

# the worker

FOR A WORKERS' REPUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

## WINNERS AND LOSERS

THERE WERE no winners and no losers—that was Liam Cosgrave's comment on the Sunningdale carve-up. That's not quite accurate. There were plenty of losers—but they are the majority of people in this country.

The pact between North, South and Britain has the sole purpose of stabilising capitalist control of the whole island—with British capitalism calling the tune. Its aim is to give longer life to the exploitation of the whole working class North and South.

No working class person should feel 'betrayed', 'sold out', or even surprised, by the role of the SDLP, the Southern government, or, for that matter, Faulkner's Unionists. They have all been prepared to use the working class for their own ends in the past. But they have never been our allies. How could anybody continue to believe in the SDLP's claims to represent Northern working class Catholics after Sunningdale?

The Sunningdale pact holds great dangers particularly for those actively involved in the fight against repression. It sets out to put the victimisation of militants North and South on an equal footing.

There is no reason to soften attitudes after Sunningdale—but an urgent need to re-think tactics. The British government is perfectly capable of making further 'concessions' on some of the traditional nationalist demands, beginning to end internment and even withdraw troops. They will only do that because they know they are leaving matters in 'capable' hands.

A press statement from the Socialist Workers Movement issued after the conclusion of the talks stated:

'The alternative to middle class unity is a unity based on the common interest of all the working class. Such unity is no utopian dream but an urgent necessity. North and South the working class is fettered by wage controls (Phase 3 and National Wage Agreements). Already rank and file trade unionists are organising anti-wage control committees North and South. Workers unity across the sectarian barriers would defeat British imperialism and achieve the only alternative worth having, a Workers' Republic. This is the struggle to which the S.W.M. is committed.'

# It's a bloody con!

AFTER MONTHS of deliberation, the Employer-Labour Conference has produced terms for another National Wage Agreement which the Executive of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions wants us to accept. From all the confusion about percentages, phases, and lump sum compensation, a number of facts come out clearly:

The best the proposed National Wage Agreement could give would be a rise for some workers, which would after deductions barely keep them in line with last year's rise in the cost of living. The increase will come after these price rises have taken place and takes no account of the rises to come.

The increases allowed for in the Agreement fall far short of the sort of increases needed to keep ahead of present inflation—the sort of increase, for instance—£10—which the craft unions are looking for.

Another Wage Agreement will tie the unions with restrictive 'no-strike' clauses; it will take all initiative for negotiating increases out of the hands of the individual unions and of the rank-and-file of the unions and put it in the hands of the Congress Executive.

The Wage Agreement will bring greater pressure for unions to accept productivity deals, which, in most cases, mean a loss of jobs and a substantial increase in each worker's output.

For most workers, therefore, the proposed agreement will mean an actual decline in the standard of living, along with restrictions on our freedom to take action to change this.

The employers will, no doubt, try to impress us that we must accept this agreement because of the economic and energy crisis in which 'we



PRESENTING!—Mr Michael O'Leary, the government's threatening alternative to wage agreements.

all have to pull together'.

But, as we explain below, that crisis is caused mainly by the profiteering of the oil companies. The government and the employers know that, but still they want us to pay. Workers should accept no responsibility whatever for maintaining the balance of a mad system which is based on their being exploited.

The cost of living index shows an overall increase of 12.6 per cent from November 1972 to November 1973. When we remember that most working class families spend the greatest part of their income on food and clothing, we see that the real increases for them have been higher. Food went up 16 per cent, and clothing

by more than 18 per cent. No agreement coming out of the Employer-Labour Conference would enable us to keep ahead of rises like that. The employers could only be forced to pay up enough by the direct action of the working class.

A third National Wage Agreement will tie the unions and their members even further into the machinery of the Labour Court and the Employer-Labour Conference. If it goes through it will damage seriously any remaining independent spirit in the unions. This time the Agreement is backed up by the threat of government action—as we have seen in the case of the bank officials.

To defeat this threat the rank and file must be organised not only to throw out these terms but to make sure there is never any Wage Agreement again. The responsibility falls, above all, on committees such as the Dublin Shop Stewards Committee to co-ordinate the opposition within the different unions.

Our position is not just a negative one, however. There is an alternative to the Wage Agreement—one based on the solidarity of the rank and file, not on collaboration between bosses and union leaders. The alternative is a fight for a national minimum wage of £30, and a working week of 35 hours. It is a fight for longer holidays and equal pay for women now. But above all else, it is a fight to keep the unions free from all influence and interference by the bosses and the government.

All trade unionists should insist on the right to vote on the proposed Wage Agreement. We urge them to vote to reject it, and to reject any other terms the Employer-Labour Conference may come back with.

# DONT CARRY THE OIL CAN! MAKE THEM PAY FULL WAGE

ONLY TWO WEEKS after lay-offs during the power cuts which ESB blamed on the engineers' strike, the "oil crisis" started hitting jobs. There have been warnings of redundancy and short-time working. Once again, the workers are being made to pay.

During the engineers' strike, the ESB managed to get workers blaming the engineers — even demonstrating against them. They did not mention the generators which were out of service. They did not mention that electricity supplies from the North were not coming in. But they weren't always completely successful in their dishonesty. In Cork, electricians refused to operate ESB's power-cut policy stating many of the cuts were unnecessary. And in some places there were protests against employers who cut earnings.

There is no reason at all why we should pay for any cut-back in industry and services which might result from the so-called oil shortage. If the bosses think more lay-offs or more short-time working are necessary, we must refuse to take any cut in wages. If there is to be a cut-back, we should demand:

### FOUR DAYS WORK ON FULL PAY

We should be prepared to sit in — simply refuse to work and insist on pay — in order to win this.

The amount of energy saved by one day's less working in the week would prevent all the messing about with petrol stations and the vindictive policy of turning off the heat early in local authority estates.

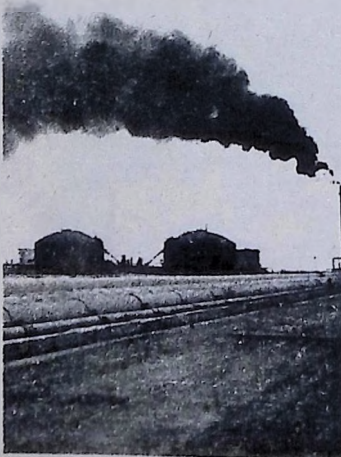
The 'Sunday Independent' has already pointed out that the supplies of oil coming into this country during November were about normal. The supplies to petrol stations is only down 10%. So all this talk about shortage is rubbish.

The same is true internationally as well. When we take the oil that is known to be there, and the oil that is reckoned to be there, the world's oil reserves could do us for 200-300 years. That's even allowing for increased consumption of oil. Tankers are queuing up to discharge oil at European ports. In the view of the Hamburg Harbour Master the hysteria only comes from the oil companies trying to get higher prices.

### PRICES UP

For a long time — even before the Mid-East war — the oil companies have been looking for ways to push up the price of oil. They want more money to develop some of the oil fields which will need more investment than older fields.

The increased demands of the oil producing countries and the war in the Middle East came by chance to help them.



Oil refinery

In some cases they were quite deliberately using the oil sheikhs to push up the prices — and to shift the blame on to the Arabs; The companies have at the same time been letting the Arabs buy up some of their shares. This is another means of raising cash to tighten their grip on all energy supplies (they are moving into coal

and uranium too). It does not mean, as some people imagine, a loosening of the companies' grip.

Eight of the biggest oil companies control over half of the world's oil production. And they are at the very centre of this so-called crisis.

There is no world shortage, just a jam in the supply lines which will push up the price. There has been no drop in the supplies into this country — not yet, at least. There is, therefore, no good reason for the panic and hysteria that is building up.

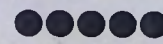
Petrol for cars takes only about 15% of all the oil used in this country. So even if there was some cut in petrol supplies it would make little difference to overall consumption. And if there was a decent transport system people wouldn't get so excited about the bit of petrol for their private cars.

The whole phoney "crisis" shows up the madness of the system which has made power and resources available to meet basic human needs and is absolutely incapable of harnessing those resources to that end.

Remember: Refuse to pay for the insanity of the system and the oil companies' thirst for profit. Insist on a full week's pay even if there isn't a full week's work.

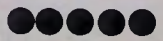
## read inside

Industrial reports on Chrysler, British Leyland, Smurfit, Waterford Iron Foundry, Ulsterbus. Workers Participation (page 4) Official Sinn Fein Ard-Fheis (page 8) Northern Ireland Executive (page 5)



## apology

In the last issue of THE WORKER we published an article on Equal Pay. We may have given the impression that statements in it by Derry McDermott and May O'Brien were given to THE WORKER on behalf of the I.T.G.W.U. This is not the case. We apologise for any embarrassment caused.



all correspondence to 95 Capel St Dublin 1

# WORLD-WIDE WORKERS REVOLT

Part 12 in a series on the History of Socialism

"High employment, fast economic growth and stability are now considered normal in western capitalism. Half the working population have known nothing else."

That is how one commentator described the economic expansion in the 20 years after World War II. This apparent stability led many would be revolutionaries to declare that the working class were no longer the people who would achieve socialism. That they had been absorbed into the middle class. Yet since the mid-sixties we have seen once again a huge upsurge in working class militancy — open class warfare has re-emerged.

