

the worker

FOR A WORKERS' REPUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

PULLING STRINGS

Anti-republican repression and Bank Act

THREAT TO ALL WORKERS

VINCENT O'TOOLE has a string of race-horses and a string of companies, so nobody should be surprised to hear that he might be pulling strings.

O'Toole owns the Maryland Hotel in Waterford, speculates in property, runs a finance company, and hates trade unions. He recently claimed that the local ITGWU branch secretary was 'telling him how to run his business,' and that 'it is now a well established fact that ALL unionised hotels in Great Britain have flopped.'

That was his reply to a letter from the union branch secretary pointing out that some of his staff were working 60 hours a week for a ridiculous wage of £10 or £11. This works out at something close to half the rate for hotel workers in unionised jobs.

Court action

O'Toole hates unions only as much as he hates anybody or anything which might stop him screwing more money out of people. When he was working for Stanford Cheques, he charged interest rates above the government-allowed maximum, and was threatened with court action. At the same time as he was working with this crowd he was building up contacts for a new venture—C & A Ltd.

His main partner in this new finance company is Sam McClure, a teacher, 'Independent' alderman on the Waterford city council, and fellow-property speculator. McClure acts as O'Toole's 'front man' on the city council. O'Toole has himself taken some interest in council affairs. Well he might, being so much involved in land deals and in building.

The rope

After all that, none of us would be surprised to hear that O'Toole was behind the 'Waterside' bribery scandal—or that his brother, Joe O'Toole, offered Vincent's money to a Labour councillor in return for support for McClure in the mayoral elections.

It would greatly add to the strength of the rope by which O'Toole should hang himself, if trade unionists in Waterford were to give active support to the attempts to unionise the workers in the Maryland by refusing to deliver there until O'Toole has withdrawn his anti-union statement and recognised the ITGWU.

THE RELEASE of 100 prisoners in the North cannot disguise the fact that repression goes on as usual. What it showed clearly was the cynical way in which the Whitelaw regime manoeuvres with people's lives and freedoms.

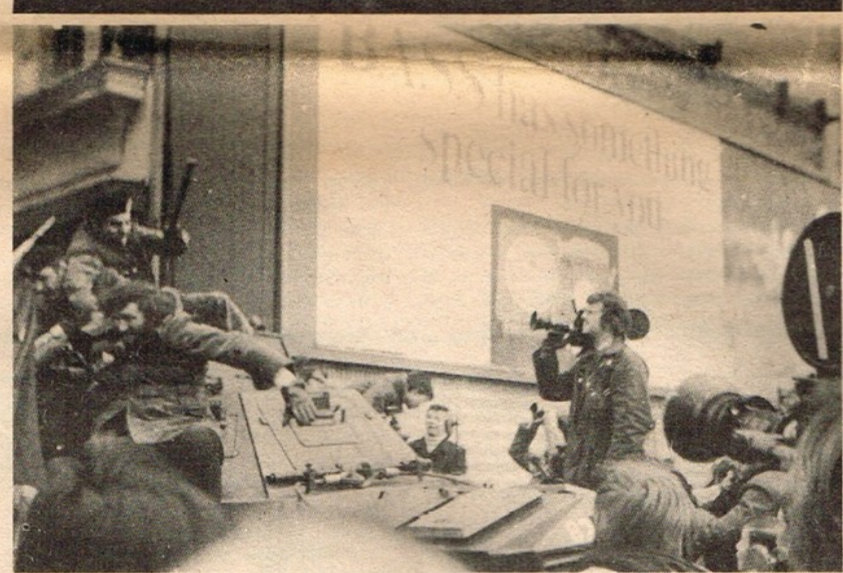
Whitelaw will now try to maintain that all those now being held are definitely 'terrorists'. That does not change the matter one bit. The vast majority of those being held in the North are imprisoned because they were fighting against repression. Their methods and their actions may have been misguided in many cases. Their long-term aims may have been unclear. But against the viciousness of the state machine, they must be defended.

If the Whitelaw regime in the North and the Cosgrave government in the South (now hurrying people through the Special Courts at an ever faster rate) succeeded in breaking the most active forces in the present struggle, then the way would be open for even wider attacks on the whole working class.

Once the ruling class has got the thin end of the wedge in, it will not hesitate to drive the rest in. The same is true too for the attacks on the bank officials in the South. The law to tie their wages to the limits of the National Wage Agreement is not just aimed at bank officials; it is aimed at any workers going for the sort of wage rises necessary to keep pace with galloping prices.

Now we hear that the ESB is trying to get a deal with its workers which will contain a three-year 'no strike' clause. If they succeed in that—and fortunately, the chances are not too great—an example would be set for other employers.

We may disagree with the republicans—and the Socialist Workers Movement have serious criticisms—but if the working class movement is to defend itself, it must be prepared to defend them too. Some may think—wrongly—that the bank officials get high enough pay, but if we allow the government to hold them back, they won't stop there.



Congratulations to Michael Farrell and Tony Canavan for their courageous stand against the Whitelaw regime. The picture above shows Farrell engaged in 'behaviour likely to lead to a breach of the peace', Farrell, who was taking part in a demonstration last February against sectarian killings, is the one being beaten.

The demonstrations and protests are getting bigger in the North, what we need to give them direction, and greater strength, is united action by all working class and anti-imperialist organisations against repression. A number of left-wing groups in the South are presently discussing joint work to help build a united front against repression. In the North, there have been moves to unite various tendencies in 'Political Hostages Committees'.

This is the concern of every worker. The trade unions must be forced to take action against the growing repression. They should be made to act on the old union motto: ALL FOR ONE, AND ON FOR ALL.

WE SAID IT FOUR MONTHS AGO ●●●●

IT REALLY IS AMAZING to see the press scurrying about for whatever they can find about the Littlejohn brothers who robbed a Dublin bank while working for British secret service.

It is amazing, BECAUSE THEY HAVE KNOWN ABOUT IT FOR MONTHS. In April of this year, The Worker published a story which detailed some of the claims made by the Littlejohns, and now known to be true. We named the two agents, 'Oliver' and 'Douglas' (now known to be the same person as 'John Wyman'). We drew attention to the Littlejohn's claim to have petrol-bombed Louth and Castlebellingham Garda stations. And we linked the whole affair to the bombs in Dublin in December.

That story was sent to all the national papers along with a further statement, but they ignored it. Even when the first hearings in the case were taking place, some of the papers did not even bother to report them.

One matter the press won't be dealing with but which should cause some concern to all of us involved in the struggle against capitalism and imperialism: How is it that agents provocateurs and spies can get so close to things in the radical and progressive movement? Even if the Littlejohns were never members of the IRA, they obviously did get information which was useful to the enemy.

As long as a movement is built essentially on physical or military principles, it is unavoidable. If people can prove their physical skills they already have one foot in the door. The only guard against

Britain's Whizz Kids

They were told to assassinate leading members of the IRA. They were to blow one of them up, and destroy all traces, while making it appear that he had fled to Canada with IRA funds.

They have privately admitted responsibility for petrol bomb attacks on Castlebellingham and Lough Garda stations. Such are the methods of the peace-loving British Government.

It looks like the Irish Government was forced to do a deal with the Tories: to hand over an extremely important spy for the return of two small fry.

THE WORKER APRIL 1973

abuse of this is the conscious and deliberate political selection of members and associates.

'National interest' means wage cuts

ALL THE T.D.'s and Senators who got up to give their full support to Michael O'Leary's Banks Bill made one thing clear — this was not just for the banks alone, it was for anybody who broke through the National Wage Agreement.

Up to this, the government's role in the wage agreements has been in the background. They have been represented at the Employer-Labour Conference as employers, and have been an extra possible threat if workers should get "too much". But now O'Leary has set a new example, and a dangerous one. Tomorrow it could be electricians, building workers or mechanics who get hit.

So it is more urgent than ever for militant trade unionists to urge on the fight against the wage agreement. With so many of the union leaders committed to it, there are obviously big odds stacked against us, but the battle is by no means lost.

O'Leary's timing was 'dead on'. The announcement of the law against the banks came during the Irish Congress of Trade

Unions conference at Killarney. The target was carefully chosen too. The bank officials are not the most popular workers, and their union is outside Congress. But none of this juggling should blind trade unionists to the principle involved: Are we going to allow the government to use state force to restrict workers' wages?

Price Control

Last month we wrote that price control was bound to be ineffective. We said it before Keating announced his new measures. With a whole assortment of price increases since then, who would say we were wrong? Even if it were effective — an impossibility, as we said — it would be no reason for letting our hands be tied. We need to be able to fight for whatever increases we can get. No possible dressing up could convince us that we should accept lower wages (that's what a wage agree-

ment means) so that the bosses can increase their exploitation.

When discussing the Banks Bill the politicians all hammered away at their favourite and trusted theme of 'the national interest'. Major deValera managed to mention it sixteen times in a short speech. And Michael O'Leary's every second sentence bowed down before that same shrine. It seems it is not in 'the national interest' if some workers get 10% rises, but it's O.K. if a bank's profits go up 40%. Most scandalous of all, the Labour Senators (Mullen and Kennedy) of I.T.G.W.U. and Harte of W.U.I., accepted that it was in "the national interest" to take away from workers what they have fought for for generations — the right to bargain for what they can get and the right to strike in order to back their claims.

The fantastic hypocrisy of it all came out in Flor Crowley's statement that "the people demand and want action in relation to those who are trying to take more than they are entitled to out of the

economy". And that's supposed to mean the bank officials, not the financiers, industrialists and international capitalists who control the economy.

The passing of the Banks Act must be a sign to trade unionists to strengthen the fight against the National Wage Agreement. The union leaders are now engaged in that magnificent exercise in democracy, "finding out the feeling of the members". If they get the chance at all, rank-and-file trade unionists must make their total opposition to wage agreements clear.

Leaflet

At the Killarney conference of the I.C.T.U. the Socialist Workers Movement distributed a leaflet urging an immediate decision against any further wage agreement. But the dead weight of the I.C.T.U. leaders and of the big unions assured that the vote went in favour of postponing any decision until September 27th. Very few of those who support agreements even bothered themselves to get up and speak — shows how much they care about

democracy.

The Socialist Workers Movement has now prepared a pamphlet on the National Wage Agreement. In it we take up all the arguments and supposed 'facts' used to support wage agreements. We welcome orders for copies at 5p each (plus postage).

Trade Unionists in the Socialist Workers Movement are also organising a conference against the National Wage Agreement, along with other active trade unionists. This will take place in September.

For further details, and for copies of the pamphlet, write to: SWM, Top Floor, 95 Capel St. Dublin

READ INSIDE: Articles on Provos and on prisons

LEAN YEARS FOR LEFT

Part 9 in a series on the History of Socialism

THE GENERAL ELECTION of 1943 returned 17 Labour deputies to the Dail. Among them was Jim Larkin, who had only just entered the Labour Party. His presence was alarming to the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union — and to many sympathisers of Fianna Fail. The Labour Party, it was rumoured, had been taken over by Communists. The majority of the ITGWU deputies left to form the National Labour Party.

