

The fight  
for  
equal pay

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# the worker

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Paper of the Socialist Workers Movement

## ANOTHER YEAR ON THE DOLE?

by Kieran Allen,  
one of the Limerick  
protestors

### IT'S TIME FOR ACTION!

"MY KIDS will have to play with a dole card this Christmas."

Des Kelly, two years on the dole, one of the organisers of the Limerick Walk-For-Work protest outside the Labour Party conference in December, wasn't alone in facing that situation. The official figure for unemployment, North and South, is around 165,000. The real figure is well over 200,000 — and climbing.

And that's a lot of dole cards, a lot of people living on a pittance and a lot of kids with little more than dole cards to play with in the new year.

An angry crowd of 200 unemployed shouted "WE WANT WORK!" as the Labour Party charade went on. Mick O'Leary heard it and scurried back inside where the leadership were proud of the great advance for the working class they had helped to make in pouring thousands of pounds to build up the army and police force.

The Left-wing of the party

### PREPARE NOW FOR THE DAY OF ACTION

**URGENT NOTICE** to all readers who are delegates to Trades Councils or who know their union's delegates: make sure your local Council decides at its January or February meeting to support the Day of Action against unemployment which the Dublin Council of Trade Unions is initiating. It's set for a day in March and will be prepared for by a meeting of Trades Council delegates from around the country to discuss common policy and co-ordinated action.

The December meeting of the Dublin Trades Council heard that an Organising Committee has been set up to re-launch its anti-unemp-

were yet again suffering the humiliation of being allowed to make their militant speeches and pass some resolutions while the leadership smiled — secure in their control. The futility of shadow boxing with the likes of Corish and Coughlan while angry workers chanted outside was never better demonstrated.

For what the Walk-For-Work showed was that the unemployed are not mobilised by quoting the finer points of smelters or hydrocarbon industries or any of the other panaceas that pass for socialism these days.

### ANGRY

The protesters were angry. Angry at a system which puts people on the dole deliberately. A system which cannot be "improved" or built up by tinkering with the way it's run.

Workers are put on the dole when it becomes less advantageous to the people who control wealth to employ us than to put their money elsewhere.

loyment campaign. This initiative must get the support of all trade unionists who see the damage which rising unemployment is doing to workers' living standards and to their morale.

The mobilisation for the proposed Day of Action must be organised in each work-place. The unemployed committees of union branches and sections must be re-vitalised—and where they have not yet been set up, must be established—in order that the government and the bosses, and our own union leaders, get the message clearly: Unemployment Can Be Ended! The Time For Action Is Now!

Only when the anger of the unemployed is harnessed to the collective strength of those still at work can we effectively challenge unemployment.

The spirit of the Walk-For-Work can be a start to this. One weakness was in not being able to pick on concrete targets to hit — apart from double jobbing. We need a policy which puts the pressure on the employed workers to stop the job losses. Opposition to redundancies; bans on overtime so that more people are employed; an end to productivity deals which sell jobs for a little more money; a national campaign by the trade union movement for a 35-hour week to create jobs; and total opposition to the cuts the government are making in the health service and housing maintenance.

The Walk-For-Work is only the start of a long campaign to fight for our right to work.

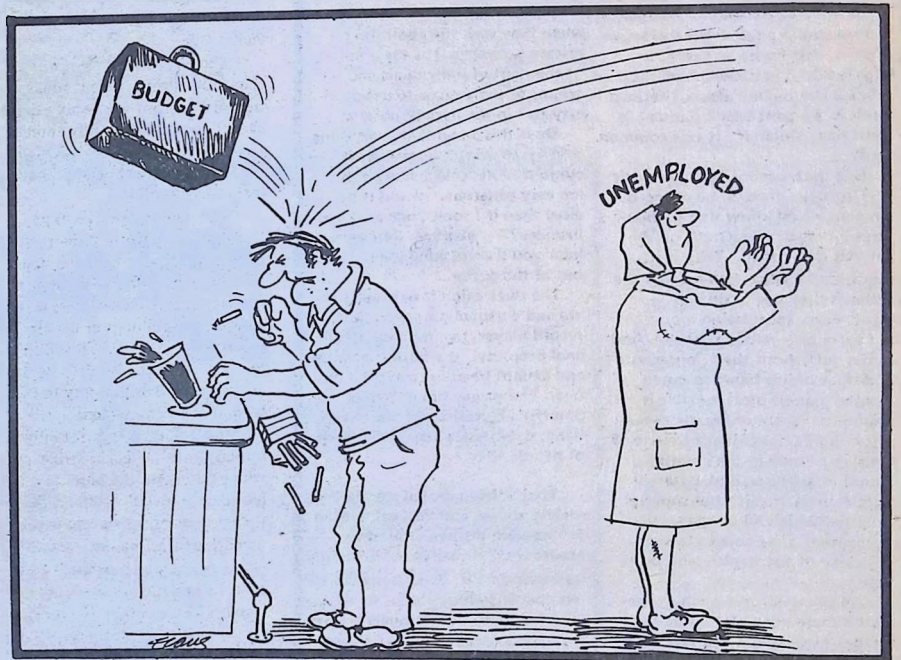


### Brian Daly

general manager  
Lough Egish

YOU may be interested in the thoughts of this gentleman, one of several asked by "Business and Finance" magazine to give their predictions for the new year.

¶ A great many people depending on the state for their income, whether in the civil service or on the dole, will be shot off cloud cuckoo land because there will be no money to pay them. ¶ It's great comfort for all of us on the dole to find that Mr. Daly thinks this is "extremely interesting."



### HIDE THAT TABLE, HERE COMES THE IDA

#### 'WORKER' EXCLUSIVE

THIRTY workers at the Repro Engineering factory on the Raheen Industrial estate in Limerick got a very special kind of Christmas present from their bosses — the news that the factory is to close in January.

Not because the factory was short of orders. No, the company had orders to keep them going for months. Not because of any "trade recession". But because the investors whose support was needed to re-equip the factory to meet those orders refused to put in their money. The "strokes" which had kept the factory open for 18 months had become too much — even for them.

The factory had been opened with IDA support and the usual tax concessions for export business. But it neither produced the office equipment it was supposed to, nor did it sell only on the export market. Filing cabinets, steel tables and parts of machine gears came out of a factory set up to produce printing equipment. According to some of the workers who were employed there, some of these products had to be hidden when the IDA inspectors were doing the rounds.

Wage structures and the procedures for hiring and firing were as chaotic as the production plans themselves. Although the workers were supposed to be represented by the ITGWU, there was no wage structure,

and workers doing the same job were getting different rates of pay. Young workers taken on as apprentices were being paid £18 a week, but were getting no training.

### BUDGET

Thirty more people will grit their teeth as Richie Ryan prepares for the budget with pleas to us all to pull together and step up production. And thirty more people have learned a definition of the word "ubscene" which the Censorship Board never thought of.

## 1976 — THE ROUND THE BOSSES WON

SEE PAGES  
FOUR AND  
FIVE

# Their property, our lives

NOBODY COULD ever accuse the Church of being consistent. Its attitudes to a lot of things have zigged and zagged according to the prevailing political forces of the day. Did you know that the Catholic church has at times supported abortion? Or that the same American cardinal who could preach peace and social stability on Sunday could go out next day to bless the bombers on their way to Vietnam?

What got me started on this was hearing a sermon on "the need for honesty" on Outlook as I waited for the TV Late News. You know the sort of thing: cheating your employer by not

doing a full days work is dishonest. And so is walking out of the factory with a few "samples" in your pocket. (Otherwise known as taking your work home.)