To understand why, it is necessary to understand the reason for the post-war boom: the development of the "permanent arms economy" — the unprecedented peacetime expenditure on armaments by which state spending on defence offered guaranteed profits to business and thus brought about levels of investment which could provide for sustained expansion and full employment.

But the arms economy had its own contradictions, both nationally and internationally. It has faltered, bringing in its wake stagnation, inflation and financial crises once again. The need to re-establish falling profit rates has resulted in savage attacks on workers' living standards throughout the west.

## US CRISIS

IN THE UNITED STATES the black Civil Rights Movement emerged and became increasingly militant. At the same time opposition to U.S. involvement in Vietnam was growing rapidly. Hundreds of thousands of Americans who had never protested at anything before were drawn in. Many began to see the problem as capitalism itself.

The economic crisis gave a clearer view of that problem. In order to meet the challenge of economic competition for markets from Japan and Germany, the U.S. has had to cut back on arms spending. This, along with the changed nature of the type of arms produced has greatly reduced the effectiveness of the arms economy in staving off crises.

In the U.S. the crisis has meant increased attacks on workers' conditions. Inflation and unemployment have gone along with cuts in real wages. Workers have not been able to fight back in the localised ways they did in the previous 50 years. Strikes are longer and more militant, and because of the tie-up between the state and industry, which characterised the arms economy, strikes are also more national and openly political. The American working class has a long way to go in breaking the stranglehold that bourgeois parties have over it. But it is beginning to show the potential for defeating U.S. capitalism in a way student protesters and black militants could never do.



'We are the power'—a Paris poster of May 1968

THE EFFECTS of the growing world crisis hit France first. In May 1968, 10 million workers struck, occupied their factories and raised the red flag of socialism. It was a series of vicious attacks by the police against the militant students of Paris that first set the stage for the massive confrontation between the French workers and the state.

The French Communist Party had widespread support among the workers. From the very beginning of the student unrest it was obvious what their role was going to be. They accused the students of serving 'the interests of the government and the big capitalist monopolies' and of being 'troublemakers'. But that did not stop thousands of young workers from coming to their side on the barricades. The trade union leaders, under C.P. influence, called for a mere one-day token strike, and advanced the economic slogan 'defend purchasing power'. Ten million workers struck, raised political slogans of their own, and went far beyond the one-day stoppage. Factories were occupied in a huge, spontaneous rebellion.

The French C.P., in line with their theory of the 'peaceful road to socialism' was determined that the striking workers should not go beyond merely economic demands. It aimed for total control over the strike and the isolation of all revolutionaries. The London 'Observer' noted, "the paradox which underlines this controlled chaos is that the Communist unions and the Gaullist Government they appear to be challenging are really on the same side of the barricades. They are defending French society as we know it".

In the absence of a credible revolutionary alternative, the French C.P. succeeded in holding back the working class. They were only interested in winning electoral victories, fearing that any revolutionary move by the working class itself would leave them behind.

Since the May revolt the revolutionary groups to the left of the C.P. have been steadily growing in size and influence. The state has responded with increasing repression. In the meantime the C.P. is

still trying to get into the government, to take over the capitalist state from above.

THE SO-CALLED 'socialist' countries of Eastern Europe have been faced with falling growth rates, which has made large-scale re-organisation of industry necessary. But any attempt to carry this out has involved clashes between different sections of the ruling bureaucracies — between those who want to increase consumer goods production so as to give the working class an incentive to produce more, and those whose power depends on the maintenance of arms and capital goods production at its existing level.



'The bosses' response

It was such a clash of interests which led to the massive uprising in Czechoslovakia in August 1968. The reformers looked outside the bureaucracy for support. But to get such support they had to raise "issues which would win popular approval", such as anti-Stalinism, anti-repression, etc. In Czechoslovakia this resulted in huge sections of the population becoming directly involved in the political debate, and there was a very real danger of the would-be reformers losing control of the masses.

The workers were now discussing things as well as the intellectuals. Workers' councils began to be set up in factories. So the Russian army invaded the country to ensure that the bureaucracy stayed in power. But the economic problems remain.

## HOT AUTUMN

IN THE 'HOT AUTUMN' of 1969, the Italian working class joined the battle. Massive confrontations developed over terms for the renewal of agreements, between unions and employers. Striking workers and police fought it out on the barricades. Unofficial rank-and-file committees were set up to lead the strikes in all the major North Italian centres. Italian industry remained semi-paralysed for 2 years as spontaneous strikes continued and governments rose and fell.

A section of the Italian ruling class — the state and private monopolists — desire

a programme of reforms, a solid incomes policy, and the incorporation of the trade unions into state planning. To succeed they must first defeat the workers' opposition to the national agreements. State repression against militants, and the open tolerance of fascist gangs, are some of their methods.

But they also have the blessing of the huge Italian Communist Party and the trade unions it controls. The C.P. strategy is to aim for a place in a centre-left coalition government, to act as the reformers of Italian capitalism. Such an electoral policy means that the C.P. must retain its respectability as a parliamentary party, and to do so they must prove their ability at holding the workers in check.

SO WE SEE that increasingly in both Easter and Western Europe the economy is getting into increasing difficulties. The only way out, for the Ruling class is to attack the workers' standards of living. This has led to massive upsurges of working class action. Increasingly, workers are ready to look for an alternative — not the sham socialism of the Communist Parties who want to bring about change by Acts of Parliament and put in new bosses, bureaucrats, to replace the old ones — but a real socialism which is achieved by the struggles of the workers themselves and which puts the workers themselves in power at every level from the factory floor up to the state. To make sure that next time they are not sold out, it is necessary for the most advanced workers in every country to come together into a revolutionary socialist party and to provide the working class with an alternative leadership.

In a final article in this series we will look at the situation in Ireland in the past few years, and the need to build a revolutionary socialist organisation in the Irish working class.

# HOTEL STRIKE

DUBLIN'S HOTELS have been in the news a lot lately. Jurys and the Moira have closed down, the Russell and the Central are about to close. The Anchor hotel has been sold and the Gresham is about to follow suit. Up until recently, the P.V. Doyle group of hotels, which includes the Montrose, the Burlington, the Skylon and the Green Isle, seemed to be escaping the general unrest in the hotels industry. On Friday, November 23rd, the situation changed when 340 workers at the Burlington went on unofficial strike in support of a demand for a guaranteed bonus payment of £22 a week.

Like all hotel workers, the men and women in the Burlington are paid a very low basic wage, which is topped up by the 12% service charge. In the high season this means, on average, a bonus payment of £18 to £25 per week, although none of the workers know how this is calculated. In winter, the expected drop in business would mean a drop in the bonus earnings. However, while bonus earnings have dropped in the Burlington this winter, business has never been better. So even the usual argument for bringing down wages could not be used — dishonest and all as it is in the first place.

As we may have come to expect in such cases, the workers got no support from their union officials. After a meeting on November 27th, it was decided to go back to work for two weeks of negotiations between the ITGWU and the P.V. Doyle Group, failing which, the claim will go to the Labour Court. The matter has been taken out of the hands of the workers whom it concerns.

The 'service charge' applies in all Dublin hotels. The issue could — and should — have been spread beyond the P.V. Doyle group. But that was one thing the union officials would certainly not want. They want a quiet life.

The Burlington Hotel is one of the biggest in this country. Its owner/director, P. V. Doyle believes that more capital investment should be put into the industry, and as chairman of Bord Failte, has done just that; £320,000 were given in Bord Failte grants to the Burlington over two years, far more than to any other hotel.

P. V. Doyle believes that the hotel industry must gear itself to a new type of customer, and provide such luxuries as air-conditioned rooms and sauna baths, but at the same time, does not provide his workers with a sick pay scheme or security in their retirement. Of course, hoteliers are not generally noted for their generosity to their workers, and worse still, the support given by the unions to workers in the industry is lukewarm to say the least.

A minimum basic wage of £30 a week, plus bonus payments, a sick pay scheme, better working conditions and recreational facilities, are the minimum needed by hotel workers to get a decent living. After all, who runs the luxurious services which the Burlington provides? As one of the kitchen staff said "We are now aware of our role in the Burlington; we will no longer be walked upon by the management".

## SWEEPSTAKE PICKET

FOR SOME TIME, the WUI has been promising backing for Ned Carroll, the workers at the Hospitals Sweepstake who is looking for compensation for lost overtime when his job was changed. But when Ned recently put on a picket to speed up his claim, the people who went past were the WUI members, including Ross Connolly, a branch officer. Maintenance men, members of a number of different unions, refused to pass the pickets.

When the Company want to get an injunction to stop the picket, they claimed that there was no trade dispute, and they did not know what the picket was about. "Wouldn't it be an idea to find out what they want?", the judge asked.

But the company weren't the only ones to show little interest in Ned's grievance. No WUI official approached the strikers for several days — and when they did it was to tell them to go back.

# SWM

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

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

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

# TIGHT SCREWS AT CHRYSLER

THE MANAGEMENT of Chrysler (Ireland) recently answered a demand from the workers for an extra £12 per week, a shorter working week, and better sick pay with their demand for the following changes in the agreement:

- Nobody to go to the toilet in the first half hour or last half hour of shift.
- Foremen to be allowed to work at the start of the shift;
- If workers are half-an-hour late permission to work may be refused;
- Sick men to be checked by the company doctor as well as the family doctor.