A similar split took place in the trade union movement, due to friction between British-based and Irish-based unions. The ITGWU and other Irish-based unions left to form the Congress of Irish Unions.

The Labour Party in the North was also undergoing some dissension, and when the Party moved increasingly towards supporting the existing constitutional position of Northern Ireland, the Irish Labour Party intervened in Northern politics and took into its ranks the dissidents from the Northern Ireland Labour Party, together with the small Socialist Republican Party, Jack Beattie M.P. for West Belfast, and the semi-Trotskyist Irish Socialist Alliance.

The necessity to define a position on the Border arose from the declaration of the "Republic of Ireland" by the Inter-Party government in 1948. This was formed on the one hand by Fine Gael and on the other by the two Labour Parties, the small farmer party Clann na Talmhan, and the new radical breakaway from the Republican movement, Clann na Poblachta.

This totally opportunist coalition reunited the two Labour Parties but made no radical changes in government policies. It met its end when the Clann na

Poblachta Minister for Health, Dr. Noel Browne, tried to implement some schemes for free medical care. The medical profession saw a threat to their pockets, and persuaded the Catholic Hierarchy that the proposal was contrary to Catholic faith and morals. The State bowed to the wishes of the Church. Betrayed by the Cabinet and by his own party, Browne was forced to resign.

Stagnation

In the following years he sought an avenue to socialism. He tried to join the Labour Party, which wouldn't touch him. Eventually in 1958 he formed a small socialist party, the National Progressive Democrats. He did not turn to the working class, which throughout this period was depressed and inactive. The economic stagnation existing since the Second World War had worsened into crisis of 1955-58, when the population fell by 100,000. This was presided over by the Second Inter-Party Government, a lack-lustre carbon-copy of the first.

However, the governments of the 1950s were making moves towards ending protectionist policies and towards a new policy of industrialisation through foreign investment. The economy gradually recovered (though at the price of becoming foreign-owned). The working class began to regain confidence. The two trade union congresses had united in 1959.

The new industrial mood was reflected in politics. The Labour Party had lost too many votes to be tempted into another coalition. Under its new leader, Brendan Corish, it moved cautiously to the left. It admitted the National Progressive Democrats into membership, and at the 1965 general election it established itself as an electoral force in Dublin. The



Above: Dublin unemployed on the march in the 1950s. Below: Derry unemployed 1955



biggest trade unions became affiliated to the Party.

The same rosy picture did not appear in the North, although the Northern Ireland Labour Party held four seats in Stormont from 1958 to 1965. The Irish

Labour Party's organisation in Belfast had disintegrated, though it came together again as the Republican Labour Party from 1963. The Republican border campaign of 1956-62 was small-scale and had little impact. The breakaways around Joe

The word 'never' was omitted from a quotation from Isaac Deutscher on the month's historical feature. The quotation in question should have read: "If the German Left, and above all the Communist Party, had had the will to fight for its life, there might never have been a Third Reich and Second World War... and meanwhile German workers would have become a worker's state."

Christie and Saor Uladh had scrupulous ideas. The small Communist Party in Northern Ireland had support from Protestant and Catholic workers to use its support against sectarianism to expand.

Its equivalent in the South (the Workers' League (later the Irish Workers' League) managed to grow slightly in the restrictive atmosphere of the 1950s. Its ideas were taken up by some members of Sinn Fein who, in the failure of the border campaign, were looking for a method of getting support. Sinn Fein began to move from traditional Republicanism towards social agitation.

Irish Workers Group

Some Republicans and Communists, however, disagreed with the basic alignment and after a period of division between those tending towards Maoism, who formed the Irish Workers' Organisation, and those tending towards Trotskyism, who formed the Irish Workers' Group. The I.W.G. declared: "Unity will be achieved, if not coming together of the Irish working class under the auspices of the Imperialist state and the capitalist class, then through the struggle towards West European Federation as an incidental in the proletarian revolution." It and its more radical supporters shot the League for a Workers' League to make a small impact on the left of the Labour Party.

For the shift in the Labour Party had been from the backward towards those who wanted a more radical social democratic party. The western European model of development presented problems in a backward, imperialist-dominated economy like that of the Irish. The capitalist class could not afford to yield a little to the working class, heading towards a strike league in 1964 and 1965, too advanced to be content with minor reforms, and the Labour Party had to use socialist rhetoric to attract them. In 1969 and 1970 the dilemma was to become acute.

J. G.

NOT BEYOND SUSPICION

THE STORY SO FAR: In an earlier issue of THE WORKER some interesting parallels were noted between the Dublin bombs of December 1972 and the "I.R.A." raid on the Magazine Fort in December 1939. Here, SEAN GARVIN takes his investigations of that period a bit further. His view (not necessarily that of the editors) is that the I.R.A. was sown through with spies, right to the top.

DESPITE their attempts at displaying a front of firm discipline in the matter of security and secrecy, both to the public and their own members, the IRA during the period of the Second World War failed hopelessly in that direction. Like all secret societies the organisation was riddled throughout not only with the usual informers of Irish history, but with actual police employees. The core of the Dublin Castle Special Branch was composed of hand-picked IRA veterans of the '20's and '30's, by and large a ruthless bunch — and in some cases men who still enjoyed the respect of their former comrades.

When Dev came to power in 1932 he tried to rid the administration of the more radical element of the Kevin O'Higgins era. The army and the police were purged. The chief of the new regime, General Eoin

O'Duffy, a veteran of the Civil War, (later to disgrace himself totally with his Bandeira of Dublin corner-boys fighting for Fascist Franco in the Spanish Civil War), and Davy Nelligan (formerly Mick Collins's man-in-the-Castle and then one of the chief figures in the Free State Oriel House Murder-gang) had to be dispensed with; they were booted out with little ceremony. Lt. Col. Eamon Broy — a sound Dev-man — was put in charge of the Castle.

WEARY

During the next few years this force gathered into its ranks many members of the IRA "who were beginning to get a bit weary of the fight". The notion of spending another decade of their lives parading through wet fields and marching over dark mountains during the nights of their free weekends was beginning to lose

much of its glamour. Indeed the rank-and-file volunteers could hardly be blamed for falling to such sentiments when one considers that the more intelligent of the men at the top, the men of vision, like Peadar O'Donnell and George Gilmore, were long since looking beyond the hope of a military solution and searching for a political formula. This search had culminated in the Republican Congress of 1934, and regrettably ended there.

CASTLE

These new recruits into the Special Branch proved themselves to be by far the lowest element of that force. Among those who joined the new force was a returned emigrant, James Crofton, who had worked as a docker in New York. Crofton during his years in the Castle worked in close contact with the IRA. It is now apparent that, not only did the Castle authorities suspect him and keep him under constant vigil but that, they in fact fed phoney information to the IRA, through him. Things were so bad that the Chief of Staff of the IRA, Stephen Hayes, was also in the confidence of the Castle. He was later to be arrested and imprisoned 'in chains' by his own comrades.

At 5 a.m. on the morning of 25th April, 1940, an explosion took place in the

lower yard of Dublin Castle, at a point almost beside the offices of the Detective Unit. The surrounding area, including these offices, was extensively damaged by the blast. The police investigating the explosion stated that a mine of 30lbs. of gelignite had been used.

Among the casualties were the housekeeper and her son who were rushed to a nearby hospital. Strangely enough, five members of the Gardaí who were also 'hurt' were taken two miles away to the hospital in the Garda Depot at Phoenix Park. Later it was reported that none of them had been seriously hurt. The blast also destroyed several priceless stained-glass windows in the nearby Chapel Royal.

In the early hours of the morning the first visitors to the scene included the Taoiseach, Mr. Eamonn De Valera and his Minister for Industry & Commerce, Mr. Sean MacEntee. They and the investigators concluded that the job had all the appearances of being the handiwork of the IRA. Indeed, it is beyond question that the 'job' was carried out by members of the IRA; J. Bowyer-Bell in his book 'The Secret Army' nominates the two men allegedly involved.

But like the Magazine Fort operation there are a number of unanswered questions. In the first instance how did these men carry in such a bomb? It has to be remembered that the Second World War



Curragh Camp, where republicans were interned

was 230-odd days old and the possibility of espionage was being commented in the national newspapers. There were numerous incidents of armed republicans finding their way into the castle. The Castle was supposed to be under strict security.

Also, why were the injured Gardaí not taken to hospital if they had needed hospital attention? It might seem possible that they were taken to a safe place from which no one could see their faces, but the fact that they were not in the slightest of shock and that they were not involved so that the incident was not as serious as it actually was?

The men who placed the bomb were undoubtedly acting under the direction of their IRA officers and these were most likely acting in the best of the cunning hand of the Free State Government. It is evident throughout the incident that the IRA was in the best of its confidence, including figures in the movement they tried to 'arrange' little incidents likely to blacken the Republicans' in the public's mind. These incidents were managed to happen at a time when the Government was in serious difficulties and had to get itself off the hook.

STRIKE

When the explosion took place in Dublin Castle the Government was already involved in a very embarrassing situation. A number of political prisoners were on hunger strike in Mountjoy Prison. St. Bricin's Military Hospital. To Jack McNeela, Jack Plunkett and Traynor had gone over 40 days without food and had been removed from the military hospital. David McNeela were to die within a few days.

This will be continued in next issue.

LYDON'S MARCH

Fresh and confident from their success in getting the ITGWU to agree to a 'bum' deal on union recognition, Lydon's of Galway are now expanding their business under the new name of 'Lydon House'.

True to their usual style, the gombeenmen of Galway used the occasion to pat each other on the back. Mayor O'Flaherty noted that Lydon's "did not forget to give their staff a forward march at the same time". Indeed - they gave some of them marching orders for trying to organise a union on the job.

But since they sold out on the Lydon's staff, the unions have been very quiet about organising the hotel and catering trades in Galway. It seems that they start the season by 'sounding off', and then forget about it again.

One of the hotel workers who was featured in much of the publicity about bad conditions in Galway's hotels, Pat Lannon, is now on the street again. Flannery's kicked him out of the job he had with them. He got a job in the Great Southern Hotel, one of the few unionised places, but couldn't stand the 'ragging' he got for having his case publicised, and left. He can't get a job anywhere else because he's 'black' - and he can't get social assistance.

What does the campaigning ITGWU branch secretary intend to do about that?



Matt Larkin addresses NATO rally

NATO problems

IN MAY last year NATO the National Tenants' Organisation, launched a national rent strike with a rally in Dublin. Some local areas were already on strike, and following the start of the strike in the Capital, many other areas joined in. Fifteen months later, the NATO leadership has recommended an end to the strike and acceptance of the Government's proposals on differential rents and tenant purchase.