What annoyed me was this emphasis on the importance of property. Because I well remember a quote from some saint about the fact that "property is theft". Back in those grim times the reckoning behind such an extreme (even subversive, would you say Mr. Cosgrave?) statement was that anyone with more than the bare necessities of life must have stolen it. How could anyone have a lot of land, a big house or castle, or huge herds of cattle when all the average person had after a lifetimes work was a bent back? Easy — must have stolen it. It was common sense.

But that, according to yer man on Outlook, must all be changed. I mean, we all know that millionaires like Paddy McGrath or Mr Smurfit don't steal. They just... acquire. Socialists believe that the methods they use to do this — investment, speculation etc — is a form of legalised robbery. And all the guff about their "enterprise" and their brains being so much greater than us mere mortals is debunked when you know that an idiot like Paddy Danegan is one of the richest men in the country. Cunning, perhaps, and certainly ruthlessness, but it's not superior qualities which allow the small percentage of people to own the majority of the wealth and property.

All the institutions which facilitate these people's methods of "acquiring" wealth were set up by people of the same class — including the Dail.

And it's not just a question of it being unfair. In using their control of property (land, factories,

## Thinking About Capitalism

by Mary Burns

machines, goods etc) to increase their wealth they constantly disrupt people's lives. We are employed when it suits these people, our living standards and working conditions are determined by their needs. And it is only by constant struggle — through our unions and other workers' organisations — that we can stave off their attacks.

This is what socialists mean when they seek the abolition of private property. It's the abolition of the right of individuals and groups of individuals to use property to run the lives of others.

Does this mean that everything belongs to everyone, says the cynic. "You socialistic people are very generous. Would it be okay then if I took your coat, for instance?" Just try. Ten seconds later you'll be picking your teeth out of the gutter.

The distinction is between private and personal property. My record player, for instance, is personal property. It's for my own use and cannot be used to exploit anyone. The ownership of one of Smurfit's factories, on the other hand, determines how a whole lot of people live.

That's the accepted standard in society today, and you get a lot of propaganda thrown around to ensure it stays that way. Including sermons on TV. Everytime workers challenge their right to abuse our lives with their property — by for instance, sitting in to prevent them making us redundant — we are questioning the very basis of their society.

# RACISM ON THE RUN

FOR THE FIRST time in decades white supremacy in Southern Africa is under direct attack. In Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) the freedom fighters are surging ahead despite the Kissinger attempts at a deal. In South Africa black youth and workers are fighting a six month old battle with the vicious racist regime. A wave of black resistance is sweeping through Southern Africa. It is the beginning of a new stage in the struggle, and it demands a renewed effort in solidarity.

"We are not fighting to put a black Smith into power in Zimbabwe. It isn't just Smith who has to be smashed, it is the system he represents" — Zingari, a London-based representative of the Zimbabwe People's Army gave some of the facts about the liberation struggle in a recent interview.

"The armed struggle is not a glamorous thing. I went to a section of the front where six months ago, there were 600 fully trained freedom fighters. Only 37 of them are still alive, most of them have lost one or both legs.

"The papers describe us as terrorists. If a white farmer gets himself killed, it's headline news. But the papers don't talk about the massacre of defenceless men, women and children in the Mozambique refugee camp. They don't tell you that 'Red Berets' — deserters from the British Army in Ireland — took part in massacres."

But the struggle is not only a military one. A recent strike which paralysed the buses in Salisbury ended up with all the strikers being thrown into prison.

In South Africa the economy is feeling the pinch of the world crisis. Vorster is trying to get a massive loan of 500 million dollars from the US on top of what he has already borrowed. One of Kissinger's aims when he met Vorster recently was to make

sure that Western investments will be safe.

Inflation has hit workers so hard that they are forced to fight back. The recent stay at home strikes of black workers in Johannesburg and Cape Town have hit British companies. Big combines like Metal Box and Unilever are taking a harder line against the strikers, refusing to pay them when they stay away.

Name any multinational company. Whatever name you pick it is more than likely making huge profits in South Africa. The list is endless... British Leyland, Cadbury Schweppes, Dunlop, ICI, Pilkington, BP, Shell, Rank Hovis, McDougall, Rowntree Mackintosh... many of these have subsidiaries

or sell their products in Ireland. The profit rate in South Africa is 10% higher than in Britain because of the starvation wages paid to black workers.

Black workers in South Africa are fighting for what we would regard as basic democratic rights: a living wage, independent unions to negotiate freely with the bosses, freedom to form political parties. But more importantly they are also fighting for power.

How can we help? Many Western governments supply South Africa's army with guns, landrovers and helicopters. All these are used to crush demonstrations and strikes. Your firm probably has a subsidiary in South Africa.

Solidarity action in your workplace in support of strikers in the same company in Southern Africa is, at this time, about the most effective action that can be taken.

We will try in 'The Worker' to keep you informed of various solidarity activities.

This article has been compiled from SPARK, the Bulletin of the Southern Africa Solidarity Campaign in Britain. Copies of the Bulletin may be obtained by writing to: Southern Africa Solidarity Campaign, 101-103 Gower Street, London W1. £1.30 p.a. (6 issues).



## POLAND: A STRANGE KIND OF SOCIALISM

ONE MEMBER of an anti-repression committee jailed for fund-raising and two fired from their jobs. Although this may sound familiar to some members of the Murray Defence Committee this didn't happen in Ireland but in that "worker's" paradise" — Poland.

This committee, The Committee to Support Worker Victims of Repression, has been organised to defend the strikers victimised after the recent strikes against price increases during which 11 workers were killed.

In addition to harassing members of the committee, the government has resorted to publishing false statements in the committee's name. For example, in a so-called "Communique No.3" it was said that "recently there have been important concessions and these have led to the rehiring of many workers." The intent was obviously to spread the idea that the need for defending the victimised strikers was diminishing.

Support for the sacked workers is also coming from their fellow workers at the Ursus tractor plant (which has links with Massey-Ferguson in Ireland). "We demand that the workers fired be allowed to resume work in the same conditions as previously, retaining all their rights of seniority, and that they be paid for the time they have lost." This is part of a statement signed by 889 workers, a quarter of the total workforce, which was sent to Polish Communist Party boss Edward Gierak.

Such a formal, public demand by a substantial part of the workers at a major industrial centre is an indication of how massive and open the opposition to bureaucratic dictatorship in Poland has become.

(Intercontinental Press)

## the worker

We don't like doing it, but we have to. Throughout last year the price of paper, printing and transport has gone up. Un fortunately inflation hits us too, and we're asking you to help us with meet the increased costs. That is why we are putting up the price to 8p per issue.

We want to build a workers paper that can fight the ravages of rising prices and unemployment and fights for the socialist alternative to the bosses crisis.

We can with your help. Write to the worker and tell what you think of the paper. Dig deeper into your pockets and send donations to our fighting fund. Give us reports of ANY dispute in ANY factory. Write to;

THE WORKER  
24 TALBOT ST.,  
DUBLIN 11

WHAT WE THINK

# A clear case of intimidation

THE DECISION of the Supreme Court to quash Noel Murray's conviction for capital murder and with it his death sentence 'is to be welcomed.

But it was delivered begrudgingly by the five judges and only after they had divided on all the possible issues to divide on. The re-trial of Marie Murray on the capital murder charge - still carrying the death sentence - can give us just as little comfort.

