped' clothing and for the

blacking of assembled cars can be raised and fought."

So far, so good.

But at the National Delegate Conference of the Federation, rather than fighting for and raising "general demands for the blacking of assembled cars", members of your organisation actually opposed such a demand. Confused by the sophisticated ultra-right Stalinism of the Two Nations pro-Wage Restraint B.I.C.O., your members fell for the diversion of associating the use of embargoes as a tactic

in the ongoing struggle of workers around redundancies with the use of embargoes and the 'Buy Irish' campaign of the bosses and bureaucrats to protect the interests of native capitalism.

What can your readers make of your politics when you call for a tactic in your paper and vote against it at a vital rank-and-file conference?

Fraternally,

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

## OUT SOON! 2 Pamphlets

## British Strategy in Ireland.

and

## What is Trotskyism?

# HISTORY OF R.M.G.



On Saturday 25th January the R.M.G. commemorated the 3rd anniversary of the death of one of its leading founder members Mairin Keegan. A republican socialist, Mairin sought to link Marxism with the revolutionary traditions of Republicanism, by striving to develop a programme for the Irish Revolution. This task continues to be the central objective of the R.M.G. who work towards this goal with the other left-revolutionary forces in Ireland. Mairin Keegan's memory will best be served by achieving this aim.

The world-wide youth radicalisation of the 1960s was not expressed in Ireland in terms of a mass national student movement, nor the type of pre-revolutionary confrontation that occurred in France. Its expression came in the emergence of two significant political groupings, mainly composed of students; two groupings faced with great opportunities in the period of the rise of the struggle in the North.

From the start, the People's Democracy was closely related, in a spontaneous and empirical way, to the mass struggle for civil rights and the civil resistance. The majority of the League for a Workers Republic, on the other hand, viewed the national struggle as a hindrance to pure class struggle. However, as the LWR degenerated rapidly into economic sectarianism, a Left opposition faction developed within its Young Socialist organisation.

In contrast to the LWR and other far Left groups, the RMG from the start rejected sectarian concepts of the building of the revolutionary party: "The general task of the Revolutionary Marxist Group is to help launch a 32 County revolutionary workers' movement. We do not consider ourselves to be the basic nucleus out of which this movement will develop. We see the process as taking the form of numerous fusions in which the socialist cadre of all revolutionary groups, including both wings of the Republican movement, will come together. However, we consider that as a group we can play a vital role in helping to formulate and clarify the programmatic basic on which this movement must unite". ('Where We Stand', point 1).

Characterized by its line on the national and international questions and its opposition to the bureaucratic methods of the LWR leadership, the faction soon gained the overwhelming support of the Dublin YS and the sympathy of other branches. It saw the need to develop a revolutionary programme which would recognise the national struggle as the central question for the working class; and it advocated support for the Fourth International.

The LWR responded by condemning the Fourth International as "revisionists" and calling for support for the Healy-Lambert International Committee, a small sectarian splinter from the Fourth International. Consistent with the International Committee's refusal to support the

Vietnamese, Cuban or Algerian revolutions, the LWR condemned the Republican movement's struggle for national unification and independence, and based its perspectives solely on the economic or day-to-day struggles of the working class.

The Left opposition suffered an enormous blow in October 1971, when its main organiser and the first representative of the Fourth International in Ireland, Peter Graham was assassinated in Dublin. Shortly afterwards Mairin Keegan, who also played a leading role in preparing an Irish Section of the Fourth International, died of cancer.

But the development they had worked for came. At a YS conference in January 1972, the Left opposition (the majority of the Dublin-branches and the Belfast branch) walked out, taking most of the organisation with them. It reorganised itself as the Revolutionary Marxist Group and sought recognition as the Irish Section of the Fourth International. Its founding conference, which adopted a 16-point Thesis on the National Question, was held in February 1972; and the Plough, first published as the paper of the Dublin YS, became the paper of the RMG.

In the three years of its existence, the most notable contribution of the RMG to the revolutionary movement has been its development of a Marxist programme. Even given its valuable work in mobilizing against internment and against repression, it cannot claim to have been significantly involved in the mass struggle.

What it has achieved is to offer in the Plough the most consistent and sophisticated analysis of the strategy of British imperialism and its allies in Ireland, and the tasks of revolutionaries. This incisive analysis has also been backed up in greater depth in its theoretical magazine, the Marxist Review.