NATO has scored a number of successes. The new proposals are a big concession to their demands - even though these demands did not go as far as some would have liked. Overtime, shift and bonus payments will not be included in assessing the differential rents. The price of a local authority house to a tenant who wants to buy will be a good deal lower than under the old scheme. But NATO is also ending the strike in weakness rather than in strength. During the talks with Tully they admitted that only 5000 families were on rent strike, whereas earlier they had given the impression that far more were involved. What this can only mean is that the support has been declining from the early 'peak' up to the present.

That is not too surprising when we see that in some areas tenants did not know whether the strike was still on or not. Communications between national and local level and between local committees and the mass of tenants were obviously not as good as they should have been. The pickets on the main Dublin rent office have not been on regularly for many months. There was not a demonstration or rally since that one which launched the strike last year, although

there were promises of one every month.

Saddest of all, NATO has only now succeeded in bringing out a national paper, 'The Tenant'. It was really needed a year ago. Now, it aims much higher than the resources of NATO can go. It is announced as a fortnightly - an impossible achievement for NATO at its present strength. The local associations simply are not active enough to fill the paper with reports and articles every two weeks. One thing which is notable about the first issue, too, is that it contains reports by local associations commending certain people for the maintaining of shrines and the organising of reseries. NATO claims to be 'non-political and non-sectarian'.

THE WORKER has written before about the confusion which this clause in the constitution causes. It's certainly very hard to be 'non-political' when the negotiations are carried out with government ministers. But things have obviously come to a pretty pass when someone like Donnachadh MacRaghnaill, member of the Official Sinn Fein executive and of NATO executive, can try to stop somebody at a NATO meeting making a speech because it was 'political'.

NATO holds its annual conference in September. The members must make a realistic assessment of the situation. They must consider what is involved in holding a rent strike together, and making it really effective. They must ensure that the more spectacular activities of the national organisation do not substitute for hard work in the local associations. And they must throw out the 'non-political and non-sectarian' clause.

For three years now, Stead has been hiring people at the beginning of the summer season and firing them again in October. This lack of security in the job, the very irregular hours, the frequent dismissals, and low basic pay, have spurred some of the workers there into action. In late June the first moves were made to get the union organised. Now a significant proportion have joined. A full claim is being prepared by the members, who are part of the Dublin No. 7 Branch.

SPIES

Stead has sent his spies to the union meetings at Liberty Hall. That should not stop others seeing the need for organisation on the job. There have been signs that the union officials want to keep the initiative. But the more who join, the more chance there will be of having an effective committee on the job which directs what is done in the workers' interests.

GLASS WORKERS: VICTORY THROUGH UNITY

THE FARCE which National Wage Agreements really are, was forcefully demonstrated by the recent victory achieved by the workers of Waterford Glass Ltd. Some time ago we printed an article on this industry, referring to the General Workers who have been fighting for a long time to maintain at least the comparability in wages which existed before the National Wage Agreements.

Seven hundred workers, male and female, employed at the factories in Waterford and Dungarvan and comprising almost the entire non-craft sections of the Industry have now succeeded in getting around these agreements.

Under the terms of the second National Wage Agreement, which applied to them on 1st July of this year they would have been entitled to £2.75 Maximum for males and £2.25 for females. Under the terms of an agreement negotiated by the workers' union, the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union, at local level, and without any reference to the Labour Court or any outside body, an increase of £6 per week for males and £4.75 for females was secured.

These people work no more than the normal forty-hour week, which is generally in operation for industrial workers throughout the country. Both these increases exceed the National Wage Agreement, which almost all Irish workers are forced to abide by, by £3.50 and £1.75 respectively. This agreement covers exactly the same period of time as applies under the terms of the second National Wage Agreement.

TEAM

Productivity was not an element in this agreement, nor in fact could it have been, because their work could only be measured in isolated areas, not on an industry-wide basis. The most important feature of this victory lies in the fact that the workers' negotiating team were successful in forcing the management to realise that

GOMBEENLAND

A Galway correspondent writes:

We were not at all surprised that Childre's first public act as President was to open Galway Leisureland. He said he hoped it would help the youth of 'Coneemaarah' (wherever or whatever that is!). The reason we were not surprised at Childers doing the job is that the whole Leisureland affair is controlled by big businessmen, hotel owners, and so on, who have their Fianna Fail connections to thank for it.

When the bosses are running the show it's obvious that the centre should be built where it suits them - beside the hotels in Salthill. Tough luck on the people on the big estates on the other side of the town. By the time they get there on a three-mile bus ride they have to fork out 20p for a swim, or 25p in the evening.

East Wall

ON 16th JULY the second public meeting organised by the Socialist Workers Movement in East Wall, Dublin, took place. The issue facing the meeting was whether or not to set up a committee to organise action on the many problems facing people in the area. The decision to do so was taken against opposition from some people who said that the problems were not what it was claimed they were and that the existing social committees filled the needs of the area.

The committee elected from people at the meeting will be tem-



Paddy McGarth, chairman of Waterford Glass, and of more besides

through the National Agreements the level of parity between the various sections within a single industry could be eroded to the detriment of the lower-paid grades.

It is important to note that when this can happen in a single industry - and a strongly unionised one at that - what must be happening throughout the entire spectrum of wage earners, particularly the poorly organised. The myth that these agreements are supposed to be protecting the rates for the lower paid, many of which were hard-fought for, is fairly well demonstrated by this case. And don't let anyone try to pretend that some clever negotiators have succeeded in pulling the wool over the eyes of a management as sophisticated as that of Waterford Glass. These boys only succeeded in making a profit of approx. £2m last year.

The second point to be noted in this case is that the negotiating team who achieved this success consisted of a full representation from all sections of the industry, craft, and non-craft with the full-time union official. What can be achieved through workers' solidarity has been shown in this case.

"But at least the bosses got it built", some people say. In fact all the money came from ordinary people. Galway County Council and the city corporation gave £280,000 between them - all from the rate payers. The Indoor Swimming Pool Committee gave £20,000 which has been collected over the past years on the understanding that the pool would be in Claddagh, nearer the town centre.

Bord Failte coughed up £580,000 - all public money too! The hotel owners must have reckoned it was worth a lot to them to get the Bord to make its biggest ever, single investment. No doubt Bobby Molloy fixed up the deal with Bord Failte; he used to be a director of Galway/Salthill Failte Ltd, the company controlling Leisureland, until he became a minister. The other directors include local businessmen like Holland, O'Flaherty, Lydon, and Ryan.

If O'Higgins had been elected President I wonder if he would have been asked to open Leisureland.



FINGLAS LABORATORIES is one of Europe's biggest colour film processing works. At the peak of the summer season it employs about 220 people. In his fifty years in business Geoffrey

Stead, who owns the factory, and another in Glasgow, Scotland, has never had to deal with a trade union. Now he has one on his hands - and he's not at all pleased.

INSIDE THEIR PRISONS

THE SUICIDE of a prisoner in Mountjoy is bound to increase the growing public interest about what is going on in Southern jails. Agitation on the inside and on the outside for changes in the system has been gathering support lately. Here, an ex-prisoner, BRENDAN WALSH, records his impressions of Portlaoise jail and the strict prison regime.

to perform these tasks for up to ten years and more.

On top of all this degradation there exists the 'punishment cell'. In absolutely none of the government publications relating to prisons is there any mention of such a place. But it is not the figment of a crazy man's imagination. It is a fact. It is imprinted on the minds of too many men to be denied. After a man attempted suicide in this cell and was subsequently transferred to the Central Mental Institution at Dundrum, visiting clergymen requested the governor to give up using this cell. He replied that he couldn't since it was his only deterrent against trouble-makers.

BREACH

The 'Rules for the Government of Prisons 1947' require that a cell be 'of such a size, and to be lighted, warmed, ventilated, and fitted up in such a manner as may be requisite for health'. This cell is bitterly cold, the light stays on all night, and blankets are only provided at night for sleeping on a slanted wooden base. The rules state clearly that 'A prisoner shall not in any circumstances be required to sleep without a mattress'. For any breach of the rules prisoners can be, and are, kept in this or other cells in solitary confinement, on bread and water diets for months on end. One can hardly expect a cry of outrage on health grounds from the present medical officer who is Doctor Duane, the very same man who allowed Sean McCaughey to die of starvation in that prison in 1942.

The Visiting Committee is a body set up by the government to make regular prison visits, and to ascertain that all is well in the prisons. This body is made up of 'respectable and reputable' members of that class from whose ranks very few experience the reality of prison life. It is these 'pillars of society' whose job it is



Mountjoy prisoners in last year's protest riot

to investigate impartially the grievances of prisoners. These same people approached me in my cell in Portlaoise jail on Christmas Day 1970, after I had received a letter from my mother mentioning that an uncle of mine had been president of the GAA for 25 years. They informed me that they knew I was alright and that I'd be treated OK, but to keep away from the other prisoners as they were 'only a bunch of yobos'. Their role is really to put a democratic face on the injustices of our prison system, and meting out punishments of solitary confinement, and bread and water diets to those prisoners who merely demand to be treated as human beings.

LAUGHABLE

The Visiting Committee, like the walls not only keep the prisoners in, but also keep the eyes of the public well out.

Re-socialisation programmes and solutions proposed by the Minister for Justice and the Prison Officers' Association (POA) are laughable. The Minister informs us that his great re-socialisation programme is already under way, and the POA's solution of building more jails has

not yet been implemented. But it would be more reasonable to assume that the POA's solution, outrageous as it may seem, could well be the one to 'win out' while the general attitude towards imprisonment as a punishment of the criminal for his crime, is constantly encouraged among the public by judges, police and warders.

The Prisoners' Union was formed about eight months ago to demand some basic rights for the so-called 'social' prisoners arrived there. Encouraged by the fact that the 'politicals' could get their situation publicised, the ordinary prisoners formed themselves into a union to make demands on the governor for better treatment. This 'violence-orientated' and 'subversive' minority, as the POA's president and the Minister for Justice called them, consists of 112 of the 180-odd inmates of the jail.

Despite the campaign to intimidate the prisoners by beatings and other ill-treatment, the union is still strong and the union will never be cowed as long as the prisoners recognise the need to organise together.

Mr. Cooney's talk of the opportunities for prisoners to have 'friendly' associations with the screws is contradicted by the

rules. In three different paragraphs (114) the prison officer is reminded under pain of dismissal, he 'shall allow any familiarity on the part of the prisoner' and 'he shall not speak to a prisoner unnecessarily'. His mitigation programme consists of screws teaching the alphabet for 15 minutes each day, while rules which were written in 1919 for four hours (at least) per week allocated for education.

CHANGES

Liberal reformers in this country at last recognised the need for changes in our prison system. Trade unionists and groups and trade unionists are demanding that prisoners be treated as human beings. Social reformers say that any amount of reform will not touch the root social injustices that fellow-workers to jail to be 'looked after' by the scavengers of this society; theless, it is our duty to join in the reforms so that prisoners, in their present situation, will come to a better understanding of their present working-class people.

