

The shape
of things
to come

the worker

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the order was given.
"Put them in the van. If they move, use your weapons."
A piece of nylon rope was thrown into the van. "Tie them to each other — by the neck." It was done. The men sat motionless — one move would have been agonising.
In truth it was just the regular soldiers "having a bit of fun" with the sergeants and officers. They rarely get such a chance, but it was also the realism the army chiefs had demanded.

EVENING HERALD

IF THAT report appeared originally in THE WORKER, you might be forgiven for thinking that the "reds" were just trying to scare you. But it appeared in the EVENING HERALD as a fine example of how the Irish army is being trained to cope with the needs of tomorrow.

The government and the wealthy class they represent have no illusions about how vicious they will have to be to defend their interests and that wealth in the period to come. And they are prepared to experiment with that viciousness now on anyone who disturbs their "stability".

Right now the people who are most disturbing that stability are the republicans who refuse to sit still while the British Army imposes some kind of final solution with their rifle butts. Whether or not we agree with their methods workers must defend the republicans against this repression. Every rope put around someone's neck by the state — whether to tie them up or to hang them — is a rope around the neck of the working class.

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EHB, Camac, Coal drivers

SPREAD

THE FIGHT

GREEN PAPERS may come and go, and tripartite talks along with them. Our union leaders will compromise, dawdle and sell us out all the while. But you can't keep a good class down!

While the Congress leaders were crying because Cosgrave didn't come shake their hands at the opening of the tripartite talks their members were hitting the streets in a real fight to protect workers' living standards.

Building workers, coal lorry drivers, Eastern Health Board workers, Camac Casks, and many others sent a shiver through the cosy relationship that our "leaders" have been building with the government and bosses.

Turn to page seven and you'll get reports on just some of the strikes which threw a long shadow across the friendly talks of the bosses, government, and trade union leaders. The strikes are unconnected and vary in success of solidarity and ability to win. But a common thread running through most of them is frustration.

Frustration at workers having tightened their belts time and time again after calls from the government and advice from our "leaders" — and for what? Still unemployment is rising, prices are rising and the value of wages is being chopped. Frustration at being members of unions which are supposed to protect us but which sell us out again and again.

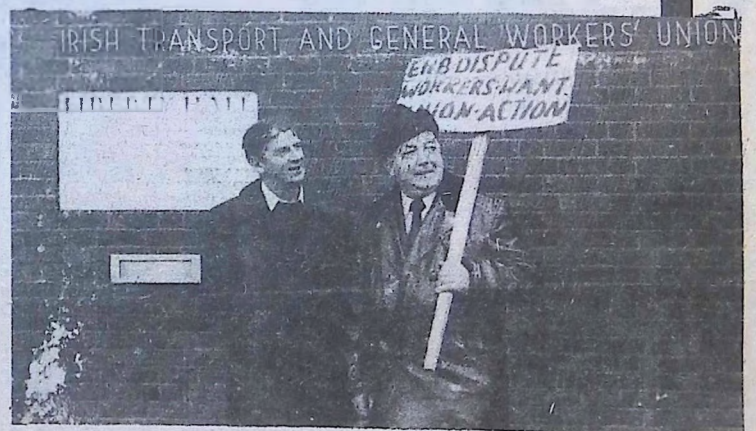
Some of the best of the strikes are unofficial and are being fought against a backlash of sabotage by the officials we pay to service us.

The job of militants now is to provide a framework within which angry workers can organise that fight back. We know we cannot rely on our union "leaders", but sporadic protests about their readiness to sell out cannot substitute for a lasting alternative. And this means organising our own rank and file groups within the unions to force our officials to do the job they are there for — instead of acting as the bosses' policemen — to coordinate solidarity and spread the fight.

The exact form of rank and file organisation will vary, but there are enough of us to begin the job of organising now.



ABOVE: Eastern Health Board strikers present a solid front in the fifth week of their strike. BELOW: They picket the headquarters of the ITGWU protesting about lack of support.



ABOVE: Camac workers picket the Guinness subsidiary in Stover's Lane.

BELOW: Doing some interesting reading on the coal drivers picket.



WHAT WE THINK

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

AS THE state arms itself with further means of repression and trains its soldiers to combat "subversives", and as the number of people embraced by the term subversive grows - the reaction from the left has been muted. It is not lack of courage that keeps the bigger battalions of the left from trying to mount a fight back - it's a result of a political weakness which does not place the main emphasis on organising directly in the working class.

The fact that the demoralisation of the class at present makes this hard to do is no excuse. Workers are prepared to fight (as reported below). And the fact that the fight is scattered and unconnected makes it all the more urgent that a political lead be given. Negative "solutions" such as calls for withdrawal of union funds to the Labour Party - no matter how well motivated - open the door to Fianna Fail supporters etc. to draw that fight into a blind alley. Only a political lead can prevent that.

BY DAVE LEE

THE LABOUR movement in the South has not covered itself with glory over the introduction of the Emergency Powers Bill and the Criminal Law Bill. All in all opposition to the Bills in the South has been rather pathetic.

However in certain provincial areas some protest actions have taken place. In Navan 700 - 800 workers marched through the town and on the Ashai construction construction site at Killala, Co.Mayo Mayo, 140 men organised a demonstration. There was also a march by 100 people in Sligo.

The Syntax building site at Clarecastle, which is near Ennis in Co. Clare, was the scene of the first militant protest when 200 workers staged a work stoppage and had a march on August 31st. Shop stewards on the Shannon Industrial Estate, Co. Clare, have distributed 1,000 leaflets condemning the state of emergency.

In fact the Ennis - Shannon - Limerick City region has been the only area in the south where there has been consistent activity against the new laws. When the details of the two Bills became public knowledge "The Bottom Dog" (the working class paper of North Munster)

immediately sponsored a meeting on the laws. At this meeting discussion was mainly concerned with what practical action could be taken against them.

It was agreed by everyone that the publicity for the rally be mainly orientated towards the working - class leafleting of factories, factory gate meetings, and at the Labour Exchange.

At the same time the workers on the Syntax building site at Clare castle, were planning their own separate protest action.

There are about 6 contracting firms on the job and they employ a total of 250 men. One of these firms is called Golden Vale Engineering (with 70 workers on the payroll) and it was the lads of Golden Vale who were the driving force behind the walkout.

At 1 p.m. on Thursday August 26th a meeting of all the G.V.E. workers was held for the purpose of discussing the repressive legislation.

After the implications of the Bills were gone into there was a proposal from the floor that some form of protest be taken and this was passed unanimously by the 70 workers present.

At a meeting the next Monday they decided to walk off the site at 4.30pm the following day, march through Clare castle and distribute leaflets to motorists on the main Limerick-Ennis road. This way they could inform workers returning home from the Shannon Industrial Estate as to the reasons for their protest.

The Golden Vale shop stewards told the other site stewards and 90% of them supported the idea. These stewards then told their own members what was going to happen.

The walk-out was supported by a majority of the workers, (200 out of 265) and the demonstration was successful. In their leaflets the Syntex workers called upon other workers to:

1. Stage similar work stoppages to oppose the repressive laws.



2. Put resolutions to trade union branches, shop stewards committees etc. opposing the laws and asking the trade union union leadership to launch a campaign against them.

3. Organise emergency shop floor meetings to discuss the Bills and to work out a plan of action.

4. Support any protest being organised against the laws.

People from the Limerick co-ordinating committee got in contact with the Syntex workers and another leaflet was prepared for distribution to other workers. This leaflet explained why the Syntex protest had taken place, carried the 4 point programme for action and advertised the public rally for September 4th.

These leaflets were given out to all the factories in Limerick and Shannon. Factory gate

meetings were held outside Ferenka and the Cement factory and there were also meetings outside the dole office.