While retaining its concept of the central importance of the national question, it has steadily developed its programme and intervention in other fields, in order to offer a revolutionary perspective on the whole range of questions facing the working class and the revolutionary movement.

## INPRECOR

INPRECOR is the new analytical journal of the Fourth International, which will be published simultaneously every two weeks in English, Spanish, French and German. It will be an indispensable organ for all militants hoping to develop an understanding of the international class struggle and contribute in the building of a centralised revolutionary International.

Price 20p from RMG branches, or 30p (including postage and packing) from Plough Book Service, c/o 38 Clanawley Road, Killester, Dublin 5.

Printed in Ireland  
Oct. 5th '74 Oct. 26th

## revolutionary marxist group



IRISH SECTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST GROUP

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

Send to: The Secretary, R.M.G., 38 Clanawley Road, Dublin 5.



# THE BRITISH AND IRELAND LABOUR MOVEMENT

## The British Labour Movement and Ireland

The Birmingham bombings caused a major setback for those fighting within the British working class for an end to the oppression of Ireland by British imperialism. Militants associated with Irish solidarity work were threatened and ostracized in the reaction to the bombings; fascist groups like the National Front gained a golden opportunity to build on anti-Irish chauvinism, and Labour MPs who had publicly supported the demands of the Troops Out Movement retreated from their positions.

But the work done over the years by Left-Wing organisations and the Troops Out Movement has made significant inroads into the Labour movement, and has developed a consciousness within the working class that has by no means been destroyed by the reaction to the Birmingham bombings. It

has been stressed by papers of the revolutionary Left and in the intervention of far-Left organisations that Ireland is of immediate concern to the British working class, in that it is the key-stone for the forces moving towards the strong State in Britain.

In a front page editorial, The Journal, official paper of the Birmingham Trades Council, comments: "The dogs of war are straining at the lead. What a sad commentary on public opinion when the impact of two bombs in Birmingham draws more publicity and comment than the whole sad story of Northern Ireland since the savage breaking-up of a peaceful Civil Rights march in 1969.

"The policy of this paper has been consistent throughout, and will remain so. A policy of reconciliation based on negotiation. The emergency powers must be the very last stage of escalation. We have six months to the renewal of those powers - beyond that point will be the point of no return to anarchy, chaos and civil war in these islands.

Many organisations are moving to build resistance to the Jenkins Act. In some instances (e.g. National Council for Civil Liberties, the Communist Party, the Workers Revolutionary Party) the fight is based primarily or even solely on the question of civil rights within Britain. But in other cases, the whole question of Britain's role in Ireland is being raised.

"Troops put in by Britain can only be taken out by Britain. As an earnest of a belief in reconciliation and ultimate final settlement, the Labour government must announce soon the first date for a phased withdrawal - colonialism ends here. The Labour movement can ensure that programme by mounting a massive campaign for peace. It is working class people who are dying, it is working class people who will continue to die unless, as of now, we refuse to be puppets any longer."

Local initiatives have been taken in defence of Left-wing and Republican militants hounded by the police under the new legislation. In Bath, for example, the International Socialists and the International Marxist Group are conducting a joint campaign which includes the demand for withdrawal of British troops. Unfortunately, on a national level, sectarian considerations have led the IS and the WRP to reject IMG proposals for a joint national campaign.

One way in which opposition to the Act is being built nationally is through Red Weekly's Open Letter to the Labour Movement, the final paragraph of which states:

"We reject the idea that the violence of the Irish situation can be resolved by increasing the powers of the British state; a solution can only come with an end to attempts to impose a British solution to the Irish question. We urge the broadest campaign be organised in the working class movement for: THE REPEAL OF THE JENKINS ACT."

## COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY ROLE OF CIA REVEALED

On 2nd January a new Penguin was released in Ireland and Britain, Phil Agee's book 'Inside the Company', a detailed and extremely critical account of the C.I.A.'s activities.

Phil Agee himself, was for 12 years (1957-1969) an officer in the C.I.A., operating in Ecuador, Uruguay and Mexico. During this period he was in charge of several projects, both aimed at collecting information and using it to maintain reactionary regimes by undermining the left. Since he broke with the C.I.A. in 1969 he has become a revolutionary socialist and as such his stated intention in producing the book is to alert the revolutionary left to the dangers of the C.I.A. and help them counteract it, by knowing more about its methods.