SUPERCHEAP

Some time ago we published two reports in 'The Worker'; one about conditions for workers in Ryan's garages, and one about child labour in Cork. This report is about both of these.

A young lad of about 15 from the flats in Killarney Street, Dublin, works as a petrol attendant in the Ballybough area. He told me that his earnings per week are £7. Out of this the company illegally deducts insurance money; illegally, because he is not yet 16. For this wage he and other young lads work from 8 a.m. to 10.30 p.m. with breaks during the day amounting to no more than two hours. This is a total of 12½ hours a day — and wait for it — for seven days a week it comes to a total of 87½ real working

hours, which works out roughly at 7½ per hour.

On top of all this conditions are bad; the boys are given a coat several times their size which often trails along the ground. After 6 p.m. there are no facilities for washing up, and they are often not permitted to use the toilets, so they have to use the nearest lane or doorway.

More than likely you will find that after 6 p.m. these young lads are given jobs of repairing punctures, and other 'small jobs' of this nature. These are jobs that a trained man should be doing, or the 'boys should be recognised as starting their apprenticeship to the trade.

Head eaten off

They are encouraged not to give the full amount of petrol to customers. How often

have we seen a young lad having the head eaten off him by a customer for this very reason?

The young lad and his friend asked me not to print their name or the name of the garage he worked in. When I asked him why he said: "Me ould fella'd kill me if I lost the job, and if you printed the name of the garage they'd know it was me and give me the boot; and I get more than the boot off the ould fella". I asked him would his father not object to the conditions he worked under. "Yeah, he's said he'll burn the place down but he doesn't mean it".

He went on to explain that his father had not worked for ten years due to illness; there are seven in the family and only himself, one of his sisters, and his mother worked. He doubted that their combined income came to much more than £20 a week, and this is the reason why he does not want to lose the job. As we have seen, he doesn't have much spare time to look for a job.

Where does the responsibility for this savage exploitation lie? The government is powerless to protect workers against profit-makers; indeed the government is made up out of these very people. The Union officials have not attempted to organise these boys "Sure it's pointless going on", they will all say "It's terrible, and something should be done about it". But they never do anything.

The only way to fight this exploitation is through solidarity; in other words the mechanics who work in these garages must look out for these young workers. This works two ways; it helps to safeguard these youngsters from money-mad bosses, and also to protect the trade from having SUPERCHEAP labour creating unemployment.

KEN QUINN

P.R.O. SET UP

THE SLIGHTEST CONTACT with our prison system should be enough to convince anyone of the need for a total change, not only in the institutions themselves but in the society which supports them. The founding of the Portlaoise Prisoners' Union was a good start, and now the formation of the Prisoners' Rights Organisation must be welcomed.

The organisation's long-term aim is to "try to seek the abolition of the present penal system and help in finding more appropriate ways of solving the problems which prisons are supposed to solve". However, there are enormous difficulties in the way of such an organisation, and unless it is clear about them, it will fail. It will be openly destroyed by the repressive machinery of the state, or else become so dependent on the patronage of "prominent people" that it is no longer really a prisoners' organisation. Either of these things could still happen to the Prisoners' Rights Organisation.

Its concentration on short-term aims such as library facilities and prison hygiene, leaves it wide open to both sorts of attack. It is always in danger of suppression by the government, the courts, or the prison authorities. There's certainly no guarantee that if an organisation is mild, worthy, and non-violent, the state will respect it.

The Prisoners' Rights Organisation has decided to direct its propaganda towards as wide an audience as possible. So far, so good. But this turns out to mean bending over backwards not to offend anyone, so that the aim is to project as good an image as possible rather than to get prisons seriously changed. This emphasis can't do anything but harm. If people think you want more books, they will be satisfied when a few mobile library vans move into Mountjoy and never think that there might be something fundamentally wrong with people in prisons in the first place.

Prisons are necessary for this society not because people are essentially evil but because society needs a category of scapegoats. It also needs a place put out of sight and mind those who either cannot or will not conform to its demands.

There are so many questions that the Prisoners' Rights Organisation should even ask; what prisons are for, what alternatives are, whether the capitalist law is necessarily unjust, what 'crimes' and so on.

The Prisoners' Rights Organisation has many things in its favour, not the least the active support of a great number of ex-prisoners. The picket on Mountjoy during July was mainly made up of ex-prisoners. These are the people who know the system best, and they make the leaders and the organisers in a movement to help themselves. But the tactics now being proposed could do away with their support. For example, the plan for a picket on Mountjoy prison on Sunday after Sunday could only exhaust the patience of supporters without getting any nearer the formation of a strong prisoners' union.

The constitution of the Prisoners' Rights Organisation is radical enough to live up to that promise. If not, it is nothing as damaging as the dismissal of wasted opportunity.

SWM

I wish to have further details of the Socialist Workers' Movement

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____

Send to: TOWER FLOOR, 95 CAPEL STREET, DUBLIN 1

Provo business as usual

The Provisional Republicans have taken some hard knocks in the past few weeks. In Belfast, several of their leading militants have been arrested. In the South, thousands of copies of their book 'Freedom Struggle' have been seized and the editor of 'An Phoblacht' is one of many of their members to be imprisoned.

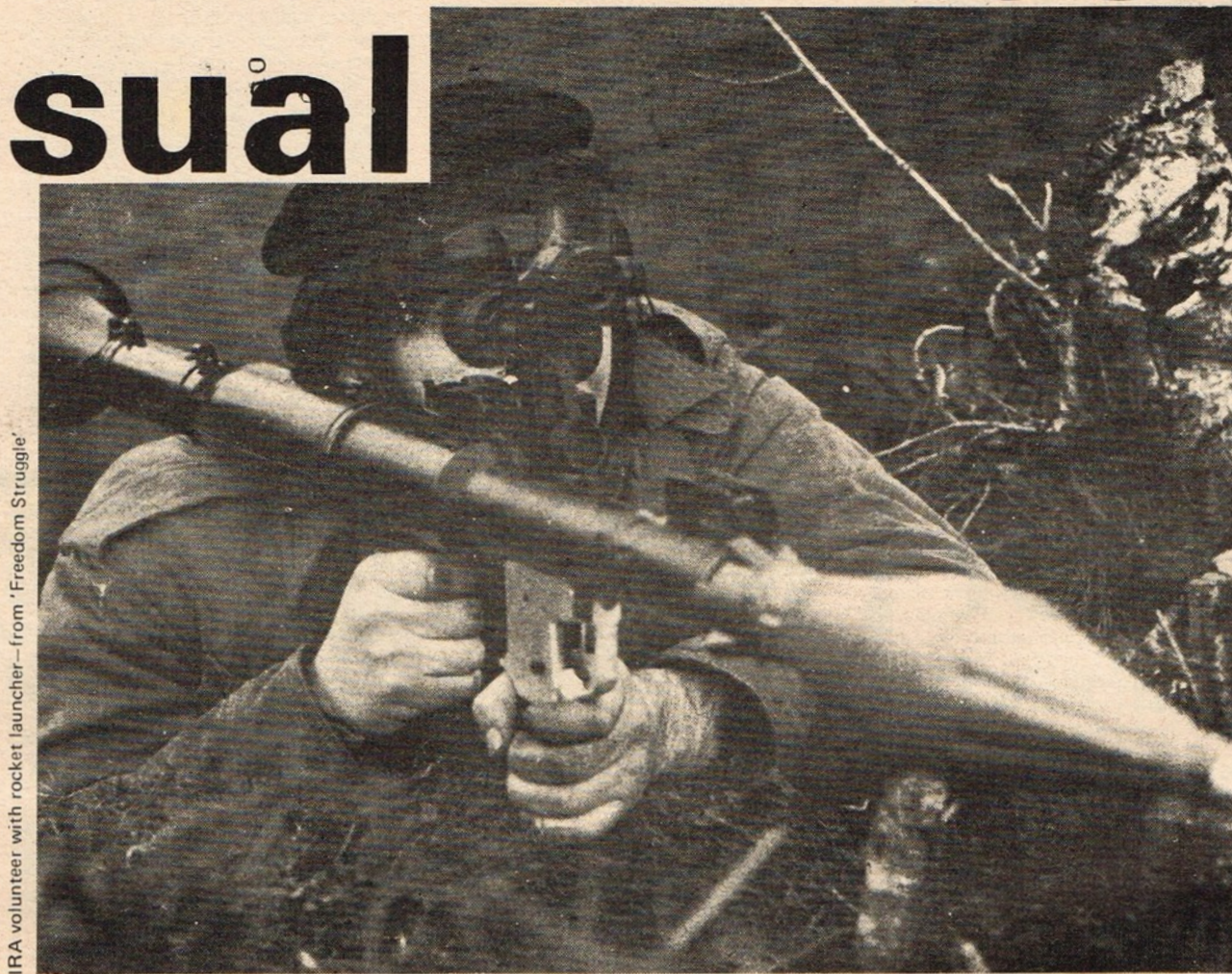
The Provisionals will be quick – and have been quick – to say that these losses are of no real consequence. The usual statements have come out: "The I.R.A. will not be beaten." Nobody would deny that the Provisionals have many times in the past shown their capacity to survive serious set-backs. And 150 members captured in the North in three months is a set-back by any standards.

But these events should provide something more than an assertion that "the IRA goes on". Conditions are changing, and the strategy and tactics need to be thought out again. But so much of the Provos' activity seems to be aimed at merely proving that they exist. It is, of course, important that they should exist, that they should not be defeated because that could open the way to bigger defeats for the working class. But that does not mean that we should accept the ways in which they prove themselves.

The purpose of the Dublin press conference seems only to have been to say: we are still active, and our leadership is intact. Nothing new came out of it, and the book launched at the conference gives no new explanation or justification for IRA activities, just a list of events. What the Provo leaders offered on that occasion was a very worn-out mixture of old-style nationalism and not-very-convincing social reformism.

On the military front, we see a sad attempt to marry the two by calling the bombing campaign an "economic bombing campaign". The Provisionals claim that their bombing can destroy the Northern Ireland economy. It sounds radical enough. But is it? 'Freedom Struggle' puts it this way:

"Both for strategic and tactical reasons a bombing campaign was commenced. The objects of this campaign were mainly two-fold: (1) to stretch the British Army to the limits of its resources and to keep pressure off the nationalist areas; (2) to weaken the economy by sabotage operations against government and commercial property with the British taxpayer picking



IRA volunteer with rocket launcher—from 'Freedom Struggle'

up the bill for damage done."

EFFECT

The truth of the matter is that the bombing campaign has not affected industrial production, and has only had the slightest effect on the level of new investment. The choice of targets has been mainly commercial rather than industrial premises, that is, places of less strategic value to the capitalist economy. The insurance companies have forked out for the damage. The city centre traders in Belfast have been given an enormous rate rebate to help them back on to their feet. We can safely say that the bombing campaign has done nothing to dislodge the capitalists from power, and that is what "destroying the (capitalist) economy" must mean.