The rally at Limerick's Thomas St. corner lasted an hour and attracted a permanent audience of 200 with many others stopping to listen to the speakers. Significantly the audience was predominantly working class. This contrasted sharply with the totally middle class character of the Peace March held in Limerick earlier that day.

Later that same night a Campaign Against Repression was formally set up and a steering committee elected. CAR immediately swung into action. Apicket on the local Labour Party T.D., Stevie Coughlan, was held because he voted for the laws. Signatures were collected in Limerick and

Shannon for a petition against the repressive legislation.

A standard resolution calling on the trade union leadership to launch a vigorous campaign, 'including work stoppages', against the laws was circulated to trade union branches and tenants associations.

So far the resolution has been passed by the ITGWU Limerick No.1 Branch at its AGM, the Southhill Tenants Association AGM, the Clare Branch Irish Bookbinders Union, Janesboro Tenants Association, and shop stewards at BEFAB, Premier Pacific, Irish Elsevier Press, all of them factories on the Shannon Industrial Estate.

Plans are afoot to strengthen the links between the Campaign against Repression and the workers movement. In

Limerick in the very near future there will be a large public meeting under the title of 'The Labour Movement and State Repression'.

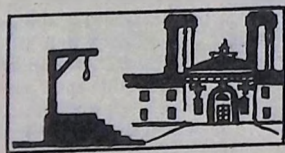
The aim of such meetings is to gain the affiliation of representatives of the Labour Movement to CAR and to develop an ongoing campaign against the Coalition's legislation. Hopefully delegates from shop stewards committees, branch committees, and tenants associations and individual shop stewards will join the campaign.

At the moment the local Provisional Sinn Fein has not officially come out in support of any of the activities that have taken place in the region. However, individual members of that organisation are active and enthusiastic in building the Campaign.

splendid isolation

By taking a position of splendid isolation the Provos are not doing themselves much good. In the immediate period the bulk of state repression will hit them and in the present political climate they haven't many friends in the South. If they are to resist the attacks they will have to shed their conservative, elitist shell and engage in united action with other political groups and get involved in developing mass mobilisations against the new laws. Alone, they will be an easy target for state repression.

NO HANGING HERE



The case of Marie and Noel Murray

WITH MARIE AND NOEL MURRAY still under sentence of death, an International Day of Solidarity was held on Oct.8th. The day was marked by meetings and demonstrations in most of the Western European capitals. In Dublin the Murray Defence Committee held a meeting at the GPO, followed by a torchlight march to the Department of Justice in St.Stephen's Green.

Some days previously, on Oct.5th., a public meeting was held in Dublin's Mansion House which filled the Supper Room. It was addressed by a panel of well-known speakers, including Father Denis Faul of Dungannon, John Mulcahy of 'Hibernia', solicitor Ciaran Mac an Aili, architect Uinseann MacEoin, writers Marie Comerford and Eamonn McCann and Sylvia Meehan of the Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland. Ms. Meehan referred in her speech to the difficulty of winning support for the demands of the Murray Defence Committee - a difficulty made all the greater by the studied indifference of the national papers which rated that public meeting worth, at best, two paragraphs.

In spite of these difficulties and in spite of the harassment of the Murray Defence Committee by the Gardai, support for the campaign is growing. Each one of its public activities has gathered more people behind it.

The Defence Committee has produced a pamphlet, the cover of which is reproduced here. It tells of the events surrounding the Murray case and puts forward the arguments of the Committee. It costs 20p and is available from the Worker Book Service or from the Defence Committee, 155 Church Rd., Celbridge, Co.Kildare. Support for the Committee in the form of financial donations is also urgently needed.

TENANTS: IT MAY BE TROOPS NEXT TIME

TENANTS have defeated the latest plans for a large rent increase. Squatters have been successful in resisting evictions. And the government is getting worried, very worried. So much so that they have made preparations to use the army in housing estates 'if all else fails'.

Early this year homeless families organised themselves into the Dublin Squatters Association in eight areas of central Dublin. The DSA produced leaflets explaining why they were forced to squat, organised local meetings with tenants and held pickets to highlight their situation.

Every eviction that the Squatters Association heard about was prevented. A noted example was in Dolphin's Barn where over 400 local people

stopped the attempted eviction of the Williams family. After the Corporation couldn't evict the Sands family from Basin Street flats, despite the use of almost 100 gardai, the current spate of evictions was called off. However, plans have now been prepared to use up to 1,000 soldiers to carry out mass evictions

in areas of strong resistance. This was discussed at a top level meeting of the Eastern Health Board and was confirmed by an EHB senior social worker.

The government were recently forced to climb down over the proposed rent increases of £3 to £8 per week. For fear of NATO, the tenants' movement, calling a national rent strike they whittled the increases down to 50p.

NATO may however oppose the 50p increase on the basis that no more increases can be afforded by the working class.

The tenants' movement is growing stronger and more militant all the time. This was reflected in many of the motions which were put before the national convention of NATO last month, motions calling for the abolition of the death penalty, for the building of local groups of the unemployed and for women's equality before the law. Of course this doesn't amount to anything like a socialist programme but it does show the tenants' associations are beginning to realise their role as working class organisations capable of wielding great power.

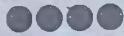
Where the white rulers are losing their grip



THE "BLACK BABIES" have grown up. And they are not so quaint any more. Suddenly the kids whom we were all taught to patronise are taking their kerbstones up and tossing them at armoured cars. Not unlike our own kids have been doing. And for reasons that are fundamentally the same.

Henry Kissinger, that famous peace-lover with the blood of Vietnam and Chile on his hands, has had his work cut out convincing Ian Smith of Rhodesia that the game was up and concessions would have to be made to the rising blacks. Throughout Southern Africa the chickens are coming home to roost. And the message is being brought home to the ruling whites by the riots and strikes in South Africa and by the guerrilla fighters in Rhodesia. With the rains due any day now the guerrillas will be in their element.

Kissinger's efforts have been to convince the whites to pull some black faces into "power" in the hope of stemming the tide. But the pressure is so great that they would have to concede things like release of all political prisoners, suspension of the state of emergency and any laws that forbid political activity in Rhodesia. The whites cannot concede to such demands as control of police and army in black hands.



Exploitation, murder and the suppression of any liberty is at the roots of the white regimes. It cannot be negotiated away. The attempt by Vorster in South Africa to rearrange the system by giving political "independence" to a number of black homelands is a sham. The wealth of the country would still be owned by the white minority and the vast majority of blacks in their "independent" homelands would still have to work in South Africa itself and the exploitation would continue. Such independence would merely be a cloak for continued white supremacy.

But, spurred on by black victories in Mozambique and Angola, the blacks will not be content with a sham independence. And the removal of the more obvious signs of oppression such as seats for "whites only" is not enough. The blacks want what the whites cannot give: their right to rule themselves and their country.

So, when the TV screens show continuing riots, black workers striking, and the bodies of whites forcibly torn from their position of domination, the newspapers will scream "murder". But any class which seeks to enchain another cannot complain if the people they are oppressing in turn use those chains to smash them to death.

The black revolution is not a socialist one, but it is the rising of a subject people and must be supported.

LEFEBVRE

Or: everything you ever wanted to know about the Church and were too bored to ask

ARCHBISHOP Marcel Lefebvre is in trouble with the Pope. He maintains that the new Mass leaves out some vital words, and is therefore equivalent to a Protestant service. He has friends in extreme Right-wing circles and thinks that as a result of the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church has almost gone Protestant. He's almost right.

The birth of Protestantism had a very close connection with the birth of the capitalist system. Protestant ideas had been around for centuries but it was not until the economic conditions were ripe for the take-off of capitalism—the discovery of China and America, the cultural shock reflected in the Renaissance; the achievement of national unity in England and France; the rise of many feudal serfs to become free peasants; the birth of bourgeois democracy in the towns—not until these things happened did Protestantism get a hold of whole countries in the 16th century. And Protestant theology helped the Protestant capitalist, while Catholic theology still maintained that lending money out for interest was sinful. The predominant ideas changed when economic conditions changed.