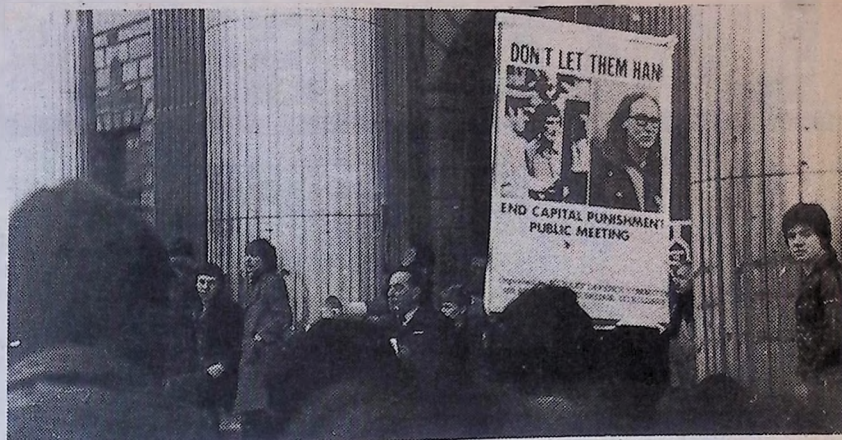
The discredited Special Court is to get another chance to send her to the gallows, unless the pressure in favour of her being re-tried before a jury succeeds

When the hearing began in the Supreme Court on November 1st, the judges were in indecent haste to get the case over. They insisted that barrister Seamus Sorahan present his case in spite of instructions from the Murrays that he should withdraw the appeal if they were not allowed to attend the hearing.

When Sorahan asked for a brief adjournment to give him the chance to put his books and papers together, he was refused. When he suggested that they break for lunch some minutes early so that he would not have to interrupt the presentation of part of his case, his suggestion was turned down.

Three French lawyers who were here to observe the case were surprised that the Murray's lawyers did not simply walk out in protest at the farce. Their astonishment at some of the things going on here was equally divided between outrage at what the authorities are imposing and indignation that so many of their own profession put up with it. They were shocked at the largely indifferent public reaction to the whole affair.

The French state still guillotines people; political rights are being steadily eroded there too. But there are lawyers prepared to oppose this process openly and vigorously. And the strength of the working class movement sets limits on what the state can do - and on the pliability of the legal profession.



And that is the political significance of the case of Marie and Noel Murray. They have become the guinea-pigs in a sordid political laboratory test - not necessarily as a result of any conspiracy, but in fact.

The lack of any trade union response to the passing of the first death sentence in twenty years; the sheer cowardice of the weak liberal opposition; the difficulty of the Murray Defence Committee in raising a public protest - all demonstrate how the atmosphere of repression created by the state has pushed down democratic standards and aspirations in this state.

## REPRIEVE

Liam Cosgrave and his cronies must be thrilled. Even if they reprove the Murrays they will have learned that they can go nearly all the way to the ultimate use of state force against persons judged useless, dangerous or "criminal" - and they can get away with it.

Each bolt of repression has deadened the nerves that little bit more. The strikes and demonstrations against the emergency legislation which were detailed in the last WORKER were, of course, a pale reflection of those which greeted the Offences Against the State (Amendment) Bill in 1972.

And yet it has been clear both from trade union discussions which took place on the emergency legislation and from the campaigning against the conviction and death sentence of the Murrays that there are many individuals opposed to this strengthening of the repressive machine but who are intimidated from opposing it because of their isolation.

That is precisely the intention of the Coalition government: to isolate and intimidate possible opposition, mainly by immediately linking it with the "terrorists". The press has underlined this isolation and intimidation by not reporting the activities of the Murray campaign at home or abroad.

THE WORKER has already explained its rejection of such actions allegedly carried out by the Murrays. We have many times outlined our criticisms of the Provos, the organisation most immediately affected by the rising repression. But we know you cannot effectively oppose the death sentence in this state if you do not also explicitly oppose its use against people who are immediately threatened with it. And you cannot talk with conviction about the defence of democratic rights if you are not prepared to defend the organisation being most severely restricted and harassed.

The job of drawing together the strands of serious opposition to the rising force of the state and of breaking down the barriers of isolation and intimidation must be focused on the trade union movement.

Not because it is immediately threatened by the new powers, but because it - or, rather, the working class whose principal means of defence it is - is having its independence and its ability to fight steadily undermined as more and more people hold back from "stepping out of line".

The trade union has the potential strength not merely to halt the tide of repression but to turn it around at the bosses whose power and privilege it is aimed at protecting.

The unity of the left groups and the involvement of sections of the republican movement in the Murray Defence campaign represent an important advance in the fight against repression. But their attention must now turn to the broader movement of the working class. It is there that the fight can be won.

## LIMERICK REPRESSION MEETING

ON THE Saturday night of the Labour Party conference in Limerick the local Campaign Against Repression held a public meeting on 'The Labour Movement And Repression.'

The meeting was addressed by Phil Flynn, Deputy General Secretary of the Irish Local Government and Public Services Union, by Michael Farrell of People's Democracy and Brian Trench of the Socialist Workers' Movement. Over 30 people attended.

The meeting was kicked off by Jim McNamara for the campaign committee. Then Phil Flynn urged that the struggle against repression be taken into the labour movement, emphasising the dangers of repressive legislation to the organised working class.

Brian Trench underlined the damaging effect on workers' confidence and fighting ability of accepting each new repressive measure.

SEE PAGE 4

## Repression and the trade unions

■ We see in this repressive legislation a threat to all working class organisations: trade unions, tenants associations and political organisations. We call on the National Executive Council to organise protest action whenever the amendment is used. We point to the action of our fellow workers in Shannon who organised a protest march against the extradition of two colleagues to the North and to the thousands of trade unionists who protested against the introduction of the amendment and the jailing of republicans. We call for a united campaign by the trade unions and other working class organisations for the repeal of repressive legislation and against the political censorship of RTE.

THIS is part of a resolution passed by the Annual Conference of the ITGWU in June 1973. Many unions have passed many resolutions against the growth of state power. But nothing - apart from one hesitantly and timidly organised march in Dublin - has been done by the official movement.

And that state power is still growing. And it is being used. Apart from the "usual" raids by the Special Branch, day-in-day-out on "suspects"; the wrecking of houses during these raids; the intimidation on the streets; the beatings in police stations; the railroading through the Special Powers Court; more beatings in prisons etc etc etc etc, - apart from all this the overall intimidation of the whole working class movement, which is the prime intention of the government's repression, continues.

The papers are scared. TV and radio are controlled and censored. How many people know that members of the Unemployed Workers Association have been arrested at gun-point for making enquiries about the best day to hand out leaflets at the dole? Or that a member of the Executive of the UWA has been picked up under the Emergency Powers Act? Or that members of the Limerick Trades Council have been taken in under that Act?

Resolutions are fine. But if they are allowed to gather dust they are worse than useless; a substitute for action.



A number of representative trade unionists around the country are presently organising for a meeting to launch a Trade Union Campaign Against Repression. Date and venue for that meeting have not yet been announced, but THE WORKER will be supporting that meeting and that campaign and we urge all trade unionists to give their support as soon as the details are announced.



LATE NEWS...LATE NEWS...LATE NEWS...LATE NEWS...LATE NEWS...LATE NEWS

To rub in the point about repression and the trade unions we have just received a last minute report from the picket lines in Hickey & Co. in Dublin. On January 6th four girls were arrested while picketing. They were trying to prevent

three scabs going past the lines. When the argument started the police intervened and charged the girls with assault, obstruction and obscene language. They are to appear in court in next month.

## LIMERICK WOMEN'S ACTION GROUP

MEMBERS OF the newly formed Limerick Women's Action Group have been collecting signatures in the streets on Saturdays, for the petition of the Contraction Action Programme.

One of the first initiatives of the group was to intervene in the Walk for Work (see front page). In this way they challenged the reactionary ideas of Councillor Michael Crowe, whose main slogan is 'One MAN, one job'. Crowe is attempting to raise the question of stopping married women working in the hopes of leading the unemployed up a blind alley - of turning their anger against their fellow-members of the working class, in order to take the pressure off the government and the bosses whose interest it serves.