Besides this, the bombing campaign has offered an easy excuse to loyalist workers to blame 'the Taigs' for any loss of jobs resulting from bomb damage. It has also given bosses an explanation for

reduced jobs and overtime, saying, for instance, that ship-owners would not bring ships into Belfast Repair yards because of 'the troubles'.

CONFIDENCE

It is true that the bombing campaign may have had an effect on the confidence of people in the nationalist areas. The fact that the Provos could go on against such odds was some sort of encouragement to continue the fight. But the only way the fight could be continued was actually to join the military campaign. Nowhere in the Provos' leaders' thinking, as expressed in 'Freedom Struggle' is there an idea of how the armed struggle could encourage and develop mass movement of opposition to the regime.

Indeed, one of the most striking things about the book is that it does not mention some of the high-points of the mass struggle. For instance, no mention of the organisation of mass resistance to

internment. No mention of the enormous march in Newry to protest against the Derry massacres. No mention of the burning of the British Embassy. No mention of the thousands of workers who left work to demand the release of Sean MacStiofain or the repeal of the Offences Against the State (Amendment) Act. The 'freedom struggle' is apparently something fought out by heroic bands of men in isolation from the masses.

Reporters at the press conference asked the Provisional leaders what they had to offer the working class. To the straight question, "Are you for the abolition of capitalism?", one of them got: "How do you mean?" None of the Provisional leaders seem to have too good an idea how the social and economic programme stuck on at the end of the book – the 'Eire Nua' programme – relates to the armed struggle they are engaged in. One of them provided an easy way out of the complication by stating: "We are not politicians". But surely it is clear that without a long-term political programme to guide the struggle, it must come unstuck.

The Provisionals concentrate all their energies on the one object of British withdrawal. Certainly it is an objective to be worked for – but only as part of an overall programme for revolution. Ruairi O'Bradaigh said not so long ago that what the Provisionals wanted was a "phased withdrawal", "so there wouldn't be any power vacuum". The Provos don't want a revolutionary situation, in other words. Very often, indeed, they give the impression that they want to slip into the gap at the top left by British withdrawal. Their leaders talk like the future government of the country – and sometimes claim to be the present one – rather than a group of people working to encourage people to overthrow the system.

APPLAUDING

Where that leads is obvious from 'Freedom Struggle' – applauding middle class journalists and politicians whenever they adopt any single point of policy akin to the Provos. It doesn't seem to matter that many of the people in Britain urging withdrawal from the North are anti-Irish and anti-republican, just so long as they agree on that one point. Similar to this is the innocence of the Provo leader's attitude to the right-wing loyalist organisations. They still hold out hope for talks with their leaders, in spite of their vicious behaviour and policies.

If the Provisionals are taking hard knocks and finding it just a bit more difficult than before to get people to defend and support them, they must blame themselves for it. The attitude of the Provo leadership, as shown in 'Freedom Struggle' and at the press conference to launch it, simply does not take account of the mass movement and of mass feelings. Daithi O'Connell was able to say that people could vote for the SDLP and still give the Provos support – which is obviously correct – but the analysis went no further than that. Asked if the election of the Assembly changed the context of the IRA struggle at all, the answer came from the Provo leaders: "Not one bit".

It doesn't change things that so many people have turned out to vote for scabby middle class parties which have consistently betrayed the people on whose backs they came to power? Surely it does. Surely it places very special responsibilities on radicals and revolutionaries to expose them, to seek to change consciousness, fight for leadership in the day-to-day struggles. It is certainly no answer to the problem simply to claim a mandate from the Second Dail or whatever. What the hell does that mean to people in the slums?

BRIAN TRENCH

equal pay

SHEILA DUNCAN

Women are great for profits. Every day, 280,000 of them make their way to offices, shops, schools, factories, laundries and hospitals. At the end of the week they'll take home an average wage of £15 – just over half the average male rate.

Many jobs are exclusively female: sewing, typing and general nursing. Like certain areas of factory work they are "women's work" – badly paid and badly organised.

A third of factory workers are women. Most of them are young and single. They are concentrated mainly in food, textile and clothing industries. But all the expanding service industries in the 26 Counties find women to be a cheap, tame, conscientious and flexible work force.

Light assembly work in the electronics industry is done chiefly by women, whose dexterity, helped by a background of knitting and needle-work, makes them

accurate and skilful workers. Their hourly rate is 40½p an hour; a man in electronics earns 66½p.

At present, few married women work outside the home – only 7%. Mothers have been kept at home with their large families. Marriage bars – formal and informal – lack of nursery and child-minding facilities have prevented married women from obtaining or maintaining employment.

Short supply

Now with rising marriage rates and the expansion of light industry, female labour is in short supply. Employers can make a virtue out of their interests: advertising 'Married Women Welcome', or providing factory nurseries – like one Dublin handbag manufacturer. Marriage bars are being lifted, attitudes are changing, prices and rents are rising, and many more married women will be hurrying back to employment – at cheap rates.

In the two years up to September 1972 men's hourly earnings increased by 30% – women's by 32.9%. It looks like a long slow crawl to equal pay. Menatime employers arrange special evening and early morning shifts for married women and the part-time female labour force increases rapidly.

Women work less overtime than men and are prohibited by the Factories Act from doing night work (10pm – 6 am) although nurses and night cleaners, for example, do work these hours. This accounts for some of the difference between the pay of men and women workers – but it goes much deeper than

that. Girls leaving school are expected to spend four or five years in badly paid, semi-skilled jobs, en route to the altar. Few training facilities are available to them. Apprenticeships for women are mainly in hairdressing and shop-work. In the grocery trade a young girl serves an eight year apprenticeship – she has probably left and got married before her time is up or the full rate paid to her.

Vocation

A girl's real vocation and apprenticeship is supposed to be marriage and motherhood. In their discussion document on apprenticeship AnCO advises that discrimination against women be removed, but of course, they argue, women won't want to do craft apprenticeships anyway. While the emphasis is primarily on the Woman's place in the home, they probably won't.

Women will continue to be a cheap, pliable labour force, used, abused, and super-exploited, if this goes on. Men have nothing to gain from this. A man may have a family to support, but it may be his wife who will be given a job because she will work for less. Needs aren't considered in this society – profits are.

That's a comrade there with her hair in a cap. She isn't doing women's work, she's doing bosses' work. She deserves help and encouragement to get better pay and conditions.

NEXT ISSUE: EQUAL PAY – WHAT ARE THE UNIONS DOING ABOUT IT?



the worker

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Snooping about

Stephen McGonagle, last year's President of the I.C.T.U., went to New York recently to speak about Irish labour. After delivering a lecture on the struggle to build the Irish labour movement, McGonagle, in explaining his role as a trade union leader, proved to be working very hard at selling out that labour movement. He said that the best way for Irish workers to progress was to co-operate with the employers and with the government. An example of such co-operation to him was the National Wage Agreement. He even came out in favour of foreign exploitation. He hadn't heard about his union's ad in the Wall Street Journal inviting American firms to invest in Ireland (all that cheap labour), but he thought it was a "good idea"

Just in case anybody might be over-impressed by Noel Browne's speech on the Banks Bill (fine in parts: "It is not the job of a socialist to work the capitalist system, it is the job of a socialist to wreck it") or his call to nationalise Tara Mines, it's worth asking the question just what is Noel Browne up to in trying to get into the Parliamentary Labour Party? When he went for the Senate he made it very clear that he would not accept the Labour Party whip. But being in the Parliamentary Labour Party could only mean taking the whip.

Nothing the workers have ever won should be taken for granted. It took a stoppage and a mass meeting in a Navan furniture factory recently to get

holiday pay for the men at the agreed national rate. If we ever once relax our attention on these things, the bosses will take advantage of it.

Gerry Harte, of the Workers Union of Ireland, was one of the people nominated by Mr. Cosgrave on the Labour panel to the Senate. But Harte seems to have forgotten that he is supposed to be representing workers. Speaking in the Senate on the bill to restrict wage rises for bank officials, he referred to "the firm I represent". (Dail Report, Vol. 75 No. 6, column 528).

Harte works in Guinness. So it was no mere coincidence that on the first sitting of the new Senate, he came striding in alongside Lord Iveagh, head of the Guinness family - and firm.

The Union of Construction and Allied Trades Technicians (U.C.A.T.T.) took a decision at its last regional conference against any further wage agreement. Now the Regional Secretary, Michael Gibney, has seen fit to send out a circular to branch secretaries asking for members' opinions on the National Wage Agreement and for a mandate for U.C.A.T.T. delegates to the Congress conference in September - as if the decision had not been taken!

Everything the leaders of that particular union do seems designed to discourage the ordinary members from taking a full part in the union's affairs. Although it's the biggest craft union in the 26 Counties it had no resolution down for the I.C.T.U. conference in Killarney - until quick-thinking Michael Gibney thought up

something harmless about payment for jurors.

A recent joint meeting of two Dublin branches to discuss the National Wage Agreement was attended by about half-a-dozen members. But members also complain they can't get hold of union officials to visit sites. Navan Trades Council took two months to get an agreement from U.C.A.T.T. to co-operate in their furniture trade card check.

There's something rotten in U.C.A.T.T. The British 'parent' union is thinking of amalgamating with another union because it's short of funds. The only reason for that is that U.C.A.T.T. had the greatest number of full-time officials per member of any union, and the highest-paid ones at that.

WRITE NOW!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PROVOS INCAPABLE

Dear Comrades,

When we look back on the history of the Provisional I.R.A. we see that they have demonstrated their complete inability to carry on a truly working class politically motivated struggle. While many so called revolutionaries (notably P.E.) rave about the anti-imperialist fight the fact remains that the Provisional Sinn Fein still resemble the middle class nationalist party of 50 years ago. Although drawing most of their support from working class areas they have failed to realise the potential of that class united under the banner of Socialism.

On many occasions the Provisionals have inflicted severe hardships on working class communities. Many innocent people have been killed as a result of I.R.A. action in built-up areas. These incidents have provided valuable propaganda for the British Army as well as for people like the SDLP yet to a large extent the working class have not deserted the Provos. This is mainly due to the fact that these areas are under constant army occupation which enables the Provos to portray themselves as the "Army of the People". This in effect means that they are largely dependent on the continuation of army repression for their support. By keeping their political movement subordinate to the military struggle they have failed to give that struggle a sense

of direction or co-ordination. They have failed to realise the full implication of British Imperialism and this is clearly demonstrated by their almost complete inactivity in the South. They have also failed to recognise the tools by which imperialism may be effectively defeated and have completely ignored the potential of militant trade unionism.