Left to right: former CIA directors Allen Dulles, William Colby, and James Schlesinger; and John Downey, CIA spy captured in China.

### The C.I.A.'s real role

The book also makes the important point that the present situation in Indonesia, Uruguay and more recently Chile, are the result of the above activities in a crisis situation. They lead to the strengthening of the extreme right and the threat of fascism. The action of the C.I.A. in the above cases helped military dictatorships seize power and led to the installation of states based on the use of extreme repression. No doubt the C.I.A. is at present working on contingency plans to pursue the same policies in Portugal. Kissinger certainly sees the coup and the activity of the masses there as a threat to U.S. interests.

### Important lesson for revolutionaries

Agee certainly paints overall a very black picture of the C.I.A.'s power and organisation; however, the most important lesson of this book is not the C.I.A.'s strength but where its weakness lies, that is where the masses have been educated in the real role of the bourgeois state with its agents, the army and police, and are led to fight the class struggle in a real way.

### C.I.A. Propoganda

On paper and in its propoganda the C.I.A. takes its terms of reference from the 'Wilson' doctrine; the new 'liberal' capitalist theory in U.S. foreign policy proposed by Woodrow Wilson after the first World War. This maintains that the U.S. and its task force the C.I.A. is in favour of pushing a 'third way' throughout the world; an alternative

to both the 'old repressive imperialism' and revolutionary socialism. It is expressed as a liberal approach that is still capitalist but one which furthers long-term reforms and 'democracy' This is its apologia and, as Agee admits in his book was one that he believed in when he joined the C.I.A.

The reality as Agee describes it, is somewhat different; it is in fact that the C.I.A. are prepared to use any method to stop a country from 'going communist'. They are in effect the protectors of the interests of U.S. imperialism throughout the world. Far from encouraging even long-term reforms or democracy, they will prop up or install any regime, however corrupt or brutal, that is prepared to offer the U.S. cheap raw materials, and investment or a market on the U.S.'s terms, they will crush any regime that will not.

### Bulwark of U.S. Imperialism

This is shown very clearly by the example of Santo Domingo. This island was invaded by the U.S. in 1965, an event that started Agee on his path away from the C.I.A. At first the president of Santo Domingo was 'favoured' by the C.I.A. for as a reformist he presented a channel away from revolutionary activity, but he was not allowed back after the coup, the sugar interests were too threatened even by his moderate programme of agrarian reform.

Agee also describes in great details the methods the C.I.A. will use to further its aims. Chief among them are black propoganda against left wing forces; infiltration of suspect groups including the use of agent provocateurs to discredit organisations training local intelligence forces in counter insurgency methods; and the skillful use of right-wing groups and forces to stir up anti-left hysteria and unrest. The church has not been too squeamish to involve itself in this kind of cooperation with the C.I.A.. Agee cites an example in Ecuador,

where a cardinal allowed his house to be bombed by C.I.A. agents to aid a campaign against Ecuador's links with Cuba. High on the C.I.A.'s list of priorities is also to the attempt to diffuse the revolutionary potential of the trade unions by setting up the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and such bodies which attempt to keep the movement only interested in day to day struggles by squeezing out and operating to discredit left-wing forces within them.

### C.I.A. is not the only one

This is of course also true of the struggle against all imperialist regimes; for the C.I.A. is not unique as a counter revolutionary force. Special police and army intelligence groups use the same techniques throughout the world, with much the same results.

We have seen, ourselves, the use of black propoganda in Ireland, the terrorist activity of the S.A.S. and the infiltration of political organisations by British agents. Kitson's book on counter insurgency puts forward much the same methods as the C.I.A. are shown to have used. British Imperialism has its Chile's and Indonesia's, cases in point were the coup against Obote in Uganda and the one which unseated Chedi Jagan in Guyana, both men were removed when they began to institute moderate reforms that would have interfered with the interests of Britain.

However we must re-emphasise that the C.I.A. and groups like it are only able to gain a stranglehold in states where the class struggle is held back and confused, as it was in Chile by Allende's ambiguous attitude and that of the C.P. dominated left, towards the army and the revolutionary process. The C.I.A.'s success there reiterates again the historical judgement on the effects of the 'peaceful road' and class collaboration.

## ARGENTINIAN COMRADES KILLED

Two militants of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR - formerly the Red Fraction of the PRT-ERP), a sympathising organisation of the Fourth International in Argentina, were killed on 13 December during a police raid on their house in Villa Galicia.