These ideas also raise divisions among those who have jobs. For workers who are faced with fighting redundancies may be tempted to take the easy

way out: married women out first, or even all women out before any men.

But women who are working are doing so out of economic necessity, not for love of working. Their needs are as important as those of male workers, and they have an equal right to work. It is playing the boss's game to start asking: "Does this woman have a husband?" just as it would be to start asking: "Does this man have a father or a brother or a son bringing money into the same house?" Such ideas set workers at each others' throats, instead of uniting them to fight management.

In just the same way, the unemployed must not fall for the ideas which tell them they can get jobs at the expense of some people already working. Unemployed women must take a lead in demanding equality of treatment in getting jobs, in keeping them, and in getting unemployment benefit and assistance on the same basis as unemployed men.

# Letters

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

## MAO R.I.P.

I WAS sorry to see that no comment was made about the death of Mao in the last issue of THE WORKER.

For many of those who call themselves revolutionaries, just as for many of those whose purpose it is to oppose revolution in any form and any country, he represented THE revolutionary leader. It would have been useful to have the man's achievements put in an internationalist and revolutionary perspective.

Readers may be interested in some of the insights into Mao's political thinking which became available after his death when a French politician 'leaked' the recording a discussion between Mao and Pompidou at the time of the French Prime Minister's visit to China in 1973.

Their discussion wandered over many subjects. Mao explained his relations with the leaders of Western countries: "As for the English, I have not met them much. I didn't see their Foreign Minister during his official visit. He didn't ask to see me, so, in that case I was rather disposed to be

bureaucratically minded."

Then, the two of them got to talking about Nixon and Watergate. Mao: "We cannot understand why there is such a row about the affair."

Pompidou: "Neither can I. There are too many technicians and journalists in the United States. Anyway, I think the affair is coming to an end." Mao: "We haven't mentioned it in our press."

Pompidou: The French press has covered it relatively little." Mao's view on Kissinger: "Kissinger likes giving briefings and quite often his proposals are not very intelligent. . . Napoleon's methods were the

## REPRESSION, JOBS AND WAGES

ANYBODY reading Dave Lee's article in your last issue about the working class response to the emergency legislation may have been struck by the fact that it was construction workers on a civil engineering site in Co. Clare who struck in protest. For it was similar workers on similar sites who also struck and demonstrated in Mayo (Killala), Donegal (Courtaulds, Letterkenny) and Meath (Tara Mines).

There was no coordination between any two of these. So

best. He dissolved the assemblies, and chose the people to govern with."

And then Mao on the population of China: "I am not sure that we are 800 million. I doubt even if we have reached seven hundred million. The censuses make it look as if the Chinese are always growing. On the other hand they always show the size of the harvest diminishing

. . . the peasants cut (the size of harvest) by at least ten percent. But I agree with that. I leave it alone. They can in fact conceal a fifth of their harvest. Certainly the official size of the harvest goes down - but the actual grain is still there. That is why I often advise the local leaders not to be too harsh on peasants if they conceal parts of their harvest. One shouldn't interfere."

The overall impression from the recording is of two elder statesmen swapping experiences, both on the same level. Nothing could be further from the image of Mao as a fire-eating leader - much less a revolutionary.

Fraternally,  
G. Liddy.

why the parallels? I think it points to an important link between the so-called economic militancy and political consciousness. Workers in this sector have maintained their confidence while others have had theirs sapped by the effect of National Wage Agreements and unemployment. Struggles over bonus rates, site conditions, travel and subsistence money have continued on these sites regardless of the impositions of the National Agreements.

So, it is precisely these workers who have the confidence and willingness to down tools and take to the streets in order to meet the challenge thrown down by the government to the anti-imperialist and working class movements.

This should be noted by those on the left who continue to assert that the work of building up rank and file initiative and confidence on questions of jobs and wages has nothing to do with the fight against imperialism and against repression. There is certainly no automatic connection between the two: everything can depend on the sort of leadership which develops. But it is certain that no one is going to convince workers who have been defeated on "economic" issues to make any effective protest against rising repression. Put it another way round: each blow of repression accepted without resistance further deadens the will and confidence to defend jobs and living standards.

It seems to be vital that socialists hold these two aspects of our present situation firmly together.

Fraternally,  
Brian Trench

in general. It is now time to present the alternative as simply and as clearly as possible. Remember, unlike capitalism, it doesn't need an economic degree to put over the socialist message.

When a worker is presented with the 'left' view it is usually accompanied by a Maoist, Marxist, Trotskyist or Leninist heading. In my view it's time to drop the headings and just put over the one basic message: EQUALITY, without divisions of class, race or religion.

Your Comrade,  
Patrick Glynn,  
Shopsteward  
A.U.E.W. (T.A.S.S.)  
Unidare.

## UNITY OF THE LEFT

I AM writing to ask if the WORKER would run a series of educational articles to explain the basic reasons why the capitalist system is failing and will always be doomed to failure, why growth economics are sheer madness with two thirds of the world unable to feed itself, and how a few men can control the destiny and economic wellbeing of the rest of the world.

In my experience there is a complete lack of understanding of how the capitalist system works. Some people I meet are very suspicious simply because the capitalist press has to keep justifying its position. There is a crying need for socialists to stop arguing among themselves on ideological differences and present a simple solution to the workers of Ireland.

At the moment there is a very strong feeling of resentment among the workers against the Government, the union leaders, the Bosses and the establishment

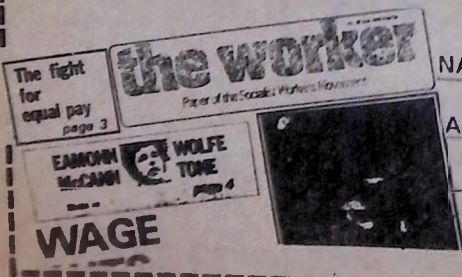
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ADDRESS



# THEIR YEAR

LOOK AT those hard hats. Look at those stiff necks. The military bearing. The firm grip on the hands of members of the security forces.

That's the image of the government they want us to have. That's the one we're getting all too used to seeing.

The "law and order" offensive was kept up throughout the year, from the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Act, through the "emergency" debate, to restrictions on the press and widespread raids and arrests.

Don't let them kid you. This is not just aimed at the "terrorists" and "subversives" which the government pretends are an increasingly isolated minority. It is aimed at the very idea of anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist politics. They want to convince us that things are basically all right, there's no imperialist presence in this country, there's no need for an anti-imperialist struggle and that the only problem is a bunch of armed criminals called the IRA.

Each new part added to the repressive machine has helped get that more firmly established. The Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Act, passed in March 1976, allowed for trial in the South for offences committed in the North. It made the RUC respectable; it pretended that the six-county state was no different from any other. The argument won, the government could leave the Act to gather dust.

## obscene

The "emergency" recall of the Dail in September used the reaction to the killing of the British Ambassador to rush through wider powers for Gardai, courts and Army. None of the bombings of Monaghan, Clones, Dundalk or Dublin had made any such measures necessary. The government was trying to convince us again that violence starts with the Provos.

Conor Cruise O'Brien's directive to RTE not to broadcast any interview with representatives of Sinn Fein (Provo) had the same purpose and the same "justification". Even if Sinn Fein is talking about the closure of a hospital or prison conditions it is "merely lending support to an armed conspiracy".

That's how the argument runs. Or how it would run, if government spokesmen were being more honest. Instead they rely on an understandable reaction to violence to nail to the wall republicans and anyone who shares any of their views.