So if the Second Vatican Council adopted some Protestant ideas, it only showed that the Catholic Church had caught up with the capitalist revolutions which ended in the 19th century.

However, there is another dangerous reactionary, who has not been condemned by Rome—Cardinal Conway. Speaking to the European Congress of Catholic Nurses on 7 September, the

Cardinal noted that some people had the impression "that it is a matter of examining the arguments on either side and then coming to a conclusion on the basis of human reasoning," in the debate on contraception, abortion, homosexuality etc.

That's certainly the impression you would get. Otherwise, what is the point of having a debate? To the Cardinal, however, "the Church's absolute certainty on such matters is not ultimately based on human argumentation. It is based rather on faith, faith in the Church...It is this traditional Christian morality which is ceaselessly proclaimed by Pope Paul VI."

Heads he wins, tails we lose. It's rather like a Labour Party conference, or Congress of Trade Unions, where the left always wins the arguments and the right always wins the votes.

And those millions of women across the world who believe that the Church's arguments on contraception don't hold water are over-ruled because the Pope can get on his hot line to God, and then play his trump card.

FAITH

What matter that Conway's theology is a little out of date even in Catholic terms? Even Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century taught that "there can be no contradiction between faith and reason." In other words, either the advocates of change made a mistake in their arguments, or the Pope got a wrong number when he dialled God. Or could it be that while Lefebvre is an out-and-out nut, Conway's backwardness is tolerated by the Pope because of the Church's need for a strong restraining influence in Ireland?

We will continue to advocate the legalisation of contraception. We will argue the case rationally. And we will win.

The Protestant churches one by one accepted the use of contraceptives within marriage earlier in this century. Because of the breakdown in the old-style family (when all members formed a single economic unit) and because of the advances of medicine (leading to a higher survival rate for children) children became an economic burden instead of an economic blessing. And people's ideas about morality changed as a result. The socialist priest Herbert McCabe has remarked that the Second Vatican Council was the Church catching up with the capitalist revolution. And that its next task will be to catch up with the socialist revolution. Or else it will go under. If Terry Rogers is taking bets, I know where my money would go.

THE IRISH CONTRACEPTION ACTION PROGRAMME
Plans for this month: the holding of a press conference, the organising of a petition, and the production of a pamphlet. They will also prepare a model resolution to help trade unionists get support in the labour movement.

THE MURDERS

SMITH is directly responsible for hundreds of murders in the last few years.

1185 alleged guerrillas have been killed by the security forces since 1971, according to the regime's figures.

Another 1,035 black civilians have been killed without it even being

claimed that they were guerrillas 106 were shot for 'breaking the curfew' and 32 for 'running with the terrorists'.

On top of this, 69 Africans have been sentenced to death—but it is not known exactly how many of them Smith has hanged.

Class

HOW OFTEN have you come across phrases like "There's no such thing as class these days" — or "It's not a question of class, just people"?

Many times, no doubt. They crop up time and time again in argument in the pub or on the shopfloor. Take the recent bank workers strike. If you tried to argue that that was essentially a class struggle you invariably came up against the "class struggle has nothing to do with it" sort of reply. Sometimes it seems that only the far left believe that class division exists at all.

Well, there appears to be at least one other group of people who are extremely interested in class — and that's the ruling class. Not publicly of course. You won't find many references to the class structure of society in Daily speeches or newspaper editorials. The fiction of a democratic, classless society has to be maintained for public consumption. But privately it's a very different matter.

A very good example of this occurs right in the very heart of the capitalist system — the advertising industry.

Every big advertiser needs to know just who exactly reads the newspapers he puts his advertisements in, who watches his commercials on TV etc. The reason is simple enough. It's no good putting adverts in, say, the SUNDAY WORLD, if Sunday World readers are not the sort of people likely to

buy your product. Fair enough.

What's interesting, though, is how the advertiser describes the sort of people he's interested in. What's the major factor that tells the capitalist whether or not someone will buy his product? The answer is — social class.

Sure, other factors often have a bearing — sex or age, for example — but what he really wants to know is the social class. So, for our rulers class has EVERYTHING to do with it.

Every year the big advertisers and media owners spend thousands of pounds on detailed research surveys to find out just what newspapers each class reads, how much TV they watch etc. These surveys make fascinating reading, provide a detailed analysis of the 26 county class structure and help dispel a few myths along the way.

Here's how the population breaks down according to the latest 1976 survey.

Them

First, of course, there's the ruling class itself. Managers, top civil servants, professional people, university professors etc. Plus a group quaintly termed "people in comfortable living with investments or private income". Enough said! Altogether (including their dependants) the ruling class is reckoned to be 210,000 strong — 10% of the adult population. Of course, we know that only a key few

Thinking About Capitalism

by JOHN CANE

thousand of them actually wield the real power. But nevertheless, the people listed here do constitute a class — their interests are the same: the maintenance of the capitalist system.

Us

So much for THEM. What about US — the other 90%? Surely 90% of the population is not working class?

In Ireland, of course, a significant number of people earn their living from the land. Altogether they make up 560,000 or 26% of the total population. This percentage is well below what a great many people might have thought, and of course it is decreasing all the time. Ireland can no longer be called an agricultural country, nor can it be said that the interests of all the agricultural community are tied to the present capitalist system. 340,000 of this community (16% of the population) are farm labourers or own farms of less than 50 acres. Their objective interests are far closer to those of the working class than those of the ruling class.

Take away the ruling class and the farmers and you are left with the working class — the majority

class. Almost two-thirds (64%) of the total population of the 26 counties is working class — a massive 1,410,000 workers and their dependants.

Not all the working class are, of course, "horny handed men of toil". Our class is now much more complex than that old image.

While manual workers still form the majority there is a growing group of white-collar workers — clerks, secretaries, teachers etc. They number 340,000 (16% of the population).

It's interesting to see how our rulers refer to the unemployed in this survey. "People unable to take their place in higher grades owing to lack of opportunity". That's a nice way of brushing them under the carpet.

Such surveys help us in two ways. First, by giving us striking proof of how big business "understands" class in just as scientific and indeed marxist way as the far left, and

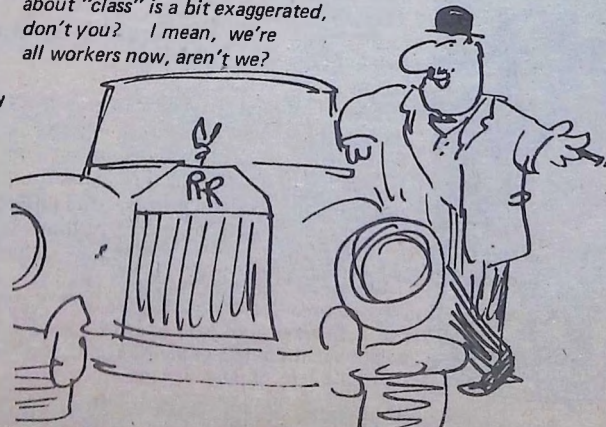
how — in the day to day running of their system — they use it for their own ends.

Secondly it shows the overwhelming predominance in the 26 counties of the working class. A class — skilled and unskilled, white and blue collar, employed and unemployed — with objectively the same interests! namely the end of the capitalist system.

Aims

Increasingly concentrated in bigger factories and offices, living in increasingly urbanised areas, the day is approaching when the working class can begin to recognise itself as a class, to pursue its class aims and complete its historical mission — the abolition of all classes.

Personally, I think all this rubbish about "class" is a bit exaggerated, don't you? I mean, we're all workers now, aren't we?