These threats required a tough, direct answer from the shop floor. The Shop Committee (all the shop stewards in the factory) opposed the changes but did not report back to the men. When the news did leak out, management and union decided that certain stewards would receive no copies of future negotiations. Members who had spread the news were threatened with branch discipline.

As reported in the last issue of THE WORKER management were only prevented from using Industrial Engineers to wipe out jobs by the men downing tools. Although a shop floor meeting then decided to hold a meeting down-

town, away from spying supervisors, the meeting was never held.

Chrysler have continued their attacks on jobs by using the changed track speeds (supposedly due to the oil crisis) to assign 1½ men's work to one man. When a worker failed to keep up with the new speed he was suspended. Despite the fact that man-assignment-rates are the management's secret, and subject to change as they like, the Shop Committee took no action over this blatant victimisation. The Branch official, Dan Browne, refused to intervene despite requests from members, and the Shop Committee ignored all calls for a meeting.

Short-time is now threatened due to the oil crisis, but unlike in Chrysler (U.K.) there will be no day-off pay. In other words, Chrysler have introduced Measured Day Work exactly along the U.K. lines, but without any of the concessions!

So now Chrysler workers are being



attacked by management over conditions, and threatened with short-time, while the Shop Committee allows victimisation and refuses to hold meetings. On top of this any worker who speaks up is likely to be called a "commie agitator". The red scare was tried in Chrysler (U.K.) last summer, and failed miserably. It must fail in Shanliss Road, too.

The present Shop Committee is behaving undemocratically. It is perhaps not too surprising since management helped some of them to get elected by using mobility of labour. What is needed

now is a clear policy from the floor, and representatives who will fight for it, or else stand down.

The main points of any successful policy must be:

- £12 rise, and a 37½ hour week;
- Fall-back pay; a full week's work or a full week's pay;
- Regular shop floor meetings, free of supervision, to report back;
- No change in conditions without shop floor agreement.

## UNION picks on MILITANT

EVEN WHEN the management has finished victimising a union militant, the union officials insist on their pound of flesh. When the management of Smurfit Corrugated Cases, Dublin, picked on Deputy Shop Steward, Kevin Barr, they were forced to pull back by the solidarity of the men on the shop floor. But still the officials and committee of Dublin No. 16 Branch, I.T.G.W.U., kept on at him.

Kevin Barr was elected deputy shop steward at the Smurfit works at the beginning of the year. He soon showed that he wasn't going to imitate the ass-licking behaviour of some previous stewards. In the last couple of years the workers have improved their organisation in the factory and they elected Kevin to keep up this fight. Neither the management nor the union officials liked his militant approach. It upset their cosy relationship - the kind of relationship where the union members could not get hold of the Branch officials for love or money, the management could have them on the spot in minutes.

As one of the management later admitted, they were "waiting in the long grass" to pounce on Kevin Barr. And pounce they did - one night when he was late on the job (his wife's illness sometimes caused him to be late). He was hauled before management and given two weeks' notice to quit the job. When the other workers heard this they threatened to strike.

The management agreed to a short-term suspension but wanted him to sign a commitment relating to his future employment. The union officials had helped management draw it up and also wanted him to sign. It would have tied Kevin Barr to his machine - and to a different contract from the other workers. They supported him in his refusal to sign.

Eventually the management was pushed back into reducing the penalty to two days suspension which Kevin Barr could take when he wanted!

But the union officers weren't satisfied. They wanted a further undertaking from Kevin that he would do nothing without their approval - and they wanted it on paper. Kevin ignored their first letter. Then they debarred him from ever holding office in the union again. But even when he made a promise of better behaviour, they still insisted on fining him £5.

The elections in the factory come up again in January. Many of the men want Kevin to run again, even though the union will not recognise his office. They can, and should, prove to the officials that the union is theirs - the rank-and-file members, not the men with the mohair suits down in Liberty Hall.

## UCATT

IRISH members of U.C.A.T.T., the building craftsmen's union, rarely have the privilege of seeing their full-time officials or influencing what they do. The claim by the Federation of Craft Unions, backed by U.C.A.T.T. for instance, was presented without any reference to the rank-and-file, and without any effort to organise to win it.

But U.C.A.T.T. members should not be too surprised. During the last big building worker's strike, in the 1960's, U.C.A.T.T.'s forerunner, the Woodworker's Union, was so keen to organise the strike that it stuck posters up in the union offices offering money for the fare to England - for those who wanted to get jobs there.

## GALWAY FLATS

LAST MONTH saw the formation of a Tenants' Association in Walter Macken flats. Fourteen people were selected for a committee made up of seven women and seven men. From now on the Corporation will not be dealing with complaints from individuals, one or two at a time, but will have all the flats tenants down on top of them if things don't improve.



# PLANT WITHERS

50%, but wages by only 30%.

The assembly workers are in the ATGWU (80) and the AGEMOU (40). Over half the workers turned up for early meetings, but recently, interest is declining. This is because there has been no lead from the unions or stewards.

For instance, British Leyland had to apply for a licence to bring in shifts. The unions had three weeks to oppose this. The men didn't want to go on shifts, and certainly not before it was known who would still have jobs. Yet the unions refused to appeal against the shift licence, saying that they should not rock the boat.

Workers who attended all the meetings are disturbed at the lack of contact with workers in the Welsh factory, whose manager will be their boss. Is Dublin's projected 10,000 seat frames per week going to cause redundancy in Wales?

British Leyland are expert at moving investment about in such a way as to threaten workers and squeeze more profits out of them. International unity of carworkers against their common employers is essential. There is no indication that the union officials have been working towards this.

A pattern is emerging from Mc Cairns and British Leyland. Both are

ending car assembly, and planning new component factories, employing mainly women. In this way, they try to avoid trouble with the unions, and at the same time increase profits by paying women half of what men get. If this is allowed to go on, carworkers will become housewives, while their wives work as cheap labour.

In the past, the ATGWU have claimed that they will oppose redundancy with sit-ins, work-ins, strikes and demonstrations. Now they must fight shifts, cheap labour and possible creeping redundancy amongst the men.

With a more vigorous approach the unions should have been able to stop the run-down of any existing plant, and get extra jobs from a new plant. Failing that, they can still demand - and, if necessary, use industrial action to get:

'No loss of jobs in Ireland or Wales!

Equal Pay for women; no cheap labour!

Open negotiations on shift work!

Link up with all workers affected by British Leyland policy!



# SDLP : UNsocialist, UNdemocratic

"FOR THE FIRST TIME in the history of Northern Ireland a socialist programme has been built into government". (Eddie McGrady, outgoing Chairman of the SDLP at the 3rd Annual Conference, Belfast, Nov. 30th, 1973).

The word 'socialist' was thrown around a lot at the SDLP's conference but there was absolutely nothing said which would suggest that the SDLP is anything other than a middle class party dedicated to the maintenance of existing political and economic structures. The slight modifications they want will bring them into line with Britain.

The conference was a triumph for the Catholic middle class party. Out of 500 delegates no more than 22 voted against any of the leadership's policies. By means of skillful control of the debate the leadership prevented open discussion on contentious issues and united the party with ease behind their often right-wing

policies. Those in the Communist Party and Official Republican Movement who still have illusions about the 'left' nature of the SDLP have been proven wrong again.

The mover of the motion calling for the end to internment said that if the issue were not taken up it 'could be damaging for the party', because grass roots support would be lost. This is exactly how the SDLP sees its opposition to internment. It agrees there will be no releases till IRA violence ends, accepting wholesale position of Brian Faulkner. Of course there was no mention of British Army violence.

### Mass Movement

We were told that no-one other than the SDLP could solve the internment problem. There is no longer any room for a mass movement. We have our middle class politicians and now we must sit back and let them get on with the job while we maintain respectful silence.

Austin Currie, that great champion of the working class, said that the social



John Hume revolution meant solving the housing problem! This would be done by the government competing with the building societies for the custom of borrowers, and by encouraging more people to buy the houses they rent. Of course he had forgotten the demands of the movement which

brought him and the others to prominence: cancelling the Housing Executive debt owed to speculators and money lenders in London and nationalising the building industry.

Ivan Cooper called for an end to the rent and rates strike - under the orders of his new boss, Brian Faulkner.

There should be no doubt in the minds of any worker in the North: the SDLP is not a party which represents their interests. It is a rag-bag of opportunists and place-seekers which represents only the Catholic middle class, desperate to see the struggle for freedom ended so that they can come to a safe agreement with imperialism which will give them a say in running the state. To achieve this end even the thin veneer of radicalism which the party wore over the last few years is being quickly replaced by much safer, much more right-wing bourgeois phrasemongering.

## WORKERS' PARTICIPATION

# Trap

'Industrial Democracy' and 'Workers Participation' have been hot subjects for articles and speeches for some time now. Michael O'Leary is preparing legislation on the matter, and from Brussels, Dr. Hillery announces that he is in favour of workers having a say in the running of the places they work. The Federated Union of Employers have already made proposals on the subject. So has the Irish Management Institute. And the E.E.C.

Now a working party of the Employer-Labour Conference has produced proposals for Works Councils - not content with keeping wages down through the National Wage Agreements, they also want to keep militancy down.