And it has gone wider too. As the build-up of repression has been used to dampen down any remaining independence in the media and to intimidate the working class movement. Within one month, three cases of contempt of court were brought against newspapers - a new departure without precedent. At the end of the year, a family

planning booklet was banned as "obscene" - again without precedent. And the Official Secrets Act was threatened against a newspaper which had evidence that the government was wasting public money - again without precedent.

From June to December two people sat on "death row" - a warning to us all of the power of the state, a reminder to those of us who oppose that power (as if we needed it) of how difficult it is to get people to understand the danger.

## power

The abuses of the extra Garda powers which had been as vehemently denied by the government as they were predicted by its opponents, have been taking place. In the space of 24 hours people were arrested in Ennis, Belmullet, Dublin and Navan and held under the Emergency Powers Act. None were even questioned in terms suggesting that the Garda suspected them of having committed any offence. The cops were just leaving their calling card.

IT HAS NOT been a good year, scattered victories such as the dispute, the Eastern Health Board, Waterford, etc, the work held back by a combination of employers attacks and the of the trade union leaders.

Here, we draw up a balance sheet for the year and outline the major tasks and point to the tasks over the next few months.



The ruling class is fully aware that it is not only the "terrorists" and their organisations which are hit by the increasing repression. the political, physical and ideological terror with which the government defends their interests is an order to the whole working class: stand up straight! Wipe your noses clean! Take the grin off your face! Attention!

A SPECIAL ISSUE of the International Socialists Journal contains several major articles on the situation in Ireland today.

The articles, written by ISM members, cover such topics as the Southern Economy, Repression, the Protestant Working Class and Women in Ireland

Available from:  
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# THE ROUND THE WORKERS LOST

# OUR YEAR

year for workers. Despite the TV Rentals equal pay Board strike, Molloy's in class as a whole has been on of government aggression, unwillingness and inability to organise any fight back. a brief balance sheet of the past class victories and defeats, as socialists and militant workers



**THE WORKER started last year by saying "Don't let them pass THEIR crisis onto US!"**

They've been doing a bloody good job of that so far and the fight back is sporadic and uncoordinated.

Almost at will they have turfed thousands out onto the dole. Our union leaders have sat in on their "tripartite talks" with the mahogany doors and the plush carpets protecting them from the sound of factory gates slamming shut behind the unemployed.

Our wages will buy a fifth less than they did this time twelve months ago — thanks to inflation. And thanks to National Wage Agreements thousands of workers have got little or no increase.

A third of the workforce are officially having their proper wages stolen each week: women. The union leaders, the government, and even the EEC say that equal pay should be paid — in principle. In practice, women have found that the fight for equal pay is just that — a fight.

The government has not forgotten to put the boot into the sick and the dying, either, in the search for a solution to their mess. The Health Boards' budgets have been chopped by over £7 million. All over the country there are hospital

wards and wings which remain closed because there's "no money" to staff them.

Old peoples' homes, maternity wards — all are chopped. They get us coming and going. Ambulances are not replaced, meals are cut. And these thugs had the nerve to try and intimidate the Eastern Health Board strikers by talking about the "poor old people, freezing."

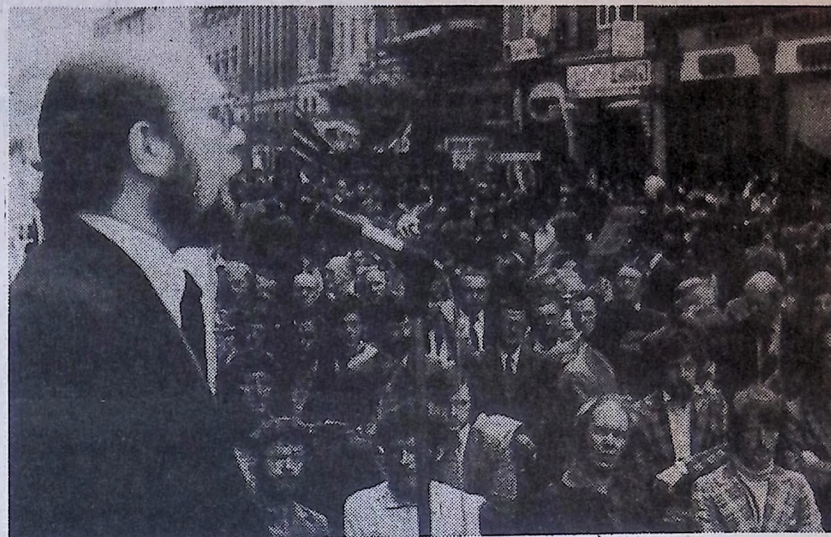
Housing has become a joke. In Limerick, for example, the Corporation didn't even get half way to its target of 250 new houses. Yet thousands of building workers are unemployed, countless families are in need of a home — but the government can afford to spend £50 each on cannon shells to blow holes in the Glen of Immal.

Limerick's housing maintenance staff was cut by a fifth — more workers on the dole, fewer repairs to working class houses. "No money", again.

## price

All this is deliberate. Our living standards are reduced, we are put on the dole, our health is put at risk, people die for need of a proper health service. And this is done deliberately.

This is part of the price we are paying for their crisis. When profits are threatened, when THEY make a balls of THEIR economy — they pass the results on to US!



1976 was a bad year for workers. We lost that round. For too long our trade unions have sat complacently, their gears in neutral, waiting for the bad times to go away.

**They're not going!**

The government openly admits that next year will be

like a carbon copy of last year. Unemployment will remain high — and get worse. Wages will be held down. And our living standards will be cut even further.

**At least, that's what they are planning.**

Above: Gerry Fleming, President of Dublin Trades Council, speaks at 15th June anti-unemployment rally. Below: Limerick unemployed demonstrate outside Labour Party Conference.



## Chile: Their Final Solution

IN THE same week in which the Soviet Union cynically arranged the release of Luis Corvalan, Secretary of the Chilean Communist Party, in exchange for one of their own political prisoners — just in time to wave him around at Brezhnev's birthday — the story of the treatment of Luz Ayress was released.

She too, had come from the horror of the Junta's Chile. In an interview, she told of how she had been repeatedly tortured and raped over a period of six months in the prisons of the Junta. In the end she was moved to a hospital where she was found to be three months pregnant.

She was so physically weak as a result of the torture that she aborted. Once she was confronted with her father and 15 year old brother while they were being tortured and was told that they would be shot in front of her if she did not "confess her crimes".

Another time she was placed a few inches from a former colleague and told: "If you do not confess we shall shoot your friend and you shall watch him die." When she refused to talk the interrogator shot the man through the head.

One torture used on Luz Ayress is favoured in several south American dictatorships. The prisoner is trussed like a fowl, a steel bar is passed under the knees and the prisoner is then suspended from the ceiling and beaten with steel rods and subjected to electric shock in the genitals. Sometimes live rats were applied to her sexual organs. On other occasions she was forced to perform acts of sexual perversion with Chilean soldiers. And all of this is not simple brutality on the part of individual soldiers. It is part of the official policy of the guardians of capitalism, going to any length to crush resistance.

The Junta now claim that no prisoners remain in camps. However, the fate of 1800 to 2,000 people still remains a



Luz Ayress

mystery. They were last seen in the camps but they have now apparently vanished.

As most prisoners don't have the prominence or publicity value of Luis Corvalan it is very unlikely that Brezhnev will bother trying to get more out for his next birthday party. Only pressure from solidarity committees throughout the world to isolate the Junta can help them.

# AND THIS YEAR

THE GOVERNMENT plans that this year our living standards will go down again. It will tell us that the only alternative to its plans is Fianna Fail. But we know that only means the same policies carried out by different men.