Letters

ITGWU SELLOUTS

YOUR article on the sellout over the Interim National Wage Agreement was quite correct in pointing out the role of the ITGWU leadership in clinching acceptance of the 'con-trick'. Their recommendation to accept—backed up by ads in the national papers—was no doubt very persuasive for the membership. However, I don't think we should ignore the role of leadership at the rank

and file level in the ITGWU. In my opinion, Branch Committees can—and sometimes, do—exert strong influence on their members. The following example proves the point.

When the original 17th Round proposals came out in June, the No. 2 (Clerical) Branch Committee produced a leaflet, distributed to all 6,000 members, setting out precisely why—the Branch Committee—were recommending rejection of the proposals. The NEC, of course, had merely recommended

rejection—giving no reasons why and certainly conducting no campaign. The result in No. 2 Branch was a massive no vote, a 2 to 1 majority against. This in a traditionally conservative Branch which up till then had always accepted National Wage Agreements.

The story over the Interim vote was sadly different. Faced with an NEC recommendation to accept—this time well publicised—the Branch Committee decided to take no position. In the end, the Branch

Write to:
THE WORKER,
24 Talbot Street,
Dublin 1.

Secretary enclosed a note to all shop stewards which stated: "We look to our members to endorse the decision of the NEC by voting in favour of the Interim proposals." The result was a foregone conclusion—overwhelming acceptance by 9 to 1.

I wouldn't wish to claim that the role of the Branch Committee was absolutely crucial in this voting but it must have had an effect. To me, it just goes to show that rank and file initiative within ITGWU is

possible and can bear fruit. Concerted and consistent action is needed, however, and an ITGWU rank and file group fighting for union democracy and militant policies is absolutely essential to ensure this.

Fraternally,
John Cane,
ITGWU, No. 2
Branch.

KNOCKED OUT

RECENTLY on a trip down to Mayo I stopped for a while at Knock. The invalids were being wheeled in their beds and chairs around the stations. Four priests said the Mass.

Meanwhile, cuts are being

made in hospital services, particularly out-patient services to the handicapped. In Northern Ireland people are losing the tricycles they use. Instead they will get the grand sum of £5 a week mobility allowance. And you can't get far with that.

In the South, expenditure on the army has increased while they are trying to chop everything else. Even where research has provided some answers, like kidney machines, there's "no money" to provide machines for all those who need them.

As the prayers and blessings went on I got really angry to see all these sick people and their friends and relatives being conned into thinking that the solution to all their problems was a visit to Knock.

Capitalism has an easier time of it in Ireland where over a million pounds can be squandered on a new church. It's much easier and safer to have people travelling there in hope than thinking about the cruelty and injustice that comes with the system. This system, its bosses and profits are the real cause of poverty and sickness. And all the priests' blessings in the world won't change that.

Joan Kelly,
Belfast.

The soft alternative

HOW to get full employment without threatening capitalism. Without touching the capitalist state. Without fighting to defend even one of the thousands of jobs being chopped away each year by the bosses. Without dealing with the union leaders who sell us out time and time again. What a plan! It's all here in 27 pages.

Basically this is a scheme for the reform of capitalism which can be implemented by the present state. It's up to "concerned men and women" to mobilise "the political will to implement that course."

That course consists of a set of proposals that the government must take up to end unemployment. Nowhere is there a suggestion that workers themselves can do anything to protect jobs or to force the creation of new jobs — except agree with "the plan" and ask the government to kindly carry it out.

Or, better still, vote for the creators of the plan and they'll do it all for us.

"True planning must be based on the subordination of the private sector to the people through the state" says 'Go to Work'. But first who are the people? (company directors, big fagners and judges are people but does this pamphlet include these in the list of people they care about?) Secondly, how can the state subordinate the private sector when it represents the private sector and the class that

benefits from it? Thirdly, to think that the state (ie, the government) could sit down and plan for the interests of the working class without coming up against the state (ie, the army, police, courts, civil servants etc) flies in the face of logic. The soft attitude of the left alternative towards the state comes out in phrases like 'the government has not lives up to it's responsibilities

IDA

The pamphlet makes excellent criticism of the IDA. Between the years 1970-74 only 5,000 jobs were created for an expenditure of £225 million. Meanwhile the IDA handed out gifts like £3.8m to Guinness's and much more to the multi-nationals etc. But then they criticise the IDA for not developing industry in which Ireland has some kind of competitive advantage. Here, the fundamental evil of capitalism — competition — is sanctified. Here and elsewhere the politics of the Left Alternative come close to De Valera's "independent Irish capitalism".

The Left Alternative would have us believe that development of natural resources would alone bring enormous benefits ("the equivalent of free health services" etc) to the Irish working class. There can

be no such guarantee while the wealth so produced is in the hands of state bureaucrats. Britain is "an island of coal in a sea of oil" yet there are a million and a half on the dole and old people have choked to death eating cardboard.

And there is a fundamental contradiction here. The force which would be needed to get the government to carry out all the nationalising and bring in the promised benefits would be a mobilisation of the working class movement. And that's something which none of the Left Alternative partners are looking for — much less the ICTU.

In fact such a movement could take up the more immediate tasks of defending jobs and fighting for a 35 hour week to create more jobs.

The Left Alternative is perfectly correct in showing how the banks milk huge profits (£84 million in two years for just two banks) and how their credit policies are decided "solely by the area which produce a profit in the quickest time".

A LOT of people have suddenly caught on to a great idea. When there's chaos all around, unemployment is growing, prices are soaring and people are getting cynical, a sure way of giving yourself a responsible image is to get yourself a "plan". So everyone has got one. From Richie Ryan to John Carroll of the ITGWU (Not that there's a big distance between those two).

Daddy and Mammy of the lot is the Left Alternative Plan, brainchild of the Communist Party, Official Sinn Fein and Liason of the Labour Left. **JOE MALLOY** takes a look behind the prim, no-nonsense title of the Left Alternative's "Go To Work, Ireland!"

But the question is can this vast wealth and power be wrested from private hands without a workers' revolution? "Go To Work" simply says that the Central Bank "allowed itself" to become a prisoner of profit, when the obvious explanation is that the state bank — like the state itself — is the servant of profit.

The very basis of this "plan" is anti-socialist. It proposes an Irish economy in competition with the rest of the world. What happened to internationalism? Socialists seek the overthrow of their own ruling class and the extension of the revolution to a sufficient number of advanced countries to replace competition with cooperation.

These are easy "answers" to the crisis, most of them are already ICTU policy — while the union leaders sit on their arses and do nothing about it.

Workers, employed and unemployed, need instead a fighting programme and leadership to repel the attacks of the bosses. Occupations and direct action to fight redundancies: no voluntary redundancies: an end to double-jobbing, unnecessary overtime, natural wastage, productivity deals and recruitment bans: a 35-hour week to create more jobs.

And the leadership to fight. From unemployed committees in the unions, linking the employed with the unemployed. Right to work committees in each area, actively campaigning for jobs and made up of the employed and unemployed.

Look high and low and you won't find a shadow of a real fight back in the Left Alternative's Plan. It's the Soft Alternative.

MEETING

I ATTENDED an SWM meeting in September the theme of which was 'No More Sell-Outs'. A bit ironic, I thought, since neither of the two speakers mentioned the biggest sell-out of them all — equal pay.

It has too often been the mistake of men to think of socialism in purely economic and political terms. It is this that leads to such an obvious omission.

Because the existing culture is male-defined men fail to identify and deal with the problems peculiar to women. Hence many revolutionary currents dismiss the autonomous womens movement as "petit-bourgeois and libertarian."

They claim that the function of the movement is to campaign publicly on specific issues like contraception and equal pay. 'Consciousness raising', if it has a place at all is purely incidental. Such a limited view can only stem from an almost total ignorance of the nature of women's oppression.