It all seems very odd. Here we have the bosses and the government wanting to give us a voice. Sometimes they might seem to be saying what we are saying: workers must control industry. But their 'industrial democracy' is a far cry indeed from our socialism.

Socialism means the full control and ownership by the workers of the factories, trucks, docks - all the means of production - and of the state. How does 'industrial democracy' compare with this? Does it bring it any nearer?

All the forms which "worker participation" has taken - works councils, worker shareholdings, two-tier boards of directors, etc. - have brought no power to the workers. They are all tricks, some of the many "management techniques" of modern capitalism.

In May of this year, a Works Council was inaugurated at Cement Ltd., Drogheda "to give people some way of participating more fully in the management of their work places". Management and workers were represented on the committee, which has to be consultative only. The real decision were made, as before, by management - for instance, the decision announced several months later to sack several hundred men in the move from the old to the new factory. The Works Council could not do anything to prevent it.

### Rationalisation

In Guinness there has been a form of "participation" and "consultation" for a long time, along with worker shareholding. A rationalisation plan brought in 1971 will eventually mean 1400 redundancies. The workers are asked to participate in the sacking of their fellow-workers.

Even where the participation goes further, and workers are taken on to directors' boards, they are always an outvoted minority. German public companies, and companies with more than 500 workers, have workers on their Supervisory Boards. There are six shareholders on the Board, along with three workers. Of these workers, one is a manual worker, one a white collar worker, and another a trade union official. The two workers from the factory itself might as well go for a stroll as sit on the board, for

all the good their two votes could do for the workers.

If past experience is anything to go on, the trade union official can be as much against the workers as for them. Salaried employees, who often consider themselves 'above' the manual workers, have the same representation as the other workers, even though they always form a minority of the work force.

### Force

This kind of participation reaches the level of farce when we consider that these boards are often part of the German two-tier board system. The board with the workers on it deals with minor points of production, while a higher board of bosses only makes the important decisions about investment and profits.

Holland, Sweden, West Germany, Austria, Norway and Denmark have all adopted legislation for worker participation. In Sweden workers councils have been compulsory for years. The General Manager of BT a Swedish fork-lift manufacturer said he was surprised that shop stewards could understand the figures and business matters. In this firm, we see how works councils get workers to assist in the running of the business. The production committee was at the time of that statement discussing the type of machinery the company should buy. Another committee in the same firm was supervising the lay-out of the factory extension. The personnel committee was concerned with redundancy policy.

The bosses try by this means, to put responsibility for changes on to the workers and shift any blame away from themselves. They also make life easier for themselves by getting workers to accept the whole logic of their profit-making and efficiency.

At BT there is a full-time union man with an office in the management block. It is certainly a good thing to force the company to pay for union facilities, but not at the price that the union structure becomes a part of personnel management, and workers' representatives are taken under the firm's wing.

An example of Austrian worker participation is to be found at Gabauer and



Workers democracy in action—a mass vote for industrial action

Lehrner, a metal-working plant employing about 350 workers. They have established a work group for each of the 16 plant divisions. Each group is composed of the division head, shop stewards, foreman and group spokesman, who represents small units within the division. The work groups meet every four weeks and control the flow of work, relative pay of various skills, the hiring and firing of foremen and division heads. But here comes the catch.

Representatives of the workers on such groups go through a training programme established by the company. This programme can only mean injecting a love of the company into the workers who are subjected to it. The Company expects worker participation to be realised in five steps, the first of which is encouragement to think about the company, its production needs and goals. Wages have risen 20% in the past three years at Gabauer and Lehrner - about the same as the cost of living - but profits for the company have doubled in the same period.

Production per worker has been driven up four-fold, and workers discuss among themselves ways of improving this further. Participation has made them slaves in mind and body.

### Cure for Militancy

Capitalism has three general reasons for introducing so-called industrial democracy at this time: as a cure for working class militancy, as a method of involving workers in the more efficient running of their business, and as a means of coaxing more output from the workers.

In a speech to the Confederation of British Industry, Ted Heath, the British Prime Minister, made the first reason clear. He described worker participation as an "antidote to militants".

By giving workers an illusory stake in the company the bosses hope to convince

The "Organisation for Workers' Democracy" held its inaugural meeting on 24th November in the Four Courts Hotel, Dublin.

It aims "to resist legislation that might seek to impose on trade unions any specific or uniform system, or that might limit the freedom of the trade unions in this field". It also advocates the introduction of workers' democracy as a first step "towards a society which economically and socially is geared to serve the community need". In other words, that workers can gain some real controls within the system before gaining control itself.

It cannot be said that the "Organisation for Workers' Democracy" consciously wants "worker participation" on the bosses' lines. But if they want something

them not to strike against 'their own' concern. The trick is to make workers believe that their interests are the same as the owner's interests. It's the same fraud as the "national interest" - there are no class differences, and "We're all in this together lads".

Worker participation - wherever it has been introduced - has done little for workers' real problems. It does not affect the core of the capitalist system - exploitation, that is, making profits from the labour of working men and women. German workers, who have had the doubtful benefits of participation for many years have found out that only independent action can safeguard their standard of living. After many years of industrial peace they have been engaged in several waves of unofficial strikes.

Mr. McNeill, the group personnel manager for Cement Ltd., has made it clear that participation is meant to undermine the independent organisation of the workers. "Unions must devolve power to their members on works councils so that they could jointly seek ways of operating plant more efficiently."

The Coalition Government has a special reason for talking about industrial democracy at this time. It's part of the National Wage Agreement package - a little imaginary sweetness on the bitter pill of wage restraint. At the national level too, they are concerned with undermining the trade union movement's freedom to take action for its own objectives.

punishments (doled out by the authorities) as the action of a just fate" (p.123). A casual conversation with any of the kids from Hollyfield Buildings in Lower Rathmines, who are constantly being harassed by the Gardaí for just chatting with their friends on the footpath might have enlightened this researcher. Such falsification which prevades the whole text, makes nonsense out of the bulk of her theories. Dr. Fields probably did not have time to dig deep, but then why did she bother

## HAPHAZARD

When the research team moved North, - and they only spent a few months there - the analysis becomes merely a haphazard compilation of data, with some

real for the workers, they are going about getting it in the wrong way. The organisation is a "servicing", not a "fighting" organisation. It has been formed to "educate and inform trade unionists particularly, and the public generally, about the many forms of workers' democracy, Workers' Control . . . "No

A merely servicing organisation stands outside this struggle on the shop floor. Essential also to that struggle is the fight for democracy in the unions - the workers' organisations. This question has not been considered at all in their policy.

It would be comforting to think that the "Organisation for Workers' Democracy" would provide a forum for these ideas to be discussed further. Unhappily, some of the attitudes shown by its most prominent personalities at the inaugural meeting seemed to exclude this possibility.

Any increase in the power of the workers is an advance. Any concession the workers can force out of management on control of the work-place would be a step forward. But that control has to be exercised quite independently of the bosses. For instance, it would mean that workers control hiring and firing, they control who does what job, and they have full freedom to organise the union on the job.

That's a far different kind of power and control from what the bosses and politicians are talking about now. It rests on the organised solidarity of workers, the independence of the shop stewards, and of the union structure on the shop floor. It comes from the workers saying to management "You can't do that!" - not from saying "O.K. We'll sit down with you and hear your point of view". If managements come up with offers of participation, that's the kind of answer they must get - we demand greater control as an entirely independent force. As workers, we can only rely on ourselves and our own strength. And that's the only way we will build the kind of organisation which can fight for, and win, workers' democracy - socialism.

DES DERWIN

## VOTE AND VOTE AGAIN

WORKERS in Irish Shell and BP recently voted twice on the renewal of their productivity agreement with the company. Shell workers in Limerick had refused to vote because of a grievance they had about shunting allowances and the productivity deal was rejected (without the Limerick vote) on a show of hands in Liberty Hall. Then the Limerick workers won their allowances, and their vote was taken. The Dublin Shell workers were astonished to find ballot boxes on the job a couple of days after the Liberty Hall meeting; they were being asked to vote again on the same issue.

This time the productivity deal was accepted. The ITGWU seems to be so anxious to establish "More work - less men" agreements that if the votes won't come to the ballot boxes they will bring the ballot box to the votes.

When it comes to voting on the National Wage Agreement, will they be so sure to have the ballot boxes on the job?

## WRITTEN ON THE RUN

A SOCIETY ON THE RUN - PSYCHOLOGY OF NORTHERN IRELAND - by Rona M. Fields (Penguin 50p)

IF YOU ARE looking for an example of misguided academic research - this book is it. An "expert" and a team of junior assistants burst into an area (Belfast and Jerry), spend a few months looking for general patterns of human behaviour and saleable ideas and comes up with the idea that society in Northern Ireland is "on the run" - very useful information indeed! By means of ground work (some questionnaires and interviews - they check out their original theories, and curiously enough they prove them true.

It is a pity that in dealing with such a serious situation Rona Fields has seen

fit to trivialise it down to these academic requirements, and she fails to complete even these. This deserves and needs a lot better. Indeed from some small hints given in her work she shows she was capable of better. Publishers and personal profits seemed to outweigh her correct judgement.

Even ignoring the numerous basic errors in the book, her tests and analysis are extremely inadequate, and in many cases incomprehensible. The few pages of explanation of the background to the Northern problem add nothing to our knowledge, and for those who seek an introductory analysis, a decent book-list would have been of much greater use.