We will have to make our own plans as workers for a fight-back. We have got to work for the rejection of the pay cut, whether it comes disguised as an increase smaller than inflation or as a cut in taxes. We have got to join this opposition to the defence of the "social wage", the social services which we pay for out of our taxes, the health services, education, and welfare benefits which have suffered already this

year, which have been hit hard in the North, and which the Southern government will try to hit hard in the budget.

We have got to make sure that the trade unions play their proper role, by working to make them more democratic and to make them fight for their members. We have got to make the force of the trade union movement felt in the struggle against the increasing invasion of civil liberties, against the repression of those who are fighting imperialism.

We have got to begin the struggle for socialism: the first step is to begin fighting back against capitalism.

# SWM Conference looks ahead

THE BOSSES didn't get their wage freeze. That was a sign of their weakness. But the working class had barely resisted rising repression and continuing unemployment. That was a sign of their weakness.

It was in this situation, a situation full of contradictions and of possibilities that the Socialist Workers' Movement met for a national conference during December.

One of the themes of the opening address to the conference was the need for revolutionary socialists to live and breathe the same problems and experiences as other workers in order to win their support and bring them into the organisation.

Much of the conference was given to discussing the best methods for our comrades to forge links of struggle and of solidarity with those who may agree with us in part but don't go the whole way with us.

It was emphasised that members and supporters of the organisation had to see themselves as part of a much wider movement of workers opposed to the build-up of repression, to the unloading of the economic crisis on to our class, and to the defeatism of the trade union leadership.

Or, rather, a movement for which the material is there but which still has to be given shape. And, in that task, revolutionary socialists have a vital role to play - one which may be out of all proportion to their numbers.

The front page of 'The Worker' had caught the mood

of very many workers when it referred to their frustration at the continuing restrictions imposed on them by the compromises of their own 'leaders.'

The job of revolutionary socialists in the working class movement was, then, to channel that frustration to good effect, to provide a focus and to encourage those who want to fight, but feel isolated.

The Conference adopted a number of resolutions which concentrate the work of SWM in key areas - the building of a militant opposition to the present leadership in the ITGWU, the winning of active support for a trade union-based campaign against repression. The organisation is also to discuss in the New Year the possibilities for a campaign around unemployment, recognising that this problem is going to be a lasting and a deepening one.

In reviewing the response of the organisation to the past year's events, comrades repeatedly stated that SWM could have been more effective, more influential if the effort had been better directed and more concentrated. Conference resolved that the areas of work mentioned should receive major attention and that the organisation should be geared to putting the best effort in and getting the best advantage out.

To that end, too, it was determined that SWM should aim for fortnightly production of 'The Worker' during 1977.

## Meetings etc.

The LIMERICK branch of the Socialist Workers Movement will be restarting their "WORKER Readers Meetings" early in the New Year. Any one interested in taking part in the discussions should contact

write to: John Ryan, 46 Roxtown Terrace Limerick.

To contact the WATERFORD branch of SWM write to: SWM, 114 The Quay Waterford.

For contact in other areas or for information on meetings, THE WORKER, etc, write to: THE WORKER 24 Talbot St., Dublin 1.

## Worker books

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THE CRISIS, by Tony Cliff. The information and the arguments on the international crisis - and on fighting back.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM JOURNAL No.92. With half a dozen articles written by SWM on all aspects of the situation in Ireland today Plus: pamphlets on why Russia isn't socialist, the basics of marxism, AND a years subscription to THE WORKER.



## THE OTHER WAY ROUND

This is CAST, a British theatre group, performing their play called "The Other Way Round." It's an intense, sometimes frightening, portrayal of something which has become an almost everyday occurrence in Britain: the arrest and interrogation of Irish people under the Prevention Of Terrorism Act (PTA).

CAST have been performing the 30-minute play throughout the British labour movement for some months and The Other Way Round is an excellent focus for a discussion on such legislation. They recently performed the play at an 8-day series of meetings from Glasgow down to Southampton followed by discussions at which an Irish Transport and General Workers Union shop steward and member of SWM spoke. This is his report.

WORKERS in Britain are no strangers to repression. While the repression has not often been as blatant as it is here in Ireland it has become ever more obvious that the friendly British Bobby's baton has other uses than directing traffic.

A few months ago a Right to Work March from Manchester to London was attacked by police. Many of the marchers were taken to hospital and 43 of them were arrested. Our meeting in Glasgow was attended by members of the James Connolly Band, from the Gorbals. They told us how they had been hired to play at a parade in London and were harassed by police. One young girl had her mouth split open when the flute she was playing was smashed into her face by a cop's elbow. Later on, many of the band were charged with "wearing an illegal uniform" - their green band uniforms! Some of them are ten years old.

Many such incidents were discussed at the meetings, but

the most significant thing was the way in which the law is used - both in Britain and Ireland - not just to arrest people or to harass them, but to keep their heads down. Over 2,000 people have been picked up under the PTA - yet only a handful have been charged with anything. They are deliberately using repression to prevent people opening their mouths against what is going on. THEY are terrorising US - it IS the Other Way Round.

One of the heartening things was hearing of the anti-PTA committees set up by trade unionists who recognise that if the ruling class can keep workers' heads down on one issue, such as Ireland, they are in a much stronger position to do the same on other issues. These committees have had success in organising demonstrations outside police stations when people are held under the PTA, and in getting trade union opposition to this kind of repression.

## 1977 Big Red Diary Pluto £1

This year, its theme is Law and Order. In many humorous, and many more serious examples from history it shows how the 'peace-keepers' have defined their law and their order to keep down resistance.

If you want to know about your rights and how our class has fought to extend them, then buy a copy (£1, inc. postage) from THE WORKER BOOK SERVICE 24 Talbot Street Dublin 1.

## 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.

**SOCIALIST 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 day's 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.

# JOIN US IN THE FIGHT

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

ITGWU  
No. 14  
BRANCH

THE ONLY ITGWU Branch to hold regular general meetings more than once a year held its latest meeting on Dec 5th. But the officials of No. 14 have never been happy about these meetings and have used the low attendance (about 40 this time) as an argument against them.

But the schedule of the December meeting hardly helped to boost the attendance. It started at 11.45 and ended at 12.30 sharp. The chairperson kept to the 12.30 deadline despite the go-slow on the buses that morning and despite the other business members wanted to raise, including our ineffective Branch Unemployed Committee. The Branch Secretary took over fifty minutes giving us the minutes and industrial reports.

Although over twelve months have passed since Quarterly Meetings were established there are no Standing Orders yet that govern these meetings. This has given the chair an excuse to disallow motions from the floor, including a resolution against the M.W.A. now being worked out.

At the previous general meeting the Branch Committee was directed to draw up Standing Orders and confer with Head Office about their official standing. The reply from there was that the quarterly meetings had no official standing under the union rules and that any decisions taken could not conflict with decisions of the A.G.M. The Branch Sec. was interpreting this as ruling out policy decisions at Quarterly General Meetings but was challenged from the floor. Because Quarterly meeting decisions must not conflict with Annual decisions doesn't mean that NO decisions can be taken.

Eddie Lawless, a member of the NEC, pointed out that the Standing Orders question hadn't come before the NEC. Then it emerged that the Head Office letter was one man's interpretation of the rules, presumably Michael Mullen since he had signed it. At this the issue was referred to the NEC itself for final consideration.

The Branch Secretary's report revealed a long list of firms pleading inability to pay and a lot of redundancies. It is not Branch policy to say no to redundancies so this time we were told of the loss of all our remaining members at Islandbridge. No progress on equal pay at Madering. Unidare members complained about two Section Committee decisions made without consultation with a general body: the withdrawal from the Joint Works Council, and the cancellation of the Section AGM this year.