One third of the women in this country work outside the home. Of these approximately one third are unionised. What of the rest?; the ones who work within the home? Are they lesser human beings for whom socialism is irrelevant?

Comrades, fighting womens oppression doesn't stop at putting a resolution through your union branch. It doesn't stop when you walk out your factory gate.

If the SWM wants more women in their organisation then the members must extend their knowledge and experience of feminism beyond its present limited horizons

Lynda Hall,
Dublin 7.

AT THE BOSSES' PARTY: Hussey, on the right. Paddy Keenan, branch official centre, and vice-chairman Tony Foran, left.



REMEMBER last month's article on the ITGWU officials at the bosses' party? Though the section committee ruled that an agreement must be signed before a cinema opened, the officials helped celebrate the opening despite the fact that no agreement was signed.

The chairman of the committee, Mick Hussey, was upset at his activities being published. He didn't contradict what the article said, but threatened to check the rules to see if he could get the writer of the article (Gene Kerrigan, member of the committee and of SWM) expelled from the union for writing in THE WORKER.

No, Brother Hussey, you can't expell people for hurting your ego. But it might not be a bad idea for you to check up on the rules anyway, as a recent breaking of the rules by the officials cost several members their jobs.

Meanwhile, we are printing above another photo of the infamous bosses' party, and if Bro. Hussey still feels put out he has the freedom of our letter columns to reply. Otherwise his threat will be treated with the contempt it deserves. —Editor.

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the worker
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WAGE

Subscribe!

What happened in Russia?

By Willie Cummins

"Workers of the world, unite!" says the slogan on the Russian workers' banner in 1917, (inset). After the second world war it was Rulers of the world, Roosevelt Churchill and Stalin, splitting the world between them.



UP TO 1917 the last place that anyone expected a socialist revolution to take place was Russia. This was because of the tiny size of its working class as opposed to the size of the peasantry. For the revolution to take place the two classes had to be united, even if what tied them together was not a common ultimate aim.

Because of these different ultimate interests between workers — a collectivist society, and peasants — individual ownership of land, the only way that this socialist revolution could be maintained was through outside help. Lenin, four months after the October revolution, wrote: "The absolute truth is that without a revolution in Germany we shall perish."

Not only was this help not coming, but by 1919 the White armies, helped by the imperialist powers — Britain, France and the USA — were attacking the newly born soviet republic on all fronts.

These attacks were defeated, but at great cost. The working class was reduced to 43% of its former numbers and many of these were

driven back to the land by the smashing of industrial production and raging famine.

The working class, which had created the soviets, the living cells of the revolution, was physically and morally smashed. This had to result in a decay of the soviets and the growth of the power and control of the Communist Party. The harsh measures taken to defend the new-born, shattered soviet republic were seen first as temporary, to ensure its very

survival.

But the CP itself was decaying. By October 1931 it had swelled to 650,000 members, nine tenths of whom had not held party cards in 1917.

So, the smashing of the organised working class and of production, and the failure of revolutionary help from Germany, Italy and elsewhere, led inexorably to

a pushing back of the gains workers had made in the revolution.

After the death of Lenin, in 1924, the power struggle in the party which controlled the state produced the symbol of the death of Russian socialism — Stalin.

Under Stalin's regime the idea of "socialism in one country" was born. Rigorous methods were used to build up Russian industry, driving masses of peasants from the land into the factories. It was but a short step to forced labour camps.

After 1928 Stalin solidified his rule, crushing opposition with brute force, putting his opponents through his mincing machine until they came out at the mass trials of the thirties "confessing" to having been anti-socialist all along. The story is told of one old Bolshevik who had fought long and hard before the revolution and had been jailed by the Tsar's police. Now he found himself back in prison only this time having to call his jailer 'comrade' instead of 'your honour' in order to preserve the pretence of socialism.

After the second world war the countries of Eastern Europe were declared "socialist" at the point of a gun. The workers themselves had no part in it, thereby breaking the fundamental definition of socialism: that it is the emancipation OF the working class, BY the working class itself. In fact, Bulgaria the workers were away on the factories and workplaces on a public holiday when the "revolution" happened and came back to find themselves living in a "workers state".

When Hungarian workers, in 1956, though up their own workers councils it was Stalin's tanks which wiped them out at a cost of 30,000 dead — the majority of whom, according to hospital reports were young worker workers.

Not till the massacres in Chile three years ago were workers murdered in such massive slaughter while seeking to control their own lives.

Today, the heirs of Stalin, many of whom served loyally under him still rule. And the system is little

changed and as far from socialism as ever. Like a huge capitalist company, the Russian state competes with the rest of the world for surplus product — accumulation of surplus product — is the same, and its continuation directed by an elite class of bureaucrats.

State

The state controls the economy but the workers do not control the state. As in any other capitalist country it will take a revolution to achieve real workers power. The organised forces for that are at present stamped under the foot of totalitarianism. But the capitalist crisis is world-wide and affects the Russian economy too. The same crisis which digs capitalism's grave in the West will stir the forces inside Russia.

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

THE PAST hangs like a nightmare on the brain of the present, wrote Karl Marx. And there's nothing that applies to more than the decline of the Russian revolution and the rise of Stalin. You can't put the case for socialism to anyone without being asked: "What happened in Russia?"

The Russian revolution, 59 years ago this month, gave control of a major country to a workers' government for the first time in history. To millions throughout the world, locked in the savage and futile 1914-18 war, it offered new hope. In the period afterwards people everywhere turned from the grim alternatives of a declining capitalism — unemployment, poverty, fascist barbarity, the threat of new wars — to place their hopes for the future in the new regime that the Soviets (councils of ordinary working people) had put into power in Russia.

The soviets were the height of working class democracy, with delegates elected and recallable at any time. Today the word 'Soviet' brings to most people a vision of a grim totalitarian society.

The ideas and events of that time still play a major role in directing the thinking and activity of the left. Groups in Ireland, such as the Communist Party, Official Sinn Fein, and the Socialist Party, use Eastern Europe as an example. "There are millions of people", they exclaim, "living happily under socialism already, so why don't we take up their system?"

The image of a bloc of countries who have 'made it' to socialism is comforting. But to hold up such travesties of socialism as an example to strive after is not only pathetic, but it calls into question the 'socialism' of those who do.

For these reasons alone it is worthwhile trying to answer the question of: "What happened in Russia?". Not just for the sake of nit-picking but to clarify the kind of socialism we are aiming at, and one of the reasons why there are strong differences on the Left.

The opposition

THE EFFECT of the rise of Stalin was felt outside of Russia too. The theory of "socialism in one country" meant that the Communist Parties across the world became mere aids to Stalin's foreign policy. One consequence of this was the betrayal of the Spanish revolution in 1936.

The CPs of today are moving further from being the tools of Moscow but are still laden down with the heritage of Stalin. But there has been an opposition, even through the Dark Age of socialist ideas. The

Fourth International, founded by Trotsky in 1938, fought on, carrying a spark of revolutionary ideas. They were a mere handful, (at one point in the late forties the entire Irish section of the Fourth International consisted of one Palestinian Jewish refugee called Tony Cliff) and many of them — including Trotsky — were murdered by the agents of Stalin.

Today, there are six Fourth International that we know of — all still attempting to build an international revolutionary movement from the top down, all disagreeing with

each other, and some having splits within themselves.

But out of that tradition the ideas have spread. And today there are groups in several countries who share an understanding of the failures of the Russian revolution and of the politics of those who still hold Russia as a model of socialism. This international tendency, of which the Socialist Workers Movement is a part, seeks to build out of the inwardlooking mentality, splits and political sectarianism which has marked the opposition to the Stalinist monolith. And it's growing.

Was it inevitable?