It is very hard to believe her vague generalisation Dublin children "unlike their contemporaries in Belfast, see the

general theory thrown in for a balanced diet.

There is little that can be said of her pen-pictures of the soldier, the internee or the politicians, they are so lacking in any worthwhile detail. One finds it hard to understand why the tests could not have been more intensive, especially in the cases of the ex-internee, and some of the more sympathetic politicians.

The major thesis of the book that the society is on the run is as meaningless as it suggests. From the evidence of the completed publication one can only presume that Rona Fields was on the run. The need for psychological study of the North is obvious, but it will take much greater labour than this researcher was prepared to give.

FRANK MURPHY

# POWER SHARING - for the middle class

THE BRITISH ruling class has not had an easy time getting the different sections of the middle class in the North to come together, although they have been aiming at it for many years now. They have had to wage a vicious war on the Catholic section of the working class, and, at the same time, demolish the old one-party system which stood in the way of "reconciliation".

MANY OF THOSE who have resisted repression on the streets for the last few years are prepared to give the SDLP a chance. They believe, probably correctly, that this is the first step towards a United Ireland, especially with a Council of Ireland in the pipeline. But just what sort of unity is this going to be? If it is the type of unity that could grow out of a Council of Ireland, then it is a unity that is designed to benefit British big business and no-one else.

The British ruling class sees the "reconciliation" and the Council as a means of rationalising its exploitation of the whole Irish working class. In the North they own around 80 per cent of all manufacturing industry, and around 50 per cent in the South. So if a Council can pave the way for peaceful re-unification by slowly convincing the Unionists that such a set-up wouldn't be so bad, it is clear that British big-business would continue to dominate.

This is the type of re-unification the SDLP would also like to see. They are fully in agreement with such a development, and see the Common Market as something benefitting it. But for the great majority of the Irish people it can hold nothing but a continuation of exploitation and the use or threat of violence to back it up.

★★★★  
The Official Republicans have said that they don't think the Assembly can work, but they have offered no alternative except a return to the type of politics that put the SDLP where they are today. If they stick to their dogmatic insistence that the reformist Civil Rights Movement is the only valid arena of mass struggle, they can only become more and more of a pressure group on the left of the SDLP using up their energy trying to get the SDLP to do things they neither can do nor are interested in doing. Their other strategy, of campaigning for local government seats on a narrow reformist programme is another diversion away from



the class struggle. While they may have been jubilant over the by-election in Magherafelt where a Republican held his seat through the transfer of loyalist votes, they have remained silent on the defeat of their candidate by a loyalist in a straight fight in Cookstown, where they had previously held the seat.

The Communist Party have gone a stage further and accepted the Assembly in principle seeing it as some sort of victory for the "progressive people", and a retreat for Imperialism. What they want now is for the Assembly to have the power to solve all the economic problems of the North. But these problems are the result of imperialism and capitalism, and the Assembly, which is an imperialist and capitalist institution could do nothing about them, even if it had legal powers.

The Provos have offered a "strategy" for smashing the Assembly. But it has no more chance of working. Imperialism will never be bombed or shot out of existence by a small group of men, no matter how heroic and dedicated they may be. Now that it has the Catholic middle class on its side, the British Ruling class has a spokesman for its interests right inside the traditionally anti-imperialist section of the population. For them that is a major political achievement, and it can only be successfully countered by a mass political campaign. The Provos seem incapable of building such a thing because they lack the politics to do so.

While repression continues on the



BOB COOPER, the Northern Executive's man in charge of Manpower, was once the assistant secretary to the Engineering Employers' Association. As such he was paid £85 per week by the bosses, for, among other things, organising a black list against socialist and militant trade unionists. He is of course the man from the Alliance Party who preaches to his fellow men on the evils of discrimination!

streets and in the concentration camps and prisons, there is still a clear need for mass opposition to it. But that opposition must not be simply to pressurise the SDLP. It must, if it is to avoid the pit-falls of the last five years, attack the SDLP, not because they are not doing

enough for the internees, but because they support the imperialist and capitalist system which backs up internment. The opposition must be firmly based on working class politics as opposed to the middle class reformism of the past.

And the struggle must go beyond the issues of repression. The British and Irish ruling classes are currently engaged in a big assault on the living standards of the working class. The Tory Phase Three and the proposed Wage Agreement in the South both aim to increase the exploitation of the working class. Anyone who is really anti-imperialist - and therefore be anti-capitalist as well - must be involved in the working class struggle against these attacks.

We can rule out the possibility of the leadership of either wing of the Republican Movement recognising this, let alone doing anything about it. But if the rank and file fail to do so, it can only mean, for the Officials, a continuation of the retreat to pure reformism, and for the Provos, a retreat to acts of pure terrorism and frustrated adventurism. Out of such a future, only imperialism can hope to gain.

MIKE MILLER

## Justice For The Gardai

A FEW MONTHS AGO, eight young workers were dragged into a police car in Galway, and later beaten up in the Garda station. The police apparently thought that anyone with long hair and general "tough" appearance was a suspect and likely to be responsible for a bogus phone call which had disrupted a dinner-dance in the Great Southern Hotel that same night. Six of the lads, all from Mervue, decided to bring charges against the Gardai, accusing them of assault, wrongful arrest, and false imprisonment. Their experience has shown yet again which side the police, judges and courts are on.

Backed up by their parents, they brought three Gardai to court - Sergeant Power, Garda Rodgers and Garda Hore. It was rather funny to see one solicitor for each Garda while the six lads had only one solicitor between them. Having finally been brought to court (which took the lads six months) the Gardai were determined to quash any evidence that might go into the papers. After all, it might expose what happens in the clink every other Saturday night.

Four of the lads were prevented from giving evidence because of technicalities - their parents did not sign the summonses before they were delivered. Unfortunately for the Gardai, two of the defendants were able to give evidence.

One claimed he was marched into the station, belted in the stomach while his hands were in his pockets, dragged by the hair down to the cells, and beaten again. He identified two of the Gardai. A doctor confirmed that the men seemed to have been injured. Another of the six backed up the evidence given.

The solicitors for the Gardai concentrated on such questions as the amount of alcohol a normal person could take, or whether the doctor thought that maybe these people were not thinking clearly, and that they had vivid imaginations.

The final trick by the Gardai was a trump card. After letting the case go for four hours, the solicitors stood up, and with the help of an act dated 1924, pointed out that the judge had no jurisdiction to deal with a charge of false imprisonment. He was therefore demanding costs of approximately £300. He went onto talk about the cheek of these people, for daring to bring a case against the honour of the Gardai Siochana.

What this in fact meant was that the six men would have to pay for the cost of this court, and save up again to bring the case to another court. This was obviously impossible, so the two lawyers made an agreement. No costs were to be paid if the six gave a written agreement not to bring charges again.

The judge called it a reasonable settlement. Most people would call it blackmail.

# By-election: a Workers' Candidate?

THE LABOUR PARTY seems determined to prove that it does not represent the workers' interests. At the Monaghan by-election it did not even bother to put up a candidate, but instead the party leaders gave their blessing to a Cosgrave-loving solicitor, Brendan Toal. He didn't even condescend to claim that he was a progressive of any sort.

Between Fianna Fail and the National Coalition the workers have no choice. Aontacht Eireann never made any claim to represent the workers, but goes on and on about the National Question, refusing to consider that matters of bread and butter might be of any relevance in the election. Sinn Fein (either street) did not put up candidates, and the Officials confined themselves to asking those who were standing what were their views or Common Law Enforcement.

★★★★  
There was one candidate, however, who did claim to represent workers' interests, and, more than that, to stand for Marxism

and the socialist revolution. David Vipond also claimed that it was a great victory for the working class that "the party of the proletariat" could put up a candidate-himself.

Whatever else he may have said that was correct about the conflict between workers and bosses and the need for revolution, all Vipond's statements about his organisation were at least as misleading as that one.

Struggles  
The day when any organisation in this country or anywhere else can claim to be "the party of the proletariat", there will

be a significant section of the working class which will know and recognise the organisation to be its party, for it will have been built in the struggles of the workers.

That is not the case with the Communist Party of Ireland (Marxist-Leninist) which has no consistent activity in the working class, and has only very recently even begun to take seriously its day-to-day struggles. The "party" - a couple of Trinity College students and a couple of young workers - is not even known to workers in the areas where it has claimed to be active.

We have confidence that a party can be built which has much more mass influence, and much deeper roots in the working class.

As a platform, Vipond put forward four slogans, and nothing, absolutely nothing, to guide workers in their present struggles. Even if the slogans were correct they could only give the most general direction to such struggles.

Socialism is about the fight for workers power throughout the world, but it must also relate to the most immediate concerns of workers in factories, shops, offices, docks, and in their homes. It is not a set of dogmas concocted by intellectuals.

A socialist analysis of inflation - which Vipond attempted to give would do more than say that it was caused by capitalism, and the system needed to be changed. It would also deal with the means of resisting it in the immediate situation. Specifically, it would point to the imperative of smashing the National Wage Agreement and any form of wage restraint. Not on that issue, or any other, did

Vipond explain what kind of demands his "party" raised in workers' struggles.