Yet even with all their failings they still claim that they are Socialists fighting for a Socialist Republic and following in the footsteps of Connolly. The claim to be the "Army of the People" while in many respects they have taken advantages of the people. The Catholic Working Class obviously need armed resistance and in many cases the Provisionals have courageously filled this role. But they have never organised their supporters on working class issues and therefore can not be regarded as true socialists.

The present Provisional campaign is not a step on the way to a Workers Republic, and indeed in many cases it is counter-productive. Revolutionaries fully appreciate the need for an armed force but it must at all times be supported by a politically aware working class and act in the interests of that class. The Provisionals in their present form are incapable of working class revolution. It is the duty of all Socialists to work for an end to the Provisional offensive military action until it has the full support of an organised working class. It is then and only then that an "Army of the People", can come into existence.

A BELFAST COMRADE

academic historians. They see the IWW as an anarchist club with no working class orientation.

Within the last year or so the IWW has been involved in a couple of industrial actions. They were both very one-shot affairs, with the IWW 'leadership' (contrary to their 'anarchism'), becoming very much involved, the workers themselves often being alienated from their own struggles.

To call the IWW a union is, I think, the height of arrogance. A union primarily exists to defend its members against the boss, bad working conditions and wages, and ultimately the sack. The IWW could not defend anyone's bread and butter, and it is insulting to the working class to say it could.

The very lack of discussion within the IWW concerning issues facing the working class - the importance of trade union fractions, for example - reflects their own distance from the working class. The IWW has no answers and does not even seem to have asked the questions.

The whole question of rank-and-file fractions is a top priority for the American Left, as their growth reflects an increasing militancy within the working class. It is from around these fractions that the new American revolutionary organisations will be built.

In 1973 the IWW is mainly students and ex-students singing 'solidarity forever' and trying to turn the clock back fifty years.

WOBBLIES HARK BACK

In the last issue of THE WORKER, a Belfast reader advocated the example of the Industrial Workers of The World (the 'Wobblies') in America, in his letter on Trade Unions. Here, a SWM comrade in the States gives his impression of the IWW:

The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) was formed in 1904 by working people and radical trade unionists. It organised the unskilled and most oppressed - mainly new immigrants.

Unfortunately, the present reality of the IWW does not live up to its history and mythology. Although many local branches are listed in the 'Industrial Worker', only Chicago and Portland, Oregon, have any semblance of activity, and all membership is unsure. The very existence of such a vivid presence the IWW has distorted the section in one of two ways. One class' This in "going to the working militantly s. factory jobs, and very with the AFL" Join the IWW; Down equivalent of H2O" (ED. - American Unions), and usugh Congress of Trade are the Joe Hill rom, cs/martyrs. The rest of the 'organ' are the more

WHAT WE STAND FOR

SOCIALIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT

The SOCIALISTS WORKERS' MOVEMENT is a revolutionary workers' movement, whose aim is the organisation of the working class in the struggle for power and the transformation of the existing social order. All its activities, its methods and its internal organisation are subordinated to this and are designed to serve this purpose.

Capitalism is a system based on production for profit, not for human need. This system is driven by the necessity to accumulate profit, which means that capitalists compete with one another, both nationally and internationally.

The capitalist class is a ruling class whose ownership and control of the means of production is based on the exploitation of the working class. Thus, a small minority rules society. In Ireland, 9 per cent of the population owns 90 per cent of the wealth.

The contradictions between competing capitalists, produce war, poverty and crisis. The struggle between the classes will produce the overthrow of capitalist society.

Capitalism needs the working class; the working class does not need capitalism. Present day capitalism is entering a period of stagnation and crisis; it attempts to solve its problems at the expense of working-class living standards and democratic rights.

This system is international: in the drive to expand it must extend its power over the whole world. 250 companies dominate the international economy. The search for markets and materials has led to imperialism - the brutal oppression of the peoples of two-thirds of the world and the effective strangling of those peoples' attempts to develop their societies.

Imperialism

International capitalism operates in Ireland through British imperialism's military, economic and political domination of the whole country. Britain maintains a standing army in the North. British imperialism has divided the working class on sectarian lines. British investments throughout Ireland equal 50 per cent of all investment in manufacturing and commerce. The Dublin and Stormont governments are subservient to the dictates of the international system and thus to its agent, Westminster.

Imperialism dominates Ireland as a whole: it treats Ireland as a unity. The struggle to defeat imperialism, therefore, must be fought in a united way throughout the 32 counties. This involves the overthrow of the Orange-Unionist state in the North and of the Green-Tory state in the South.

Irish capitalism, Green and Orange, is wholly integrated into the world system. Because of this, the mere unification of Ireland, or the removal of British troops, cannot in themselves mean the defeat of imperialism in Ireland. There is no independent republic this side of the Workers' Republic. Only by the uniting of the

working class can power be taken from the Orange and Green ruling class minorities and victory be won over imperialism.

It is the Irish working class and small farmers who bear the load of this imperialist domination. The contrast between Ireland, a neo-colony, and the Western capitalist countries is especially glaring:

- North and South:
 - 120,000 unemployed—the highest rate of unemployment in Europe;
 - 60,000 redundancies expected in the next four years;
 - 100,000 unfit houses and the worst housing record in Europe;
 - £9 per week net average income per rural household—the third lowest in Europe;
 - 1,000 political prisoners.

The working class has the capacity to end exploitation and oppression. In Ireland North and South the working class is now the predominant social class numerically and in terms of potential strength. The class has achieved a new self-confidence and militancy; this needs political co-ordination. Independent working class action can create a society based on production for human need, democratically controlled by the majority. By organising at the point of production and in the localities the workers can lead a struggle to the Workers' Republic. This would not mean merely a State takeover of the means of production, but workers' control of all aspects of society, local and national. Such a society does not exist in any country today.

The Socialist Workers' Movement stands for the nationalisation of banks and industry under workers' control and without compensation. To this end we actively engage in the day-to-day struggles of workers and small farmers and seek to build a mass working-class party which can lead the struggle to build socialism in Ireland as part of the struggle for international socialism. A Workers' Republic cannot survive without the aid of the British and Continental working classes and the international extension of the revolutionary fight.

The Socialist Workers' Movement opposes the E.E.C. to which the only alternative is socialism in Ireland, as part of a socialist Europe. The Socialist Workers' Movement opposes N.A.T.O. and all other international military alliances. We are independent of Washington, Moscow and Peking. We support all anti-imperialist struggles throughout the world.

Workers struggles

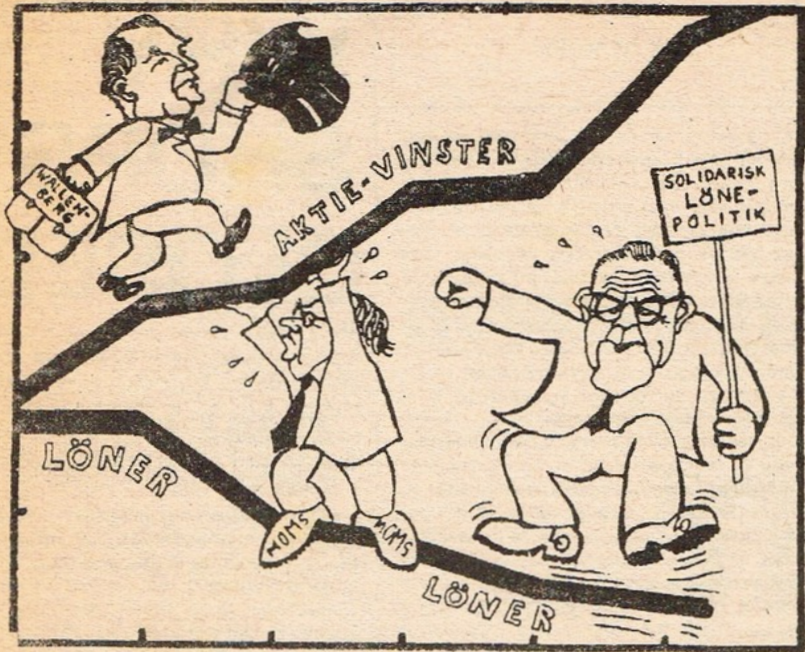
The Socialist Workers' Movement fights for:—

- full support for workers and small farmers in struggle;
- defence of the living standards of workers and small farmers;
- rank-and-file control and socialist leadership of the trade unions;
- the election of all trade union

- officials, subject to recall;
- all strikes to be declared official if supported by the majority of the workers concerned;
- a minimum wage of at least £30 for a 35-hour week;
- equal pay for women;
- 100 per cent trade unionism;
- opposition to all anti-trade union legislation;
- opposition to all incomes policies under capitalism;
- against unemployment, redundancy and lay offs. We support the demand Five days' work or five days' pay;
- repeal of all repressive legislation—e.g. Special Powers Act and Offence Against the State Act;
- extension of the Civil Resistance Campaign in the Six Counties;
- release of all political prisoners;
- evacuation of British troops from Ireland;
- defence of working class areas against military and sectarian attack
- freedom of worship for all religious groupings;
- total separation of Church and State
- an end to clerical control of education;
- a secular and comprehensive education system controlled by teachers, pupils and parents;
- raising of school-leaving age to 18;
- free education to the highest level;
- adult wages and adult rights for workers at 18;
- free and comprehensive health service;
- end to means-tested benefits;
- minimum wage for the unemployed and pensioners;
- one family—one house;
- emergency housing programme and expropriation of all building land;
- tenants' control of estates, including rents;
- full social equality for women;
- free contraceptive facilities with full medical services;
- 24-hour nurseries;
- income for small farmers and agricultural labourers on parity with industrial rates;
- division of large estates under control of local farmers;
- the building of a genuine co-operative movement among farmers and fishermen;
- nationalisation of hunting and fishing rights.

The SOCIALIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT is a democratic organisation open to all those who accept its principles and objectives, who work in one of the units of the movement, agree to recognise its discipline and pay dues.

"Internationalism; to some people this is the great bug-aboo which frightens them off from socialism" (James Connolly). The struggle for a Workers' Republic in Ireland is inseparable from the international struggle against capitalism. The Socialist Workers' Movement fights to build a mass party of the working class as part of a revolutionary international of working class parties.



Left: Cartoon shows Swedish trade union leaders stamping down wages while profits rise

SWEDEN TO CHANGE?

On 16th September general elections will be held in Sweden. Voters will elect candidates to local, regional and national assemblies. But the really important elections are the national ones. For the first time in forty years, the Social Democrats may not be able to form a government.

The Social Democratic Party was founded in the late 1880's under a strong influence from the German mass working class party of that time. Already by the turn of the century it had lost much of its militancy and no longer had a revolutionary perspective on society.

Today, it is an administrator of monopoly capitalism. The party's main means of carrying out this work is through organised class collaboration between employers' organisations and the trade union leaders. It is true that the working class has benefitted from many of the reforms brought in by the Social Democrats, but

they also have to pay the price now that the economic fortunes of the country have changed.