IT CAN be argued that the seeds of Stalinism were sown in the Russian situation long before Stalin himself came to power. Few would deny this seriously. But the point is that it was one of many seeds sown as they are in any political situation. It is the circumstances produced by history and the actions of human beings which determines which seeds will flourish and which will die.

After the Russian revolution, the isolation of the new

society, the failure of revolution in the advanced capitalist countries, the withering away of the Russian working class in war and famine, the death of Lenin and the defeat and murder of the other Bolshevik leaders — all contributed to the growth of Stalin and the smashing of the revolution.

The circumstances of history are different today. The effects of a revolution in any of the countries now ticking over with instability, would be tremendous. The growth

of capitalism, its international structure with the complex linking of the system across national boundaries, means that the crisis which opens the door to workers' power in one country will be hammering at the door of others.

Such a situation ensures that the isolation which caused crushed the Russian workers will not happen next time.

And it's our job as socialists and internationalists to make damn sure of that.

WHY RUSSIA ISN'T SOCIALIST



FOR further reading on the aftermath of the Russian revolution: **WHY THE REVOLUTION WAS LOST** by Chris Harman 20p.

On the world's Communist parties: **WORKERS AGAINST THE MONOLITH** by Ian Birchall £2.00.

Available from the WORKER BOOK SERVICE 24 Talbot St. Dublin 1

We want you



"LITTLE did I know, when I was made redundant two years ago that I'd be talking now about a rank and file movement against unemployment which has got the bosses and trade union leaders rattled", said Neil Davies. A member of the Right To Work Campaign in Britain, he was speaking at a series of meetings around the country organised by the Socialist Workers Movement.

Neil, an unemployed building worker, told of the small beginnings of the campaign, the ones and twos going to the dole queues, convincing unemployed workers of the chance of fighting back. And of the link-up with the employed which was the key to the campaign which resulted in over 3,000 workers descending on the trade union leaders at the TUC conference in Brighton in September.

This series of meetings — in Limerick, Waterford, Dublin, Dundalk and Belfast — followed hard on the heels of two SWM meetings held against the introduction of the repressive legislation.

THROUGHOUT September and the first week of October was one of the busiest periods yet for the SWM.

Seven meetings were held in the space of two weeks, leaflets were produced for strikers, members were involved in the preparation for the visit of the British Labour Delegation to Ireland and the activities of the Murray Defence Committee.

These activities, on top of the routine work of branch meetings, work in the unions, producing and selling THE WORKER, stretched the group and revealed its weaknesses and tested its strengths.

building

With the general drift to the right caused by the fact that these are not easy times for socialists it is an achievement in itself not only to maintain a presence in the working class but to increase the spread of socialist ideas.

But the audience reached is still small: a couple of hundred through the meetings a couple of thousand through the paper. And the stretching of resources to the limit inevitable results in slip-ups and missed opportunities.

The building of a relevant workers organisation during



Available from:
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International Socialism

Monthly journal of the International Socialists.

SPECIAL ISSUE

THE International Socialists are the SWM's fraternal organisation in Britain. The October issue of their monthly Journal is out now and contains several major articles on the situation in Ireland today.

The articles, written by members of the Socialist Workers Movement, include:

THE SOUTHERN ECONOMY: What the government and bosses are planning and the possibilities and problems for a rank and file fight back.

THE PROTESTANT WORKING CLASS: The forgotten class. Dismissed by many socialists as



a reactionary bloc — but they must have an active role to play in any true socialist revolution.

WOMEN IN IRELAND: 'The slave of the slave', in Connolly's words. How women have been fighting back in one of Europe's most oppressive states.

PLUS: Articles on repression, the republicans, Ireland's biggest union — the ITGWU — and a rundown on the Irish Left.

the crucial few years ahead depends on an ability to digest the experiences, good and bad, of the past and produce a strategy which will increase the spread of socialist ideas, the intervention in workers struggles, and through that, the winning of large numbers of workers to see the need of building an independent workers movement.

The next SWM Conference, in a couple of months time,

will have the job of building on the experiences gained, particularly over the past few months, preparing for a fortnightly edition of THE WORKER, and for the battles of the months ahead.

winning

We are not interested in drawing up plans to solve capitalism's problems. We

are in the business of winning workers to a fight to end that system and its misery. For that we need more members. And that means you.

The basis of SWM's politics are explained below in "What we stand for", and the journal advertised above carries a more detailed view of how we see the political situation. If you want more information there's a coupon at the bottom of the page.

JOIN US IN THE FIGHT

SWM What we stand for

THE SOCIALIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT is a revolutionary workers' organisation which aims to organise the working class in the struggle for power and for the overthrow of the existing social order.

Capitalism produces war and poverty, racial and sexual oppression. It is based on the exploitation of those who produce the wealth. It is geared to profit and not to human need. It wastes resources — above all, human resources. It is driven into ever-deeper crises.

Only the working class can destroy it and build a socialist society based on workers' control of production. Our political action to prepare the working class for that is based on the following principles:

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM:

Capitalism cannot be changed by piece-meal reform. Increasingly it is unable to bring in even those small reforms which some sections of the ruling class think necessary. We support all struggles of workers against capitalism, seeking to co-ordinate them and direct them towards a fight for workers' power.

CAPITALIST STATE MUST BE SMASHED:

The state machinery — courts, parliament, police, army — is used to maintain the domination of the ruling class. Working class revolution produces a different kind of state — one based on councils of delegates from work-places and localities who are democratically elected and subject to recall at any time.

NATIONAL ANSWER TO THE NATIONAL QUESTION:

Imperialism dominates the country, props up the Northern state and keeps the working class divided. But the problem can only be resolved in the working class's struggle for power. Only a united working class can defeat imperialism and capitalism, leading the fight to end repression, to force withdrawal of the British Army and against every aspect of the bosses' system.

NO SOCIALISM IN ISOLATION:

Capitalism is an international system and can only be overthrown by the working class internationally. Socialism in a single country cannot survive. We work for solidarity with workers in other countries and support the struggles of oppressed peoples against imperialism. Along with revolutionary organisations elsewhere we aim to build an international of working class parties.

RUSSIA AND CHINA NO MODEL:

The attempts of the Russian working class to build socialism were halted by the failure of their revolution to spread. The Stalinist rulers established a new type of society based on exploitation and oppression. Russia, the countries of Eastern Europe, China and Cuba are not socialist or "communist" — the workers are not in control. We oppose these regimes as we oppose Western capitalism.

The main area of political action for socialists is in the mass organisations of the working class, particularly the trade unions. We fight to make them — independent of all ruling class influence and any state interference and to make them effective organs of struggle for the workers.

In the trade unions, we fight for the right to organise free of restrictions, and against all laws and agreements limiting the right to take industrial action. We fight for democratic control of union affairs and the election of officials.

We oppose all forms of wage control and wage restraint; we oppose unemployment, compulsory and voluntary redundancy, and closures. We fight for shorter hours, five days' work or five days' pay, and demand the nationalisation without compensation and under workers control of companies which cannot guarantee job security.

We fight for a national minimum wage of £45 per week, for equal pay for women, and for the adult rate from 18 years of age. We oppose attempts to lower living standards by cuts in social services, health and education.

FOR A RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT which draws together militant trade unionists willing to oppose the class collaboration of the union leaders.

FOR FULL EQUALITY FOR WOMEN

which can only be won if women themselves are organised to fight for their demands and if that struggle is part of the fight for workers' power. **FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE** in order to break the hold of reactionary ideas on workers, and remove a principal obstacle to women's equality. We support the demands for contraception and abortion to be made available on request.