### Jargon

Sometimes the jargon of the Maoists, gets the better of them. For instance, one of Vipond's statements talked about "uniting the Irish people on a class basis". "Uniting the Irish people" can only mean bringing all sections - and classes - together. "On a class basis" usually means on the basis of one class only.

They do a disservice to socialism and to the efforts to bring socialist ideas into the working class movement by representing its theory as some sort of religious cant.

### Involvement

When an organisation with a reasonable

claim to be "the party of the proletariat" does put up candidates in elections for purposes of propaganda it will be on the basis of involvement in struggles in the area and already having its politics known there. Vipond's party had not been seen, or heard of, in Monaghan before the by-election campaign, and not even very much during it.

If the 175 votes for Vipond were protest votes against the stand of the three main parliamentary parties (rapidly becoming only two), then fair enough; we would have voted that way too. But if they were votes for what people believed was revolutionary socialism, they have been wasted.

## the worker

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# PUBLIC BODIES SPECULATE TOO

GALWAY is one of the main growth centres in the country and a place which attracts a kind of speculation which can only be called sheer crookery. This financial rape is not only carried out by the private Martin Hush-Hush type organisations but also by Galway Corporation and the ESB

The ESB have stepped right on to the bandwagon with their new "budget scheme" which grew out of a suggestion to them by the tenants' organisation has offered the ESB a direct means of speculation with the consumers' money.

Consumers pay a regular sum each month, but a consumer using only £8 worth of electricity per month may pay a 'budget' of £12 for the same period. The ESB thus gets an excess of £48 each year from that consumer.

It is obvious that the ESB will invest this money, and gain interest on it. After one year, the consumer's bill is revised, and credit is given for the overpayment. But there is no return on the interest that the ESB has gained from it.

You may say, why sign for this budget scheme at all? — but with typical ESB jackboot methods, the basic theme on the budget seems to be join up, pay up, and shut up.

GALWAY CORPORATION has built blocks of flats in two areas, Mervue and Rahoon. When one considers just how much building land is available around the area, one must wonder why these multi-storey complexes were ever necessary.

The Rahoon flats are more than three storeys high, and are hazardous because of the height of the buildings, and their situation beside the main Ring road. There

has already been one death up on the Ring road. How long before somebody is killed in a fall from the flats as happened in Ballymun recently? The blame must lie with the Town Planners, who failed to cater for the Galway situation. But when we remember that the whole thing was a repeat of the Ballymun chaos, there is perhaps something more to it.

## UNFAIR PLACING

THERE IS definite evidence of unfair allocation in the Walter Macken flats, where a young itinerant couple with three children were living in a one-bedroom flat, while another couple with no children have a two-bedroom flat.

This is typical of the system of allocation throughout the Galway estates. The Corporation seem to persist on unfair allocation and have made no effort to alter the situation. Obviously, there are always the usual brand of puppet officials, but who is pulling the strings?

Anybody trying to get out of the mess by building their own house soon discovers that the problems are even greater. Less than ten years ago Galway Corporation were selling sites in Galway for about £300. These sites were suitable for detached, four-bedroom houses with garages. They run along the main Dublin road from Ryans Hotel to Flannery's Hotel. Naturally enough, speculation has been rampant there, and now the houses erected on these sites will fetch some of the highest prices in the city.

If you were to buy a site from the Corporation today, it would cost you

over £2,500, and you would be confined to an area of 81 feet by 35 feet. You will not be allowed to build your house to your own design, because they now insist that you can only build a semi-detached, two-storey house. This means that you must get full co-operation from your neighbour.

All of this ensures difficulties that a site purchaser would not come up against if buying from a private individual. But when anyone points this out to the Corporation, they insist that you should be grateful that you're being offered a site at all.

Are the Corporation building large blocks of flats so that they can speculate on the building area they save by doing this? It's hard to avoid the thought.

SOME union journals look more like advertisements for the union leaders than anything else. "Liberty", the paper of the ITGWU has on occasion had six pictures of Fintan Kennedy (the union president) in one issue. The "AUEW Journal" for November 1973 has five pictures of General Secretary, Jim Conway. Perhaps it's a consolation for AUEW members in far-off places, like Ireland, who never see him.

The union leaders still have a long way to go to beat their ex-colleague, Michael O'Leary. Our handsome Minister for Labour adorned the four pages of the first issue of "AnCO News" no less than five times!

EMPLOYING cheap labour is one way in which Dunne's Stores keep their supermarket in Cornelscourt ticking over. Schoolgirls, aged between fourteen and sixteen, go to work there three nights a week, from 6.30 p.m. to 10 p.m. and all day on Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. They get one five-minute break for tea during the evening work.

For their twenty hours of labour, they are paid the grand sum of £5.62p. Two of the girls have been sacked recently: one for "talking", the other for standing with her arms folded.

BACK in October Tynagh miners were driven to Dublin for a march against any taxation of the mining companies. That demonstration confused a good many people. Here's how it happened.

Pat Hughes, the biggest mining mogul of them all, appeared on the scene a few days before the event. He ranted and raved about possible redundancies, how everybody was in the same boat, and so on. He proposed a trip to Dublin with full pay, £5 bonus, free meals, and naturally free travel. Total value about £10.

A lot of workers accepted. Perhaps they hadn't noticed what Pat Hughes left out — that the company at Tynagh has been letting men go over several months a total of 80 redundancies, tax or no tax.

# 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 Offences 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 attacks;  
—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-boo 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.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR



Site meeting in support of the Shrewsbury 24

Sir,

At a meeting of the University Labour Club on 8th November, members decided to lend their full support to the building workers, known as the 'Shrewsbury 24'. It is the view of our members that these workers have been chosen by agents of the British ruling class that they might be made an example of and serve as a warning to potential strikers who intend to set up and operate effective pickets, such as that operated by the building workers last year.

As the twenty-four workers involved are and will be engaged in a 'trial' until Christmas, thus being deprived of their right to earn a living and help defend themselves, our Labour Club will do all it possibly can to raise money for the twenty-four.

Although the case has not been widely publicised we believe the many readers are already aware of the circumstances and thus of the implications

for the whole of the working class. For further information, readers should contact:

W. Regan, Honorary Secretary,  
North Wales 24 Defence Committee  
18 Princes Drive  
Colwyn Bay  
North Wales

— who we are sure would be very appreciative of both concern and financial assistance.

Yours faithfully,

T. Crocket, Chairman  
R. Knight, Secretary  
D. Michael, Treasurer

Labour Club of the New University  
of Ulster, Coleraine

ED. — We have a Pamphlet available (Price 5p) on the Shrewsbury Trial. Write for a copy to S.W.M., 95 Capel St. Dublin 1

# LIP: WORKERS SHOW THEY CAN DO IT

SIX MONTHS AGO, on 12th June, workers at the LIP factory in Besconon, France, opened the briefcase of one of the accountants sent in to sort out the company's mess and found a document outlining plans to sack several hundred of them. They decided to occupy the factory to prevent redundancies. Since then, LIP, — where they make watches, arms and machine tools, — has become a rallying point for millions of French workers. All over France, you can see slogans and posters in support of the LIP workers; "Get the cops out of LIP" — "Support the LIP workers" — "LIP: the fight goes on" — and so on.

The LIP affair has affected and involved the French working class even more than the "work-in" at Upper Clyde Shipyards in Glasgow affected the Scottish and English workers. Three months ago, there was a demonstration at Besconon of 100,000 people, including workers' delegations from Italy and Switzerland.

Today, some of the LIP workers, whose occupation was ended by the police, have been forced to go on the dole. Some others have started work again in a part of the factory which has been taken over. But the LIP affair has not yet been resolved. It is still alive, and is being analysed and discussed by French trade unionists and socialists.

more than anything else, what they will not forget is the way in which they launched the attack. They knocked down the doors with their shields. They took over the main stairway, and there were 300 people at the top of the stairs. The corridors were fairly narrow, it was rough, that's when they started kicking the women. They succeeded in getting to the door of the room where the prisoners (representatives of the Receiver) were held . . . it's a miracle that the police van wasn't set on fire . . . there wasn't a window left in it when it passed the gate . . . the LIP workers had never taken part in a violent demonstration before, but they did not come out of it too badly".

The LIP experience changed the lives and attitudes of many of the workers there. The core of that experience was the running of the factory for a period of several weeks by themselves — the base for spreading their own struggle. They did it not to prove that workers' control could work in capitalism and compete with bosses' control. They did it because it was their way of ensuring some means of survival while they continued to fight for their demands — no splitting up of the company into sections, keep all the workers together, and no redundancies.

At the same time, it was a lesson to themselves and to the people of the area of the capacity of workers to run their own affairs. The banner outside the factory proclaimed to the world: "It can be done; we're producing and selling".



## PASSION OF THE STRUGGLE

Only a small proportion of the total of 1300 LIP workers were actually producing the watches. Others were arranging publicity, solidarity meetings, sales of watches to factory committees throughout France catering and 101 other things. Workers who had never before been involved in union affairs were taken along in the passion of the struggle: "I gave out leaflets, I swept up, I did everything to help the fight and help the unions". But: "It wasn't only women cleaning up and doing the cooking — some of the women got

up just as much as the men to do all the jobs there were — even men's work".

LIP under workers' occupation sold thousands of watches, got hundreds of subscriptions for a daily bulletin put out by them and mobilised the active sympathy and support of a whole section of French workers.