The apparatus of the trade union bureaucracy, known as LO, is closely tied to the state and the Social Democrats and acts as a police force within the working class. The real power in Swedish society lies with the capitalists, the union apparatus and the state machine - not in parliament.

The main bourgeois parties are, roughly conservative, liberal and centre. The last two have co-operated in the past but the centre party has also given support to the Social Democrats. The most likely alternative to a Social Democratic government is a coalition of some of these parties. The change would not mean a great deal for Swedish workers. There might, however, be stricter use of the existing repressive laws. The bourgeois parties mainly represent smaller capitalists, and there is little chance of them shifting power back

to them from the big monopolies.

The election of a bourgeois government would certainly not mean that the reforms brought in by the Social Democrats, for instance, in social welfare, would immediately be done away with. After all, bourgeois governments have brought in similar systems in Holland, Belgium and Norway.

Communist Party

The Swedish Communist Party (VPK), which has been supporting the Social Democratic government, gets about 4%-5% of the votes, and is the only party to the left of the Social Democrats in the parliament. Three small left-wing groups will be putting up candidates in September's elections. But none of them - right-wing Stalinists, Maoists, and the Swedish section of the Fourth International - have any chance of getting candidates elected.

Another revolutionary group, the Communist League, has launched a political campaign which aims at using the increased interest in politics to expose the real functions of the bourgeois parliament; they are not putting up any candidates or supporting those of any other organisation. They do not think that this would help build a mass political movement within the Swedish working class, the most important task facing revolutionaries in Sweden today.

The possibilities of building such a movement are clearly increasing. Recent strikes have shown that the grip of the union leaders and also of the Social Democrats is weakening. One of the most recent of these strikes, last February at a SAAB car plant was beaten when management and union leaders combined to split the workers. However, in order to maintain their position the union leaders in many cases have thought it necessary to launch campaigns against the 'splitters' in the unions - meaning left-wingers, whose influence is growing.

Left group banned

On June 28th, the Communist League was banned by the French government. The reason given was its part in organising a demonstration to protest against a fascist meeting, a demonstration during which violence occurred and policemen were injured - in fact, a suspiciously large number of policemen; it seemed that the authorities deliberately provoked the incidents. Alain Krivine, general secretary of the League, was arrested under the 'anti-wrecker' law, which is similar to the former Minister for Justice Michael O'Morain's proposal on the Criminal Justice Bill.

The action of the French government was so outrageous that even the Communist Party and the Socialist Party and Radicals, normally enemies of the revolutionary left, were forced to protest. In many countries demonstrations were held - Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Mexico, Japan and Denmark.

The Socialist Workers Movement issued the following statement: "The Socialist Workers Movement condemns the recent actions of the French

government in outlawing the Communist League (Ligue Communiste). We pledge our solidarity with the members of the Communist League and other revolutionary groups in their struggle against this repression.

We note the parallel between the French repression and that being suffered in this country, where thousands are interned".

A public meeting was held in Dublin, at which the platform represented both Sinn Fein, The Revolutionary Marxist Group (associated internationally with the Communist League), and the Socialist Workers Movement. Representatives of other organisations spoke from the floor.

This degree of unity has been long looked for in Ireland. It has been followed by a picket on a Bastille Day ball, and by a series of meetings between a group of left-wing organisations. Unity against the left-wing organisations. Unity against the action of the French government has resulted in moves towards united action to fight repression in this country.



ALAIN KRIVINE

PLANNED GIVING

Vatican Finances by Corrado Pallenberg (Pelican, 47½p)

This is a useful little book for information on the wealth of the Catholic Church. Pallenberg is no fiery cleric-hater, and his book takes a middle course between criticism of church finances, and apology, justification, and even approval for Vatican wealth.

The author was refused Vatican permission to inspect the books, and so relies for his information on "sober, level-headed bankers and businessmen who are in touch with Vatican administration",

as well as his own calculation and leads.

The teaching of Christ (take nothing for your journey), is contrasted with the actual history of the church. Pallenberg sketches the main infamies of this history. To take two examples; The papal states were built up and extended during the Renaissance by the notorious Borgias (one of whom was Pope) through conquest, murder, and expropriation from their fellow robber barons. During thirteen years of reign, Clement VIII donated over one million scudi in cash to his nephews.

ALLEGIANCE

The Concordat with Mussolini ended an old hostility between the Italian state and the Vatican. Under the agreement,

Fascist Italy handed over about £17 million. All the newly appointed bishops had to swear their allegiance to the Fascist state and government and all parish priests intoned a prayer for the Italian government at the end of mass.

What should concern us most is the financial picture today. The interest in Vatican postage stamps means that, for example, nearly £9,000,000 was made on just three series of stamps at the end of 1967. Two-thirds of Vatican capital is invested in Italy, and laymen represent church interests on company boards (for obvious reasons!). Pius XII's three nephews dominated the Vatican's financial affairs for years.

Immobiliare is one of the biggest and most successful real estate and building companies in the world, and the main

International News



With Bundesbank President Klasen



With Bayer chief Hansen



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With Mannesmann chief Overbeck

BREZHNEV'S PURPOSE

THE RECENT VISIT to the United States of the Soviet Union leader, Leonid Brezhnev, tells us a great deal about the nature of Russian 'socialism'. The visit had much more to do with promoting trade between the two super-powers than with promoting 'peace and friendship', as the propaganda merchants on both sides would have us believe.

U.S. capitalism has a very real interest in gaining a foothold in the USSR which it sees as a source of raw materials and a field for expanding investment; wages are low and there is no trouble from striking workers.

The Japanese have already moved in on the profitable Soviet gas and oil deposits, and the Russians are seeking credit of one billion dollars from them to further exploit these resources. European capital is also beginning to flow in, largely in the form of heavy machinery.

The Americans are fast workers, however. David Rockefeller, described by Time Magazine as the 'archetypical American capitalist' recently opened a branch of his Chase Manhattan Bank in Moscow (at No. 1 Karl Marx Square). The Bank of America and First National City will follow shortly.

In June, the huge American petrol company, Occidental, signed a deal worth 8 billion dollars. Brezhnev said he wants to see trade with America rise to the value of 250 billion over the next 20 years.

If the Americans are looking for cheap materials, cheap labour and a profitable area for investment, what are the Russians after? The Russian economy, far from being the crisis-free, shining example of socialism in action that its defenders claim it to be, is in serious trouble. Agricultural output has been falling steadily since 1970 and the Russians have had to buy massively from the West - 2 billion dollars worth of grain in 1972. This in turn has generated a balance of payments crisis.

In industry too the growth rate has

been declining from an average of about 8 per cent per annum from 1965 to 1970 to under 4 per cent in 1972. Massive spending on armaments, estimated at anything up to 40 per cent of national income, has meant a severe lack of capital for investment in other areas of the economy.

The Russians need to import capital and technological knowhow. Brezhnev was accompanied to the West by 50 Soviet foreign trade, industry and agriculture officials.

In spite of all Russia's attempts to solve its problems by turning to the western capitalist powers, the working class is still the key to production, and it is here that the Soviet leaders face their biggest problem. Wages have been frozen for the whole of 1973, and workers show little desire to slog over their machines for the miserable rewards they are offered. Not allowed to strike for better wages and conditions, they retaliate with sabotage and low output. So much for Workers' control!

Supporters of the Russian regime often claim that, whatever else its faults may be, there is near equality between workers and leaders, that the unequal distribution of wealth in capitalist countries cannot be found in Russia. Well, Brezhnev enjoys a standard of living that would match that of any leading western capitalist. He owns four foreign cars: a Maserati sports car, a Cadillac Eldorado, a Mercedes 450, and a Rolls Royce Silver Cloud. As well as his Moscow home he has a massive country retreat at Zavidova, 70 miles from the city. There he has a magnificent swimming pool and sauna, high speed power boats and his own hunting preserve.

Incidentally, the Russian state press blamed the whole Watergate scandal in America on right-wing agitators who were trying to upset the friendly relations between Russia and the USA.

stronghold of the Vatican financial empire. Immobiliare has large interests in hotels, buildings, industrial companies and a clinic, and more besides. Immobiliare became "imperialist" when it began building and demolition in Paris, put up the tallest skyscraper in the world in Montreal, and a satellite city of 100,000 inhabitants in Mexico.

One of the main owners of the Watergate hotel in Washington is the Vatican. The main fields of Vatican activity include five banks, four insurance companies, four firms, Finsider, the giant steel company, three Real Estate enterprises, the Pesenti cement group, a flour and spaghetti company, and gas and textile firms.

Massimo Spadd, one of the Vatican's lay financiers, is on the boards of the financial holding Finanziaria (capital 122 billion lira), a boiler-making firm (2,500 million lira), a cotton mills (2,500 million) Siemens Elettra (4 billion), and a skin and leather company. He is president of Lancia, the big car factory, and of the Gianni building firm. The church has 'catholic' tastes, says the author.

Mussolini allowed the church to go

tax-free dividends, but when a later government wanted to change this, the Vatican threatened to throw on the market all the shares it possessed. This would have led to an economic crisis. The tax exemption, however, is now ended, but in its day amounted to 1,087 million lira a year. Vatican investment in shares in Italy alone is approximately 90,000 million lira.

The Vatican has ties with the Rothschilds, the Credit Suisse in Geneva, and with Hambros Bank in London. The career of Cardinal Spellman sparkles with various financial coups; in 1960 his diocese's annual revenues and collections were £60 million. Whenever he visited Rome he booked the royal suite at the Grand Hotel.

Whatever the relief money given around the world by the Church (and it is substantial), what is the justification for being so neck-deep in the system? Can it be the teal live, or the 'church of the p' is so heavily committed to h enterprises?

DES DERWIN

SDLP GETS IN ON THE ACT

THE SIGNIFICANCE of the first meeting of the Northern Ireland Assembly was largely lost in the confusion of the headline-stealing antics of the ultra-loyalists. It would, however, be a grave mistake to underestimate the role the Assembly is supposed to play, not in providing 'democracy' for the North, or in solving the problems that face the majority of people, such as military and political repression, unemployment, poverty, and slum housing, but in finally absorbing the last elements of the Catholic middle class into the political structures of British rule in the Six Counties.

For the whole fifty year life-span of the old Stormont regime, the Catholic middle class was excluded from any share in power. They made temporary alliances with the anti-unionist workers hoping to use them in order to carve out a comfortable niche for themselves in the ranks of the ruling class. The days of such alliances are over. The entry of the SDLP into the Assembly marks the first major turning point for the Catholic middle class.

Now that they have been promised a share in the new Executive, the SDLP, in the interests of the class they represent, will try to ensure that other doors will be opened to them, that they will obtain places in every department of the state apparatus for their well-shot supporters, the propertied Catholics. We have already heard them demand a say in the running of the police force. They have often complained that not enough Catholics have £10,000-a-year posts in the Civil Service.