FOR DEFENCE OF ANTI-IMPERIALISTS who face the full force of state repression. We fight for the abolition of repressive laws and for the withdrawal of the British Army. We support the self-defence on working class areas against military and sectarian attack. We fight to build a united front of working class and anti-imperialist organisations for those aims.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS' PARTY which can draw the most advanced, class-conscious workers together to fight for the political leadership of the working class. A revolutionary socialist leadership based in the working class can have a decisive influence especially in periods of upheaval.

The Socialist Workers Movement is working to build such a party. It is a democratic centralist organisation open to all those who accept these principles and objectives, who agree to work in one of its units, and recognise its discipline. We urge those who want to fight for the socialist, working class answer to the mess that is capitalism to join us.

If you want to join or to get more information about the Socialist Workers Movement, send to: THE WORKER, 24 Talbot Street Dublin 1.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Join us in the fight **SWM.**

NEWS

From the shop floor
and the unions.
Send us your report

BELFAST FIREMEN FIGHT

Day in day out firemen in the North risk their lives in the course of their work. Many of their fire calls are due to bombings, and often while putting out the fires other explosives go off in the buildings.

For laying their lives down on the line they take home £41.72 at best. For this reason they're calling for £5 a day danger money and have been using their industrial muscle to back their claim.
Since October 1st they have ref-

used to respond to fires at any commercial premises in the city. They have since then extended the action to pubs and other places of entertainment.

As one fireman put it 'These buildings are just made of stone and mortar. I'm made of skin and bone. I can't be replaced'

The government is refusing to pay the money. It's the usual excuse 'It's outside the 4½% pay agreement.' But at the same time

someone has enough money to quickly replace the bombed out buildings with modern structures.

Firemen have been leafletting shops and restaurants in the city to get public support. Their wives and girlfriends are organising to leaflet the city as well. Many unions in Britain and the North have given their support to this action. A march on Stormont is being planned by the Firemen's Action Committee and their wives.

APOLOGIES to those who sent reports and articles this month which had to be left out or cut. The old story of not enough space. But keep them coming for next month.

EHB WORKERS SHOW

THE WAY

AS WE go to press, the Eastern Health Board workers have all but won. Five weeks of unofficial strike action have achieved what two years of talking failed to do.

But not only have the EHB general operatives forced the Board to concede their claim for parity with the craftsmen. They have also won a victory over their own union officials, who, after two years of processing the claim through the "proper channels" and getting nowhere, still refused to back their members' action. In fact they have done everything they could to sabotage it.

The workers at the centre of the dispute are 60 general operatives in four EHB psychiatric hospitals — St. Brendan's, St. Loman's, St. Ita's and Dundrum. The differential between the general operatives and the craftsmen in the EHB had risen from £5 to £15 after the craftsmen won their claim for parity with the Corporation craftsmen in 1974.

The general operatives claim for the restoration of that differential was first served by the ITGWU No.5 Branch on Sept. 17th '74. In the following two years the claim went the rounds of the official machinery; talks between the EHB and the unions, conciliation and arbitration, and finally the Labour Court which, in a moment of inspiration that says much for the "proper channels", recommended that there be MORE talks between the EHB and the unions!

In the meantime, in June '75, the Government had slapped down its embargo on 'special claims'. And despite the fact that the EHB claim was first served nine months previously, the embargo was seized upon by the EHB as an excuse for not paying up.

Worse, it gave the union officials their chance to trot out the now familiar line: "Sorry boys, we'd love to help you, but our hands are tied." It was an excuse for doing nothing.

The workers had had enough. On Sept. 13th they struck. With the active support of the Chairman of the EHB Group of Unions, Gerry MacNamee and the Vice-chairman, Tom

By Eamonn O'Dwyer.

Grace, unofficial pickets were placed on St. Brendan's. A Strike Committee was elected and within a week pickets were placed on nine EHB hospitals in the Dublin area. Support came from other general workers, from laundry and kitchen workers and from tradesmen. At one point up to 600 workers were out in support of the claim.

"Union officials that we'd been having difficulty in seeing for months were suddenly all over us", says Dominic McEvoy of the Strike Committee. "They were working overtime trying to get us back" back."

One week into the strike the three unions supposedly representing the strikers, the ITGWU, the WUI and the Cranmen and Firemen's Union held an abortive meeting in Liberty Hall in an attempt to get their members back to work. "We walked out as soon as we heard what they were recommending", says Paddy Byrne, also of the Strike Committee. "They wanted us to go back with a possibility of £1.75 and a whole load of productivity strings. It was a fiasco. Some of the men would

have actually lost money!" The following week the strikers held their own general meeting in St. Anthony's Hall at which they decided by a majority of the 120 present to reduce hardship and strengthen the strike by concentrating their pickets on the four psychiatric hospitals.

Pickets were to be withdrawn from the other hospitals and the workers there asked for financial support instead.

The atmosphere of the meeting was one of solidarity and determination to win, despite the lack of official union support. Tom O'Brien and Mick Togher of the ITGWU No.5 branch and Barry of the WUI were condemned by speaker after speaker for their sell-out.

In the fifth week of the strike all but one of their demands had been met. The EHB had agreed to pay an immediate £1.75 with the full £7 to be paid before Christmas, retrospectively to Sept. 1st, with the possibility of earlier retrospective negotiable, and no victimisations.

FIRM

But the strikers rightly stood firm on their demand for compensation for loss of earnings. Amid all the talk of the hardship caused to the patients by the strike, little has been said of the hardship of the workers who, before the strike were having to exist on a miserable £40 a week.

The solidarity and confidence of the EHB workers must not be allowed to dwindle away on their return to work. With this victory under their belts they must prepare for the future.

As the cutbacks come in the Health Boards, and come they will as part of the general attack on workers' living standards in the crisis, only the rank and file will be able to fight them.

Regular workplace meetings and a Health Worker Bulletin to keep workers in the different workplaces informed will help prepare for the battles ahead. As one WUI tradesman at the general meeting said of the general workers' fight, "Their problem today will be ours tomorrow."

strike but that wasn't so surprising. The same man recently worked overtime to get pickets taken off the Limerick Gas Co. which had just sacked nine workers. He succeeded, the jobs were lost and the workers themselves have since made it known in public statements that they blame the union for not fighting for the jobs.



Dominic McEvoy and other members of the EHB strike committee address the meeting in St. Anthony's Hall.

MAKE THEM PAY

"THE chances of it being paid are the same as ever — 120,000 workers were cheated out of the last Agreement".

That's what we said in the last issue of THE WORKER, and already the bosses have been crying all the way to the bank with their "inability to pay" claims. The old "tighten your belts" joke is being trotted out again.

But this time a lot of workers are not laughing. We've heard it too many times.

Rowntree-Macintosh workers hit the streets; in Clover Meats they slapped on an overtime ban; Odeon cinema workers held a meeting and said they didn't want to know about their bosses' problems; Cadbury workers served strike notice.

The bosses will be claiming in ever greater numbers that things are tight. Well, things are tight down here too — a damn sight tighter than they've ever known it. A lot of us didn't want this agreement in the first place but it's money we're due now.

If they get away with weitching on the miserable deal that was agreed we'll have even less chance of getting any more when it ends next year.



COAL BURNS WHILE BOSSES FIDDLE

EVER since Coal Distributors Ltd. was set up three years ago there has been a festering grievance between workers and management over a productivity agreement.

The clause in the agreement stating that coal lorry drivers would assist in the carrying of coal was being interpreted by the bosses as meaning that the drivers would, in effect, be driver/carriers.

In the middle of September 30 drivers were suspended after disputing management's order that they would carry 192 bags of coal per day — on top of their driving — and this for a take-home pay of £28-38 a week.

Once outside the gates the men formed an action committee and placed pickets on the gates. The majority were members of AGEMOU, with two in the Marine Port union, and three in ITGWU. However, AGEMOU's hands were tied by the fact that negotiations could

not take place unless the three unions together were involved, and the Marine Port and ITGWU would only consider negotiations when there was a return to work.