Activists in the branch may be tempted to give up in despair at the small attendance and the tight control from the platform at the quarterly meetings. But greater participation by the general members will never be built on YEARLY meetings. We must safeguard the quarterlies and improve the attendance and we can take heart that the No. 2 Branch has taken up the idea. When standing orders are finally introduced the platform will have less chance of dominating the meetings.

Des Derwin, Shop Steward,  
No. 14 Branch.

## Hickey's

DON'T give the bosses an inch or they will take a yard - that is what the workers in D.C. Hickey and Co. Ltd, of Lime St., Dublin, found out before Christmas.

When the boss would not pay the National Wage Agreement the workers joined the ITGWU. The union went down the old familiar, hopeless road to the Labour Court, and got the workers mixed up in a "work study" exercise. The boss, crafty enough, found an excuse to stop the bonus, leading to a wage cut of around £7 a week.

Some of the workers were on take-home pay of £24 a week. The Monday after the wage cut the workers sat in to discuss tactics. The union officials brought the motion - back up to Liberty Hall - and of course they were promptly locked out by the boss. He then said that he will only take back half of the 68 workers in January.

Come January, the 68 are still on strike. Non-union workers in Co. Cavan have refused to do work transferred to them. But Hickey seems intent on starving his staff into submission.

## Cinema sit-ins

The workers tell their own story best. We print the appeal sent out by the workers in the Ambassador and the Academy

Here, in the Ambassador and Academy cinemas, the people are fighting for the right to work. Since we got our notice on Novemner 5th of last year we have tried every means of keeping the cinemas open.

The company we work for has done the opposite. Capitol and Allied have not, and never had any intention of maintaining the cinemas. They are using them as disposable assets. They are treating us as disposable liabilities.

"Compensation for loss of office" for three executives amounts to £42,052. This is the company that wants to see us go tamely to the dole carrying a pittance - the minimum redundancy payment. This is the company

that "couldn't pay" the National Wage Agreement. People who have worked the last 22 years for the company go out with about £500 ---- much less if they are women. And such figures are guess work, as they refuse to meet us. They have refused to meet us for two months.

We urgently need finance to sustain the fight. Take a collection sheet. Use it. Please. The old union slogan is, "an injury to one is an injury to all." If we win ---- a victory for us is a victory for all trade unionists and for all those facing unemployment.

Of course, there's our pension ("free"). For some it amounts to £45 a year --- if you wait till you are 65.

This is the company we are fighting. This is the only way we can fight. Sitting in ---- "freezing" their assets. How far will we go? All the way! As far as our unity and your solidarity will take us

## SHOP FLOOR NOTES

IN DECEMBER almost all sections of the Unidare workforce, outside of the general workers, were on a work-to-rule/go-slow.

TASS were the first with a work-to-rule in pursuit of more money for two programmers. The No. 2 Branch ITGWU work-to-rule arose because one personal secretary was on a lower grade than the rest. The issue has now been referred to the Labour Court and the work-to-rule was called off.

The fitters, electricians and carpenters have been seeking staff status (the chief benefit of which is full sick-pay) since mid-1974. They also lodged a claim recently for substantial pay increases. They started a work-to-rule on 10 December.

The 900 general workers, represented by the No. 14 Branch ITGWU, have a claim in for full sick-pay and the negotiations have been dragging on for months. The section committee are unlikely to take similar action to the craftsmen. But the craft unions have made NO FORMAL APPROACH to them for united action.

Direct contacts between craft and general shop stewards are needed to make sure that the general workers are not instructed to pass pickets, if a strike develops.



Irish Press strikers on picket duty, and behind them, Liberty Hall, headquarters of the union that sold them out.

THE FIGHT FOR  
EQUAL PAY

John Cane  
Section Committee  
member.

LATE LAST year Fintan Kennedy, President of the ITGWU was boasting of "solid progress in equal pay". That must have sounded just a little strange to the thousands of women members of his union for whom equal pay has become a sour promise.

But if Fintan had cast a glance out his window one day just a few weeks before Christmas, he would have seen some of his members making a first step towards achieving equal pay. And unofficially - without his help.

It was the Irish Press clerical workers of the ITGWU's No. 2 Branch mounting a one-day protest picket on the Irish Press offices in city-centre Dublin. Despite being unofficial, the picket was supported by over two-thirds of our 185 union members.

We have been negotiating with management ever since the Equal Pay Act became law at the beginning of last year. They made their final offer in October - and by current standards it was pretty tempting. The average woman would get an increase of £5.50 a week, men already in the job wouldn't suffer and it applied to all women clerical workers across the board with no "job evaluation" or "regrading" nonsense. But it wasn't what we call equal pay.

## REJECTED

The average woman would still be £2.50 below the current male rate, it would only be paid from September despite the Act and - perhaps worst of all - it would mean in future a new unisex rate some £2 below the current male rate.

We rejected the deal unambiguously and stuck to our original demand: "the full male rate for all women workers from January 1976."

Plenty of these compromise deals have been accepted, though. In a list of 30 workplaces where No. 2 Branch has supposedly won equal pay last year only 6 have got the full male rate with no strings. Many more have been conned into "job evaluation" and "regrading" exercises designed to avoid equal pay by down-grading whole sections of the female workforce. Still others (and no one knows just how many) have not even begun negotiations - and anyhow

pay slips to show how the amounts were arrived at.

Of course, Sister Marguerite denied that Kathleen's dismissal had anything to do with her joining the union. In fact, the first she knew of her being in it was when she told her that she was dissatisfied with her work and gave her a weeks pay in lieu of notice.

But the good sister wasn't given the chance to argue the toss. With the ATGWU threatening a picket, her Reverence got a warning from Tom Malloy whose jeweller's shop was picketed for several weeks earlier in the year to get two girls reinstated and their wages improved...

have little chance of succeeding under the infamous Equal Pay Act. With this in mind, Fintan Kennedy's boast sounds even more of a fantasy.

Involved negotiations, Equal Pay Acts, Labour Courts and moral indignation will never win equal pay - ask the telephonists. They've been through it all and are still talking after seven years! Industrial action is the only answer. The successful strike in the TV rental trade this summer proved that beyond any shadow of a doubt.

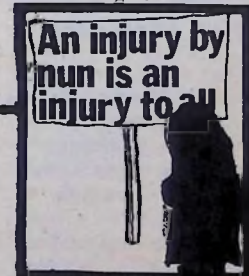
Irish Press workers realised it too and voted to seek official strike sanction in late October. We had an unanswerable case, we were sure we'd win, we'd been promised it for ten months - but we didn't get it.

## CRAP

The National Executive Council sold us right down the river because they claimed that the Interim National Wage Agreement didn't allow strikes over equal pay. What a pile of crap! The NWA is bad enough, but this time all references to "no strikes over equal pay" were left out because of the Equal Pay Act. The fact is that the male-dominated ITGWU bureaucracy, tied to the coalition government and riddled with reformist ideology, has decided to opt out of the fight for equal pay.

And yet again the real fight is left to the rank and file. That's why we had our one-day protest strike. It wasn't only to put pressure on management to concede, it was two fingers to the union bureaucrats. And that's why we disrupted the No. 2 Branch AGM and pushed through a resolution calling on the NEC to make all equal pay disputes official immediately. And that's why we've sent petitions to Mickey Mullen and everyone else we could think of.

But that's not going to work. Ultimately we are going to have to face the choice of accepting the compromise deal, referring it to the Labour Court with job evaluation etc., - or striking unofficially. There's only one answer - we have to fight.



So the jeweller warned the nun not to mess around with the union.

The picket went on six days after the dismissal when she was still not budging. It consisted of Kathleen, a friend, the union branch secretary and an ambulance driver from Arkeen hospital. P&T vehicles, ambulances and suppliers refused to pass it and by noon it was all over.