The novel — and, incidentally, illegal form of working occupation captured the popular imagination. The two main unions CFDT and CGT, were obliged to give their hesitant support. They wanted to see the struggle kept within the accepted framework as far as possible. They blamed bad management and international competition for LIP's original difficulties and saw it as a purely local problem which

could be solved by better (capitalist) management.

But LIP may foreshadow a more widespread crisis for capitalist enterprises. And the important thing that could have been drawn out of LIP — and that was learned by many in spite of the union leaders — was that workers should never accept to pay the price for the bosses' problems and could only rely on themselves — not on better capitalists — to impose their own solutions.

LIP has made a deep impression on the French working class. As Rene, a 40-year old LIP worker, put it:

"The life which the bosses have forced on us can't go on, it has to be stopped once and for all".

## IMPRESSIONS

Already, a couple of books have been brought out on the struggle. One of them is by Charles Piaget, a charge-hand in the watch factory, and secretary of the local union branch. It details the impressions of a couple of dozen LIP workers, including Piaget.

A technician, and secretary of the works committee recalls the arrival of the police to take over the factory:

"LIP workers will never forget those men with their helmets, their visors, their shields, their truncheons, their gas-canister guns, the whole paraphernalia of Marcellins (Minister for Justice) boy scouts. But

# Tanzania: 'Socialism' and Poverty

TANZANIA, formerly the British colony of Tanganyika (and the island of Zanzibar) has established for itself a reputation as the most socialist state in Africa. Is such a reputation justified? A correspondent recently returned from there examines the claim and finds it quite unfounded.

LIKE MOST backward countries which have recently achieved independence from imperialist rule, Tanzania faces a number of serious problems: to develop the economy, establish a decent living standard, and at the same time maintain its independence from the international capitalist system which is responsible for its present under-development.

To develop in a world dominated by imperialism, Tanzania must import at the going price, technology and expertise from the already advanced countries. To pay for this it must sell what exports it can on the world market, where prices are again determined by the rich and powerful. 85 per cent of Tanzania's foreign exchange comes from agricultural products, and although 95 per cent of the population work on the land, only a small fraction of these produce cash crops; the rest live by subsistence farming.

The peasantry must be induced to produce more marketable goods if exports are to be increased. To do this, 'Ujamaa' villages have been established where peasants who once worked separately now work together. This has been hailed

as Tanzania's 'unique road to socialism'.

While there can be little doubt that these settlements will increase productivity and the standard of living of those who participate in them, through the introduction of farm machinery, running water, electricity, education, medical treatment, etc. this does not mean socialism. So far only 10 per cent of the population is involved in any case.

Tanzania's working class is tiny: less than a quarter of a million in a population of 12 million. But the level of political awareness is high as a series of recent strikes has shown.

## Guidelines

In 1971 the ruling party issued guidelines for building socialism. One important section denounces heavy-handed, non-socialist managers. Since then there has been a rush of strikes, mostly in industries totally or partly state-owned, against such managers. In private industries workers have seized factories, locked out their bosses, and called for nationalisation.

The rate of strikes increased steadily until July this year when the government responded by sending armed police to arrest the workers of the Mount Carmel rubber factory which they had occupied and declared "socialised". Sixty-seven men were sacked and 're-patriated' to their villages, while the factory owner was re-instated.

In its dealings with the working class the government has shown a ruthless determination to suppress any independent activity which might upset their own plans for industrialisation. In 1964 the government dissolved the independent trade unions, imprisoned their leaders and established a state-run union in their place. The Minister of Labour is also the General Secretary of this union. All strikes, unless



Nyerere inspects his troops

called by him, are illegal.

The government justifies this by arguing that the workers are 'privileged' in an overwhelmingly peasant society, and must make sacrifices 'in the national interest'.

But in Tanzania the surplus that is extracted from the workers adds to the capital in the hands of private capitalists, both native and foreign, and to the capital of the state which is very far from being controlled by those who actually produce the wealth.

All opposition parties were banned at the same time as the unions were dissolved. The ruling, and only party, TANU, is anything but a socialist party. One of its founders, and main financial backer, John

Rupia, once had the reputation of being the richest black man in Africa. It has taken over the colonial state structure which is of course thoroughly capitalist.

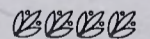
## Control

Through its control of the union and the workers' councils in the factories TANU keeps its tabs on the working class. The main aim of the Councils is to ensure greater productivity, enforce discipline and bring management and workers closer together.

The interests of the class which TANU represents are diametrically opposed to the interests of the workers and poor peasants. The belief of many Tanzanian

socialists that TANU can be turned leftward is a myth.

In spite of all the pronouncements of socialism, Tanzania remains a country of stark contrasts between rich and poor. Those in power, the state and party functionaries, military officers and rich businessmen, live in splendid luxury in the plush suburbs of the capital. On the other side of town workers live in squalid huts made of mud and stick or in concrete tenements. The peasantry, for the most part, live in conditions virtually unchanged in 1,000 years. 'Experts' from America, Britain, West Germany and East Europe, earning huge salaries and living in plenty, are everywhere. Fifty per cent of children will die before they reach the age of five. Poverty, disease, malnutrition and illiteracy are widespread.



These contradictions spring from the fact that the ruling class is unable to break the link with imperialism. Only the working class can establish the type of regime necessary for finally breaking free from imperialism. Only they can ensure that independence is meaningful and development is in the interests of the majority rather than for the few who accumulate capital in their own hands.

The working class alone can have a truly internationalist perspective: to spread the revolution to other African countries, and ultimately to the imperialist countries themselves. The inability of the Tanzanian ruling class to resolve the contradictions must inevitably lead to more severe repression of the workers. There is no possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism in Tanzania.

# ULSTERBUS WORKERS AGAINST MERGER

Right: Heubeck

SINCE THE Belfast Corporation busmen threw out the terms of a proposed merger with Ulsterbus, their boss, Werner Heubeck has been attempting to push through those terms in a piece-meal fashion, while at the same time negotiating 'new' terms with the unions.

Heubeck is currently managing director of Ulsterbus and of Citybus, which replaced the Corporation Transport after the merger was rejected. He is also director of the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company which controls both Ulsterbus and Citybus. By this means he has been given full powers by the Government, who own the NITH Co., to impose the savage terms of the merger.

The 'new' terms in fact amount to the same thing thinly disguised behind complicated mathematical jargon. A meet-

ing of busmen rejected these terms at the beginning of the month.

One of the proposals in the merger scheme was a new piece-work arrangement with Ulsterbus maintenance men which would have given them an extra £5 per week. This was rejected along with the rest of the merger proposals. But Heubeck and his chief engineer, Middleton, went ahead and tried to introduce the piece work scheme, only this time without the £5 increase!

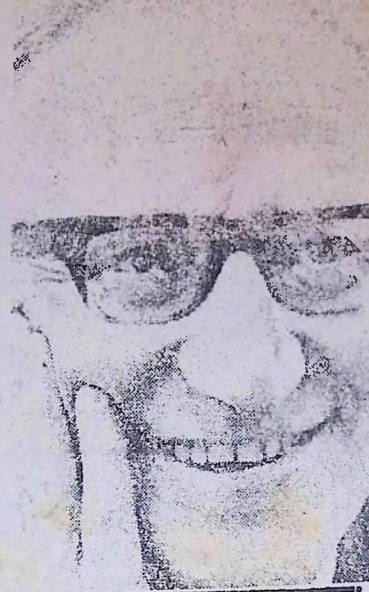
250 maintenance men all over the Six counties went on unofficial strike against the attack on their conditions. With terrific solidarity from the drivers, who refused to take out any bus which had not been fully serviced, they virtually brought Ulsterbus services to a standstill and forced Heubeck to withdraw the

scheme.

But Heubeck has not yet finished his assault. Notice has been served to a number of break-down recovery men in Belfast. The unions were not even informed. When the redundancies are due in January, there is likely to be strong resistance.

These men can learn a lesson from the maintenance men's stoppage. Their strike was unofficial because of the delay in having strikes declared official by the unions. The recovery men should begin now to force their union to prepare for official action in defence of their jobs.

All busmen should also be preparing for a fight should the terms of the merger, if and when they are finally agreed, mean any loss in jobs or pay, or cuts in hard-won conditions.



# Around GALWAY

EVERY LOCAL paper usually carries a lot of reactionary drivel from the Chambers of Commerce and similar organisations. But the 'Connacht Tribune' goes a bit far. Some pompous gentleman happened to write a letter to the Chamber which made the headlines of the 'Tribune'. We wondered who this very important chap could be who was so upset by the nasty greedy ESB workers holding the country to ransom and God knows what else.

The writer of the letter was Mr. Liam O'Brien, Managing Director of Cold Chon, part of the enormous international Shell group of companies, and an enthusiastic member of the Old Galway Cricket Club. He had the impudence to call for action by the "Silent Majority" to boycott the strikers.

He's hardly one to speak for the silent majority. He is one of the nasty, greedy 5% who control 75% of the wealth.

LAST YEAR, THE WORKER reported the sacking of 41 men at Irish Metal Industries. At that time, the management claimed that the introduction of new machines made the sackings necessary. The trade union official of the I.T.G.W.U., said it had to do with competition from the EEC. THE WORKER said that there was plenty of work going, only the bosses wanted to push up profits by getting more work out of less workers.