When the coal lying there in a stockpile suddenly began to go up in smoke, the bosses got worried. They tried everything, including bribery to get the men to help move the coal — but the strikers held firm. Then the bosses found a friendly judge, Justice Quinlan, to give them an injunction and they quickly moved some scabs in the form of outside contractors to move the coal.

One of their strongest bargaining points — the burning coal — is gone but the men's morale is still high. Winter is well in now and pressure is on the bosses, and if the picketers remain firm, organise collections and solidarity their chances are good.

Finally, a warning to all readers in the Dublin area. After the last such strike the distributors sold coal which had been burned just as the coal was

this time. So keep an eye out for half-burnt coal and clinkers mixed up with the good stuff when the coal starts moving again. The Distributors have been getting away with too much already.

So the Camac workers have gone back after six weeks to "negotiated" compensation with management — and with no illusions as to the value of that.

There are close links between Guinness and Camac and there is a big need for workers in the two factories to have close links too. Meetings between shop stewards from both factories, and factory bulletins to explain issues and help ensure solidarity are a necessity.

CAMAC DEFEATED

WORKERS from Camac Casks in Dublin, 120 of them, have gone back after a defeat in a strike in which they sought compensation for loss of earnings.

The workers feel bitter, and with good reason. They had a good case since they were losing up to £13 after management had switched their shifts around. And since Camac is a subsidiary of the Guinness empire they had a big

target to hit.

However, things being what they are in the labour movement today, they were told by their union officials to confine the picketing to Camac. The officials — AUEW, WUI and NUSMW — made the strike official. But when pickets were put on the Guinness factory next door they instructed workers in the factory to pass them.

the worker

Paper of the Socialist Workers Movement

WHY RUSSIA
ISN'T
SOCIALIST

page 5

Latest 'peace initiative' from RUC: a new interrogation centre

THE PEACE people still get the headlines with their globe-trotting. But what have they actually done? They have said lots of prayers and sung many hymns. What they have done to change the situation in the North is perhaps not quite as they, or many others, would have expected.

Their campaign has made it easier for the British Army to step up

the harassment. More people are being lifted by the Army and RUC. There is more information coming to the police from republican areas.

Coming on to the streets, as they did, then the nationalist population was largely demoralised, the peace movement has added to that demoralisation. The British government can barely disguise its pleasure at the success of the peace move-

ment. Roy Mason faces little resistance to the toughening of the line.

It's not that the leaders of the peace movement planned any of the new Army initiatives. They have simply made the way smoother. Their speeches for peace at any price and their attacks on the Provos have created an atmosphere in which informers feel safe.

Without them, it would be hard to imagine an Ardoyno priests being able to admit that he acted as an informer against the IRA - and getting away with it. He encouraged others to use the confidential telephone, claiming that those who report terrorists are "apostles".

In one area alone 40 people have been picked up in the last three weeks. They were held for a few hours or for several days. The police have even had to open up a new interrogation centre in the Crumlin Road jail. The Castlereagh RUC station was obviously becoming too crowded.

the anti-imperialist movement if the Provos, out of fear of losing, decided not to fight this issue.

The Provos in Strabane took to the streets and gathered four times as many as the peace marchers. But the usual Provo response has been to ignore the job of building a political movement and to continue with the insane bombing campaign.

At a time when a major factory is due to close in Andersonstown and when jobs are threatened in a whole number of industries, the Provos bombed 20 women from Sandy Row out of their jobs in a factory in Adelaide Street. Is it any wonder people are confused? Is it surprising that the sectarian divisions run deep?

Aims

However they state their aims, the success of the peace movement can only mean greater licence for the Army and for the RUC in the nationalist areas. It could pave the way for the re-establishment of a sectarian Northern administration.

Their purpose will not be frustrated if the bombings go on, or if the peace people themselves are attacked. Even less will they just go away if they are ignored. Their aims and their statements need to be confronted politically.

Only if there is a mass, democratic alternative to the peace movement can the confidence of the people to resist all facets of imperialism be built up. That confidence needs to be developed to fight every redundancy, to fight the rotten housing, to counter the attacks of the Army, and to defend the political prisoners.

This cannot be done by any elitist army. Nor can it be done by prayers or hymns.

It can only be done by socialists and revolutionaries committed to building democratic working class organisations to fight every attack of the bosses' system, of their state, and of the sectarian monster that system has created.



BETTY WILLIAMS gets a touch of make-up to help her sparkle for TV viewers in the USA. She returned to the harsh reality of Northern Ireland politics to find that people were growing a bit sceptical about the way in which the peace movement is being used. The scepticism was demonstrated when she was thrown out of a meeting of Turf Lodge residents. She stated that without the presence of some Provos to protect her she might have been beaten up.

Parkinson's law

"I LIKE war! So the place for me is the army."

That's why 2nd Lt. R.D. Parkinson of the Royal Light Artillery gave up his job as an engineer and ended up patrolling the streets of the Markets area of Belfast. He explained this (in French) to a group of French tourists from whom he had just "captured" some camera film. They had been taking pictures of children in the area and slogans and cartoons painted on the walls. Unfortunately, they included some military installations in their pictures and that's forbidden by the Emergency Powers Act. You can't help but include the military—they are always in the way—from the foot patrols to the Saracens to the army billet in the old Protestant church that dominates Cromac Square.



the IRSP, but now run by the GAA. There was the usual Saturday afternoon crowd in it and they were all searched and photographed. The soldiers apologized after they found nothing incriminating in the Bull. It was normal Saturday afternoon harassment.

But that activity won't be around any more. The Bull was mysteriously burned down the following night. Many people think the army did it for "badness". Now there's very few places to go in the area—except for the Sticky and Provo clubs.

And the film? Lt. Parkinson's superiors didn't think it was such a transgression on military privacy. They returned all the camera film untouched! Parkinson is going to have to look further for battles for his war. And he'll probably find them.

Mercenary

Parkinson, who likes war so much, is just the type to join up as a mercenary to fight—in Angola or Northern Ireland. He loves to fight so much, he'll do it for money. Wages in Northern Ireland are not as high as in Angola. But the risks are a lot less here. The MPLA wiped out the mercenaries there. With the British state behind them, the mercenaries here can spend their days mopping people about in the Markets.

After the capture of the film, Lt. Parkinson's man continued the "war" by seizing the Black Bull, a popular local pub, frequented by members of

LOUSEY HOUSING IN THE MARKETS

THE NEW houses in the Markets area of Belfast are finally going up. And it's about time. Promises of new homes began at least ten years ago. People in the area have been saving up their new wallpapers ever since.

Some of the old homes are over 100 years old. Many of them are badly in need of repair, but repairs are slow to be done. One woman has waited five years for a window to be fixed;

You would imagine the local people are waiting anxiously for the day they can move. But they have found good reason to object to the poor quality, the size and the location of the new houses. In most of them, the rooms are very small. There is no room for expansion for growing families. There's little chance of getting a bigger house if you need it—or of being able to add rooms. There just is not the room at the back. The windows are small—'just like a jail'. And there's no ventilation in the bathrooms.

The houses are built with central heating. But most people would prefer to keep their open fires and be able to regulate the heat in their homes. So far, there is no sign of any playgrounds. And the school is built right beside the railway line.

For all this, rents will increase from the 50 pence—to-£4 they are now, up to something like £7 and £8.

The houses are showing faults even before people move in. Water can be seen running down the walls. The faults are built in.

The workers on the site are working 'on the grip'. That means they work as fast as they can to improve their earnings. The result is shoddy quality. The Housing Executive must take the blame—and, with them, the union leaders who allow the grip system to operate. They don't care what kind of houses are built. They aren't going to live in them.

It's up to the people in the Markets to organise now to get some changes made. They are going to live in the houses. They should decide how they are built.