## Oh, Sister...

SISTER Marguerite, Reverend Mother of the St. John of Gods community which runs the Maypark Nursing Home in Waterford narrowly avoided getting involved in a very embarrassing Christmas row.

On 10th December she had dismissed Kathleen Lane from her job as "domestic" worker in the home. But by 12 noon on 16th December, after the ATGWU had maintained a picket on the nursing home for three hours, Kathleen was back in her job.

Not only that, the union has

NOW, here's something to chew on: 100 workers in the Leaf chewing gum factory in Kildare, Co. Kildare, are being put on short time because of a 'trade recession'.

Jaws temporarily seized up? Or could it be that the massive Unilever corporation which owns the factory has been stock-piling?

case understood and supported by the public. When the 'go sick' or 'work to rule' they add to the commuters' irritation.

To convince bus-travellers there is a need for extra services and extra jobs, they should keep up the number of buses on the road. They should drive and conduct - but refuse fares!

And it's none too soon. Behind the cloak of giving charitable assistance to young girls "in trouble", the nuns had in fact been getting their domestic work done at about one quarter the union rate paid in other Waterford hospitals. One young girl, three months pregnant, was getting £8 a week for working in the home. Others were earning £10 - £12 and were getting no

# the worker

Paper of the Socialist Workers Movement

1976:  
A round  
to the  
bosses

## The political status campaign shows the way



POLITICAL prisoners have an honoured place in the struggles of the Irish working class and in the fight against British imperialism. Time and time again when the movement of political resistance to state repression has been weakening, prisoners have given the lead in re-launching it.

That has been the case with the current campaign for the retention of political status in the North. And the wives, mothers and sisters (seen above in a Derry protest) have followed the lead magnificently with their imaginative and effective protests.

Even while those protests had gone into a Christmas lull however, the prisoners in Long Kesh kept at it, refusing two meals on Christmas Day as part of their continuing campaign.

Poy Mason paid an indirect tribute to the courage and commitment of the prisoners when he gave details late in December of the time lost in remission to prisoners who had taken part in prison protests.

You have to be determined, you have to have guts if you do things which you know

in advance may lengthen your days in the nick.

The response of political organisations outside, but particularly of the Provos, has to be very carefully tuned to the best possible methods of maintaining broad, united mobilisation and of keeping the goal clearly in view

Provisional Sinn Fein has been very fully involved in the campaign on the streets, claiming to have distributed one million leaflets in support of the campaign for political status. But there is another side to Provo thinking, one which could endanger the gains already made.

'Republican News' of 18 December expressed that thinking with a headline which claimed: Revolutionary Force Used To Highlight Status Issue; The examples of this 'revolutionary force' were the familiar ones of railways blocked, suspect bombs ('causing havoc') outside customs posts, four bombs planted in a Co. Derry village.

It is time that Provo supporters and all those committed to the struggle against repression and, in particular, against the attacks on the anti-imperialist prisoners, started to ask: Just what do these military actions contribute to the struggle?

It will be said that it boosts the morale of the nationalist population. It will be said that it cheers the republican prisoners. It will be said that it pushes down even further the sinking morale of the British troops and thus hastens their withdrawal.

It may do some or all of these things to some degree. But it can just as easily - and much more damagingly - confuse the nationalist population,

delude the prisoners than an effective military victory can be won, and provoke the state forces to sharper attacks on the resistance movement and those who support it.

The Provos make a great mistake if they take every sign of increased anti-imperialist activity in the streets as a signal for a new military initiative. The truth, and the sad truth, is that the bombing campaign, or a campaign of 'causing havoc', diverts attention from the job of building up and co-ordinating mass political resistance. It leads too many people to retire to the sidelines leaving it to 'the boys' to look after.

Concretely, what does the bombing of Richardson's Fertilisers after Christmas achieve?

### BUT BOMBING BLUNDERS CAN BLOCK IT

None of this is to deny the need for military action. None of it is intended to lend credibility to the pious mouthings of the 'peace' movement. And we share nothing with the hypocritical liberalism of the Officials.

All the signs are that the Provos are, in fact, beginning to become more aware of the problems which the building of a mass political movement presents. The front page story in 'Republican News' may no longer reflect the real thinking in their movement - in Belfast, at least. There are many in that movement who are questioning the role of the military campaign.

### Example

The example of the prisoners in Crumlin Road, Long Kesh, Magilligan and Armagh has spurred the anti-imperialist movement into more effective and more united

action than it has shown itself capable of for a long time.

That is the impetus which needs to be picked up again in the New Year with a spreading of the Relatives Action Committees and the deepening of political debate within them.

The 'freedom fighters', the ones who can achieve the freedom sought by all anti-imperialists and socialists, are the working class and its allies. Every move of political activists must be geared to drawing in broader working class support, to making the demands of the anti-imperialists understood, to translating them into

terms of mass, democratic propaganda and agitation.

Any methods of work, any kinds of action, which stand in the way of that should be abandoned immediately.

## DILEMMA FOR Mr Harris

(adapted from 'Revolucion', bulletin of the exiled Chileans in Ireland who support the Co-ordinating Committee of the Chilean Socialist Party)

NEARLY ALL the mass media have been closed down in Chile. Because the few that remain are controlled by the dictatorship there is a particular interest, among workers and in the resistance movement, in radio broadcasts from outside giving news and views on what is happening in Chile itself.

### Phone call

On Tuesday, 2nd November Radio Moscow announced during a programme on Chile: 'We have received a moving phone call from Ireland which we will pass on to you presently.' Then a woman said, in Spanish, something on these lines:

'In Ireland, a little country with a population of 4 million, everybody is committed to the Chilean cause. The trade unions, the political parties (nonames were given), and the national students' union.



Harris

But, says 'Revolucion'; 'Sadly - and Mr Harris and the members of the committee he chairs, and the members of the eight other committees, and all the Chilean exiles in this country know this all too well - nothing, ABSOLUTELY NOTHING, not a single point of the programme mentioned, has been achieved. More than three painful years since the coup we can only note some small actions and a few statements (like Mr Harris's). AND THAT IS ALL'

To get the broad, democratic participation needed in the solidarity movement, there needs to be wide-ranging discussion of the implications of the Allende regime and of this coup among the rank and file of those organisations.

'We thing,' says 'Revolucion', that 'this discussion will not take place while leaders like Mr Harris maintain a style of work and a manner of doing things different from those of the masses - divorced from them but still claiming to speak in their name. This creative and indispensable involvement of the working class will not take place while the 'leaders' go on negotiating and accepting agreements behind closed doors and then later present these agreements as the true feeling and think feeling and thinking of the workers.'

### Masses

'Mr Harris is going behind the masses when he makes it appear that they are taking part in a solidarity movement which they are not involved in, because he has never consulted them or effectively urged them to participate.'

'Revolucion' concludes by reminding Noel Harris that the masses can always teach us something. But before that it sums up what it calls 'the predicament of Mr Harris.' 'Mr Harris has put himself in debt to, and has tangled his relations with, the Chilean working class and Chilean people: he now has to work to put into effect the things he calined he claimed had been done in his statement. And that means work without sectarianism or false leadership ambitions.'

The caller went on to underline that because of this common interest there was broad agreement and the solidarity efforts by all mass organisations create a powerful solidarity movement. This is involved in wide-ranging work to achieve certain concrete tasks which were not detailed. The phone call ended by naming the persons who signed the statement read over to us: Noel Harris, chairman, and the secretary of the Irish Chile Committee.'

That should mean that Chilean prisoners have been adopted, that trade with Chile has been blocked, and that trade unions, student organisations and all political parties are fully involved in this.