Now we discover that is exactly what they are doing. They have already brought back overtime, while some of the workers who were sacked have either emigrated or are still out of work. It's obviously cheaper to have overtime for a few hours — and turn it on and off when it is needed — than to re-employ the 41 redundant workers.

G.T.M. the big shop at the centre of Galway, was recently taken over by the Galen Weston Group, Pat Quinn's crowd. The company has shown quickly how concerned it is with efficiency, rationalisation and the general boosting of profits.

A few weeks ago, they sacked seven men, and soon afterwards took on seven girls. The tactical shift has probably just a little to do with the fact that women are paid less than men. When Equal Pay comes in 1977, the bosses can point out to the girls that there are no men to have equal pay with.

# Waterford: FOUNDRY STRIKE Stevie

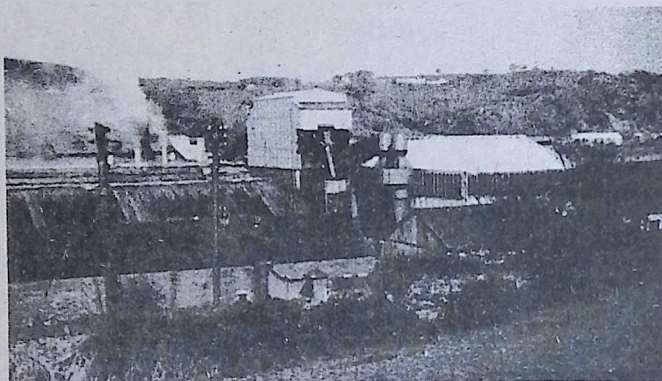
MAINTENANCE MEN ended their four-week strike at the Waterford Iron Foundry. It has been one of the most important labour disputes in the history of this company.

The management have sacked men left, right and centre and walked roughshod over the other workers. They tried to impose more overtime, which the men refused and then served notice on two workers who objected. After negotiations with the union the notices were initially withdrawn but 24 hours later the shop steward was told that they still stood. Pickets were placed the following morning.

This strike was not made official by the union N.E.E.T.U. Waterford No. 1 Branch, and members of N.E.E.T.U. No. 2 Branch passed the pickets, as did most of the other workers in the factory. Many of the men on strike believed that the union's reason for not making the strike official was the financial cost involved, there are over 100 members in the N.E.E.T.U. No. 2 Branch. What price then is the principle of resistance to the sack?

The strike Committee issued a statement referring to 'excuses to pass tickets by the other workers'. One excuse was that the strike was not official. Workers have been conditioned to ICTU red tape.

Some workers in the factory said that a few years ago the men in the maintenance section themselves passed pickets put up by the other workers in the



factory, and so deserved the same treatment. While these arguments are used there can be no working class solidarity. The majority of maintenance workers have changed since then. The two men who were sacked have less than six months service in the company — they were not involved in passing the earlier picket.

A levy was put on all N.E.E.T.U. members in town and collections were held in factories throughout Waterford in support of the strikers. In the last week of the strike a flying picket went around to shop places receiving foundry goods. Eventually the management were forced to retract their two dismissal notices. The lesson to be learned by other

workers in the foundry is that dismissals can be prevented; the maintenance men have shown the way. Links must be built with the other workers in the factory to smash management's right to hire and fire as they please. An effective shop-stewards committee can overcome the confusion caused by union officials over pickets, and put greater pressure on the officials to make strikes official when they have the support of the workers concerned.

Management will be frightened that this victory will spread militancy to the other sections in the factory. Workers should prepare for the next round; forget the past problems and build solidarity amongst themselves.

WHAT a fitting end to the career of Stephen McGonagle, trade unionist, — shoring up the Northern regime at £7,000 a year. Stevie, who was president of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions last year, and now becomes Ombudsman, will be responsible for presenting the "moderate", "non-sectarian" face of the regime.

McGonagle as a trade unionist was always moderate — but not always non-sectarian. Twenty years ago he persuaded 4,000 Derry members to leave the "Prod" "British" National Union of Tailor and Garment Workers to join with the 100% Catholic dockers Union!

It didn't run off too smoothly, however. There were fights — even minor riots — over the matter. And once McGonagle had got the members — mainly girls — out of the NUTGWU, he found that the ITGWU didn't want them — as he'd hoped they would. He tried "hawking" his "Clothing Workers' Union" around to others. But they didn't want it — and the Derry Trades Council didn't want McGonagle either.

Eventually, the ITGWU did take in the Derry clothing workers, but not before a great deal of damage had been done to trade union unity in the town.

How fitting, too, that McGonagle should get a Northern state appointment at the same time as Vic Feather, trade unionist, the man who tried to stop American workers protesting against the massacre of the Derry thirteen.

# OFFICIALS: Sticking In The Mud

THE OFFICIAL Republican Movement took one step further towards a clearer definition of its politics at the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis last month. It was a step to the right. Although we can only welcome any move out of the backwoods of traditional republicanism, and any attempt to come to grips with all the political and economic consequences of domination by imperialism, we have to see that the move Sinn Fein has made is one which commits them even more to reformist methods.

The strategy of contesting elections is now at the very centre of their political perspectives. Already candidates are being selected for the southern local government elections in June.

All the main resolutions adopted at the Ard Fheis insisted that the immediate struggle was for short-term democratic demands. Those inside and outside the movement who criticise this approach from a socialist point of view are castigated as "instant revolutionaries".

But the key point is not whether socialists fight for reforms or contest elections, it is how they do it and what part do these tactics have within the overall strategy. In every limited struggle revolutionaries need to have their sights firmly set on the goal of workers' power. They advocate a programme around which militants can organise, win support, and help advance working class consciousness. Otherwise, socialism recedes into the very

dim and distant future.

Not surprisingly, some members took the position of the Sinn Fein leadership to its logical conclusion. "We can influence the establishment for reforms", one said: "Workers would get a fair share (before the law) if the working class was not excluded from juries", said another. So what Sinn Fein's fight for reforms is about, it seems, is persuading the capitalist class to be nicer or getting workers into the institutions of the capitalist state. What it should be about is developing working class organisation and awareness to act outside those institutions, and against that ruling class.

## SOCIALISM FROM ABOVE

Sinn Fein also took a position of support for the countries it chooses to call "socialist countries" — presumably Russia and Eastern Europe among them. This means accepting an idea of socialism without workers' councils running the state, socialism without democratic trade unions, socialism, with no rights of opposition for workers demanding higher wages or for writers.

All this means, in other words, "socialism" imposed from above — which fits in with Sinn Fein's refusal to take building up the political and industrial organisation of the working class as the first priority of a socialist movement.

Tomas Mac Giolla's presidential speech did not mention organising in the trade unions. In his radio interview during the Ard Fheis he managed not to mention the workers at all.

The leadership's main political resolution committed the movement to fighting a series of separate struggles for short-term demands — if necessary developing



Tomas Mac Giolla

separate organisations to carry it through. This puts all issues on the same level, and offers no way of knitting the whole thing together around the struggle for power.

Some delegates argued that the key to the strategy must be the working class and its fight for socialism. In reply to their criticisms of the main political resolution, Tomas MacGiolla and Mairin de Burca deliberately misrepresented positions and told lies. They claimed those opposing the civil rights strategy were "against reforms". They said that English revolutionaries went to factories "calling on workers to revolt".

Tomas MacGiolla stated that the failures of Derry republicans during the period of "Free Derry" was proof that their political perspectives were wrong. The person in charge of Official Republican activities in Derry at that time, Malachy McGurran of Sinn Fein Ard-Comhairle, chairman of

the Six-County Republican Clubs, member of N.I.C.R.A. Executive was also the chairman of the Ard Fheis!

Eoin O Murochu made the position clearer still when he stated the general purpose of the movement: "The main purpose of Sinn Fein is to build up among the masses of Irish people the consciousness that both Irish states are subject to British imperialism and opposed to the interests of the people". Note: no mention of organising to defeat bosses' attacks; no mention of building up the forces among workers to challenge the capitalist system; no mention of socialism.

MacGiolla explained that the aim was to mobilise "all the people of Ireland" against imperialism and some delegates argued that this should, and could, include Irish capitalists.

On the basis of this kind of thinking Sinn Fein now calls for the reform of

Coras Trachtala (state export board) along the lines of its Japanese equivalent. While this is a possible recipe for national capitalism it has nothing to do with socialism. The Ard Fheis proved this by rejecting an amendment to the economics resolution concerned directly with workers' problems and not merely with re-organising the existing system.

Sinn Fein is congratulating itself on having adopted a resolution on the trade unions. It was a long time coming in a movement that for some years has claimed to be socialist and working class. And now that they have it, it excludes the one thing that has been a cornerstone of revolutionary strategy — a programme of demands to be put forward, and fought for, by militants and socialists in the trade unions.

Republicans hoping to change these politics from within can draw little comfort from the fact that organising within the movement for an alternative programme is now forbidden.

Those who believe the Officials can be moved in a revolutionary direction are being proven wrong daily. We have no reason to change what we wrote after the last Ard Fheis: "Sinn fein could condemn itself to complete immobility and find itself left behind by a rising tide of class struggle"

B. TRENCH