Both Mario Rodrigues and Adriana Drangosch were won to Trotskyism through a struggle inside the centrist militarist PRT-ERP, whose leadership then bureaucratically expelled them. Rodrigues was elected as one of the Red Fraction's delegates to the Tenth World Congress of the Fourth International, held early last year.

As a statement issued by the LCR concluded: 'Their names will become a battle standard for all those who continue the struggle to build a revolutionary marxist party, for which they gave their lives.'

This is just the beginning of discussion on this and we would welcome any contributions or criticisms from women who are interested in this idea and possibly building a campaign around these demands.

# Working Womens Charter

## Needed Now!



Some time ago we introduced in the Plough, the concept of a Working Women's Charter for Irish women. This idea has already raised some interest among women in the Trade Union Movement. Here we put forward the following terms as our suggestions to the charter.

1. New equal pay legislation based on the principle of the rate for job regardless of sex, at rates negotiated by the trade union movement, with a national minimum wage. The present equal pay legislation is completely inadequate. First, it is based on "equal pay for work of equal value", this leaves many loopholes for the employers to downgrade women and still allow them to pay women poorly where there are few or no men employed.

Putting forward the demand of the rate for the job with a National Minimum Wage (the demand of the National Federation of Shop Stewards and Rank & File workers Committees for £35.00 minimum wage could be raised in this context) immediately shifts the emphasis from the false arena of male versus female job evaluation.

Secondly, the present legislation also puts the pressure on the woman to claim equal pay not on the employer to implement it, and gives no job security to women who claim equal pay so that an employer could, in theory, sack a woman successful in a claim.

Lastly it also has clauses which effectively stop automatic parity for women employed in the same industry; equal pay, at present has to be fought for not only job by job, but factory by factory (even inside the same concern).

2. Equal educational opportunities for girls and boys and an end to church control of education. The education system is one of the first places a woman learns her role. Many schools still do not offer girls the opportunity to study subjects they would need for trade and professional qualifications. Even if they do the emphasis is on girls preparing to be wives and mothers rather than for careers. This is especially true of schools run by religious orders.

3. An end to discrimination against women in apprenticeships and day release course, all unions to open their membership to women. Retraining schemes to be fully available to women. Even in industries that are attempting equal pay women are still in general viewed as cheap expendable labour. Few employers will invest in training girls and women.

The right to equal opportunity in this as in education is an important part of the demand of women to be recognised as powerless to control their lives.

4. An end to discrimination in employment on the basis of sex. A self-evident civil right, but many advertisements for jobs still state that only men need apply.

5. Family Planning Centres in every town subsidised by State grants. Facilities to be open to all who need them. Unless women have the right to control their own fertility, they are powerless to control their lives.

At present contraception is not at all easily available, only barely legal and unavailable in general to people outside Dublin. At present there is a small-scale service operating in Dublin, government grants should be available to extend this to all parts of the country as they have the necessary information and experience in this. Also, this way women would have more chance of an efficient safe backup service, than if supplies came through G.P.s, something that is extremely necessary in the case of the Pill and inter-uterine devices.

6. Legalisation of abortion. This will be, of course a controversial demand to raise, but the numbers of women, alone, who take the mailboat each week to use English facilities prove the need for it. Women who want an abortion should have the civil right to have one here, in safety.

7. The same unemployment benefits for all regardless of sex or marital status. With the rapid growth in unemployment it is even more essential that women put this demand. Too often unemployment figures are disguised by the fact that women aren't counted as part of the number, it is important that women are recognised as part of the bone fide work force.

8. At least 12 weeks paid maternity leave, with no loss of job security, pension rights, promotion or bonuses.

Working mothers, very clearly, have special needs and yet the small concessions employers are prepared to offer to these are grudged them.

While women are the child bearers there should be proper provision for their needs in the work situation. At present women are encouraged to have children, by all sorts of social and moral pressures, and then are penalised for doing so.

9. Provision of nurseries and day-care facilities, subsidised by the state at a minimal cost to the mother.

This is very much tied to the 8th point. It should be the right of every working mother to have access to nurseries and day-care facilities staffed by trained personnel, without having to pay exorbitant fees.

This is far from the case in Ireland now, Dublin for example, has only a handful of day nurseries and yet the number of working mothers has risen rapidly during the last few years.