This new Assembly is as high as 'democracy' can go in the North. It will be the working class, Catholic and Protestant, who will pay the price of making this sham democracy work. The road the SDLP has taken to power is already littered with the bodies of hundreds. The British rulers will see to it that if necessary hundreds more will die to ensure they stay in. But that will only be the case if the British bosses and their Irish allies are allowed to get away with it.

How are they to be prevented? Some people insist that the main thing is to keep on fighting for full democracy within the Six Counties. The communist



Assembly or no Assembly, life goes on more or less as usual

party has said that it wants to see the powers of the Assembly increased to make it more democratic. The Officials are still insisting on the Civil Rights Policy. The Provisionals on the other hand say that the way forward is to continue the same military type campaign as in the past.

The Provos are right on one point: the Six County state must be smashed; it cannot be reformed. The Officials are right when they say there must be working class unity. But for all their correct generalisations neither has a strategy which CAN smash the state OR unite the working class.

Both consider that the two aims contradict each other. The Provos say there can be no working class unity until the state is smashed; the Officials, that the state cannot be smashed until there is working class unity. But the Provo strategy for smashing the state cannot create unity, largely because it offers no real alternative to the 26 Counties. The Officials' civil rights strategy cannot unite the working class because Protestant workers will remain 'loyal' so long as the state power is intact.

Class Unity

Working class unity is something that must be achieved not simply because sectarianism is 'nasty', but because only a united working class can achieve social-

ism, and only socialism can destroy imperialism. But working class unity will not come BEFORE the struggle to destroy the state, and it cannot be left until AFTER, because without it the state will not be smashed. It must, and will, come BEFORE the struggle to destroy the state, and it cannot be left until AFTER, because without it the state will not be smashed. It must, and will, come DURING the struggle against the state, provided that struggle is fought correctly.

The nature of things in the North

CHAIRMAN NAT!

NAT MINFORD, the first chairman of the Assembly has not had a smooth rise to fame and fortune.

When his father died back in the early 1950's, the Unionist Party, instead of following the usual custom of offering the seat to the eldest son, offered it instead to Nat's brother-in-law, an ex-public school boy with a distinguished R.A.F. record. Nat had played no part in defending the glorious British Empire. What's more, his obsession with the bottle, and the fact that he had married the daughter of 'big Saddle', a local mill worker, did not endear Nat to his father's pals.

But luckily for Nat, his brother-in-law a Scottish Nationalist, turned the seat

down. Since then Nat has followed whoever happened to be in power at the time. He never found difficulty in shifting allegiance from O'Neill to Chichester Clark, then to Faulkner.

When his mother died in 1963 Nat inherited the family estates near Templepatrick in Antrim, but had to go through an embarrassing court case to prevent his brother and sister from sharing the fortune with him.

In 1970, at the time of the Bannside bye-election, Nat said he hoped to see "a Protestant parliament for a Protestant people". He quickly changed it to "a progressive parliament for a prosperous people" but later had to apologise for a sectarian remark.

by M Miller

has made it inevitable that the struggle should be begun by Catholic workers, but, alone, they cannot finish it. Whether or not they ever draw Protestant workers into the struggle depends on how they themselves fight it. For working class unity to become a real possibility the struggle must be fought on socialist lines, and it cannot simply offer the set-up in the South totally dominated by capitalism and imperialism, as the alternative to the set up in the North. It must be a 32 county struggle. It must be a struggle that puts the interests of the working class to the fore.

It must have a revolutionary strategy for fighting on such issues as wages and conditions, unemployment and redundancies. It must be able to show the links, between the attacks on the living standards of all workers in Ireland, North and South, with the existence of imperialism and it must be able to show that 'native' capitalism is no alternative. It must advocate working class action to lead the struggle against repression and discrimination.

Such a strategy will not be as dramatic as one which offers immediate results if only more people would take up guns and plant bombs. It will not be as wide-ranging in its appeal as one which limits itself to the achievement of an imaginary liberal democracy in order to foster unity with 'progressive' middle class Catholics. But it is the only one that can bring a final solution to the grave problems that face the working class of Ireland. It is the only strategy that can smash the Six County state and its counterpart in the South. It is the only one that can unite the working class against their common enemy - imperialism and its Orange and Green capitalist allies.

WHY SHOPS CLOSED

For weeks now most of Dublin supermarkets have been closed Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday nights, due to a dispute with the Irish National Union of Vintners, Grocers and Allied Trades Assistants ("Banba Hall Union").

The supermarket owners have been spending a lot of money putting half-page ads in the national newspapers, put forward their case, and insinuating union dictatorship. Thus the shoppers are getting a one-sided view of this dispute and a distorted one at that.

The union itself has handed the bosses their ammunition on a plate. Not only have they not made any statements about the dispute, but they have failed to provide adequate information to their own members.

In a circular the union sent round to its members, it failed to mention what was looking for; it merely stated that overtime was banned. This created confusion amongst the workers of several supermarkets, and allowed the management a free hand in spreading anti-union propaganda.

The Labour Court recommended the union should agree to talk to the owners; it might not be a bad idea if they did some more talking to their members.

Incidentally, in their claim to the Labour Court, the union said that supermarket profits were only "low" because of "under-cost selling" - that sounds suspiciously like an argument for high prices!

The Banba Hall Union has always run its affairs undemocratically. Some of the older men who run it seem to care little about the younger people - many of the girls - who make up most of the membership. In one Dublin supermarket, the union has been organised for six months and has had two shop stewards in time. Both were appointed by the officials without the members approval.

There is much to be supported in the union's claim (better rates for overtime, opposing any worsening of conditions, present staff, etc.), but in fighting such a grabbing, parasitical lot as the supermarket bosses, it needs to be based on UNI. Only with full democracy in the shop and in the union can there be a fight for unity.

BELFAST BUSES PRESS GANG

Some months ago (Worker April 1973) we reported on the proposed merger between Ulsterbus and Belfast Corporation Transport (BCT). A mass meeting of the BCT men threw out the proposals and the Government, in the form of the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company (NITH Co), stepped in and took control of Belfast's bus service. What this has meant is that the merger has actually gone ahead in spite of the total opposition of the men. The details of this can not have been published anywhere.

The state company has 99.9 per cent holding in Ulsterbus, and at least two of its directors, Werner Heubeck and Herbert Catherwood, are directors of Ulsterbus as well. BCT has now changed its name to Citybus, and Werner Heubeck has been put in control! The busmen opposed the merger because it would have meant fantastic wage cuts and redundancies. Since Heubeck took over the lay-offs have begun. First to go were the BCT clerical staff who have been replaced by temporary staff on a six-month contract. More redundancies are planned for the near future.

Heubeck, who took control of Ulsterbus in 1966, has a reputation for making big profits out of a public service. This is due mainly to his ruthless attacks on the wages and conditions of the transport workers. Heubeck has made hundreds of men redundant by introducing one-man operated buses. He made the 22 depot

managers personally responsible for seeing that their depot runs at a profit. Failure to do so is punished with the sack.

Saving a few hundred

The case of Mr. Brian Innes gives an idea of how the Heubeck regime operates. Mr. Innes was a bus driver for 37½ years. He was more 'loyal' to the company than most of his colleagues, he even broke strikes in the past. He was due to be made redundant in September when the Bangor depot goes over to one-man-buses. The company would have had to contribute a few hundred pounds to his redundancy payment. At the end of July when Mr. Innes was on holiday the company demanded him to have a medical check-up. The doctor advised him to retire there and then. His 'voluntary' retirement has cost him his redundancy money, and saved Heubeck from paying out the niggardly few hundred.

Heubeck had a scheme for making BCT run at a profit too. This was what men rejected at their mass meeting, and it is little wonder that they did. He tried to increase the working week from 40 hours to 42, with a cut in wages by £9 per week! The basic rate for BCT men was slightly less than that for Ulsterbus men, but they made up the difference through a series of bonus schemes. Average pay was £39 a week.

Under the merger scheme Heubeck offered £28.50 basic, as well as doing away with the bonuses and replacing them with a 'merit bonus' of £1.50 per week, payable at six-monthly intervals. Any form of "misconduct" would result in non-payment of the merit bonus. So if a man worked for five months and

three weeks without 'misconduct' and was then accused of some misdemeanour, he would automatically lose his six months bonus!

Splitting the Workers

To get the agreement through Heubeck tried to split the workers. He tried first to buy off the smaller unions by offering them fantastic awards for accepting the merger. He then offered the majority of the men the miserable conditions outlined above, and stated that unless ALL parts of the agreement were accepted, none of them would be implemented. Heubeck hoped the majority of the men would be forced into accepting by the pressure from their colleagues.

If Heubeck's savage scheme for making fat profits at the expense of the wages and conditions of the workers, and of the service provided to the public, is to be halted the busmen are going to have to fight to prevent any more lay-offs, by demanding a shorter working week with no loss of pay. The workers have the strength to defeat Heubeck's plans. The meeting which rejected his proposals showed this clearly. It is vital that he is now stopped introducing those same terms piece-meal.

For all practical purposes the bus service in the North is state-owned and state-run. That has changed nothing for the workers. For the only people who care at all for the livelihood of the workers and for the public well-being, are the workers themselves. Workers' Control of industry is something that the workers must begin to recognise as the only solution to their problems.

The young workers at Press-O-Matic in Artane, North Dublin, get a rough time. The factory assembles Bosch fridges, vacuum cleaners, and washing machines, and slave-drives young labour to do it cheaply.

Within the space of three months one young worker, who was recently sacked from the factory, saw the production target in his department go up from 80 fridge doors per day to 108. All of this without any increase in pay. He was sacked because, according to the management, he was not coming up to their standards. The worker who succeeded him in the job was started at a rate of 120 doors per day.

In another department, the rate set for the job was cleaning an average of 12½ fridges a day. When one lad was moved out of this job, the person coming after him was required to do double the rate: 25 fridges a day! He was sacked when he couldn't keep up to that standard.

The basic wage for this young worker was £12 a week. The bonus scheme gave him a further 81 pence a day if production reached 105 per cent of the company's standard. 'Top' rates for production workers in the factory are £14 basic for women and £21 for men. The 14th round increases have not been paid.

Overtime is compulsory: if you don't do it, you won't get the chance next time. Conditions are bad: when one worker was overcome by fumes, management refused to move him to another department, and he had to leave. Another worker who had to go to hospital to have a cut on his hand seen to had his wages stopped for the time he was away.

The supervisors harass the workers and try to speed up production all the time. Of course, conditions for the smaller number of older men in these permanent positions are different. The people who do the real work are being chopped and changed all the time. The young workers don't get a chance to get organised. They can't join the union until they have been in the place three months.

The country is still full of these sweat-shops. Trade unionists working in better conditions have a right, and a duty, to demand that their unions do something to end these abuses of young workers. In Press-O-Matic itself, things can't go on getting worse like this. Something has to give.

we have moved

The address for all correspondence to THE WORKER, the SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT, and the

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