10. The right to all social welfare benefits to be extended to women at the same rates as men, all people looking after children to have the right to claim family allowances, full rights for single-parent families.

The present social welfare system is full of anomalies with many glaring inequalities. The implementation of this demand would end, for example the situation where women looking after children by themselves are expected to stay at home with a tiny allowance, while men can claim a housekeeper allowance to look after the children while they work.

11. An end to woman's unequal position in family law, both partners to have the same rights with regard to children, domiciles, marital property and finance. The right to legally end the marriage should also be recognised. Women, are to all purposes, chattels in Irish family law, that is part of their husbands property and under his jurisdiction.

Any working womens charter should seek to change this, as it is a large part of women's oppression here.

12. An anti-discrimination Bill which would legally enforce all aspects of a Working Womens Charter

Although this wouldn't solve the problems of Irish women overnight, it would be an important tactical victory for us.

It has been said that U.S.I. consists of merely three men, an office and a typewriter, and such a statement does bear some relation to the actual weakness of the student movement in Ireland. U.S.I. is little more than the sum of its constituent organisations and reflects all of their weaknesses; more than this, it is tied to an analytical method doomed to failure, reflected in its ideas of student commitment in a vacuum of "convincing" the trade union movement of the correctness of its demands through talks with its bureaucracy

The strength of these ideas lies only in the unconsciously accepted weakness of U.S.I. and its existence as a mere ghost of a national student movement, by the mass of the students themselves.

In many cases the establishment of student unions instead of S.R.C.s has not changed fundamentally the nature of student representation. Discussion and decision-making still takes place, largely removed from the mass of students, and representatives still have a semi-permanent status. This produces a failure to respond to the needs of the students and means that most relevant issues are ignored in inter-bureaucratic wranglings. This is what U.S.I. is based on, at local level, and consequently the annual congress suffers from lack of student involvement in the affairs of the national union.

The officers of U.S.I. are elected by a narrow semi-bureaucratic layer of students and those elected only have as their qualification the necessary one of being able to manipulate this layer. It is no coincidence that the centrist politics of Official Sinn Fein should triumph in this situation. Using a combination of red-scare tactics and bourgeois rationality they have created a permanent niche for themselves in the leadership of the union. They thus pose the question of differing politics in terms of "being reasonable" as apart from being "political motivated". As a result, instead of questioning the strategy and tactics used by U.S.I. in the grants and finance campaign, they blamed the failure of the campaign on lack of commitment by the local student organisations. Again, the proposal by the President-elect David Kavanagh

to concentrate this years campaign on Burkes proposals to the detriment of the grants and finance campaign, shows how isolated he and his 'Sticky' allies are from the real opinions and needs of students.

How then did political groups at the congress project themselves? David Vipond of the Maoists, along with the R.M.G. comrades was the only one to really fight on the issues of student democracy and the cutbacks in educational expenditure. Carol Coulter of the L.W.R. however, did not intervene at all in these important discussions nor in the debate on the national question. One can only conclude that she considered these issues to be peripheral. The Officials totally opposed allowing any debate on the crisis situation in the North to develop and crammed this section into 15 minutes of the Congress' time. Under

International Affairs the Sinn Fein officers spent long hours in introducing resolutions of solidarity with struggling peoples but were hostile to criticisms of treatment of dissidents in the Soviet Union. On this question Pat Brady and Brendan Glynn interrupted R.M.G. speakers, and tried to use bureaucratic manoeuvres to avoid the issues of workers democracy being raised. David Vipond proposed a resolution calling for denunciation of the Soviet Union as "social imperialist". In commission session (the smaller workshop-type sessions) this promoted a lot of healthy discussion on the economic and political situation in Russia, the parasitic nature of the

Moscow bureaucracy and its relationship to the socialised means of production. But in the general session, only two people were allowed to speak against the motion, while an important decision

on abortion was referred back to national council.

It is obvious then, that there is a real need for discussing political differences in the national student movement, outside of the confines imposed by U.S.I. It is also necessary that U.S.I. should begin to relate its theoretical commitment to socialism to actually beginning to fight for students demands, rather than trying to quell enthusiasm and militancy. The lessons of the U.S.I. grants campaign and the arrest of 50 students in Dublin and Galway show the way forward, mass democracy must be linked with mass action.

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# USI EVADES ALL ISSUES