

THE WORKER

Paper of the Socialist Workers Movement

PRSI
Waterford Glass
Shows the Way

TURN TO PAGE 6

TAX AND WAGES MAKE THE BOSSES PAY

IF YOU want to spend the rest of this year spitting boot leather, follow the line of the trade union leaders.

The bosses are all set to put the boot in. And they must be encouraged by the fact that, meanwhile, the ICTU fumbles and pussy-foots around.

Not only has the ICTU leadership made no attempt to organise at the grass roots to fight back against the employers' offensive.

They haven't even made a decent effort to counter the propaganda con-job which the FUE and the government have organised to blame workers for the crisis.

The result is that in industry after industry, while prices roar ahead and taxation slashes deeper into workers' pay packets, there is no real sign of militant opposition emerging. The propaganda has had its effect.

And no wonder. The lie that workers have created the current mess by pressing for higher wages, and that public

by EAMONN McCANN

service workers in particular are a burden on the rest of the community, has been allowed to go almost unchallenged.

Clap-trap such as "We have priced ourselves out of world markets;" drivellike "We have been paying ourselves more than we have earned;" hog-wash along the lines "Growth in the public service is out of control": all this has become the standard daily diatribe of the media's misery merchants.

And it's being believed. Despite pockets of resistance — and aggressive counter at tacks such as at Ranks, Clon dalkin, Kingdom Tubes and so forth — the general experience is of workers echoing boss-talk. . . "We're lucky to have jobs at all."

This perception leads to docility and demoralisation.

For every highly-publicised occupation and refusal to go quietly down the road, there are a dozen examples of workers accepting redundancies, wage freezes and even wage cuts without fuss or fight-back.

That's the reality, and it's perfectly understandable. In the absence of any fundamental challenge to the economic system, it is logical and inevitable that workers will only consider the options that

are open to them WITHIN the present system.

And within those limits, people with jobs ARE lucky. And as they look at the lengthening dole queues, they'd be fools to tempt fate by pushing their luck too far.

Clearly, leaders who consider themselves part of the present system can do nothing to lead anyone out of this impasse.

And every statement that comes from Congress HQ makes it clear that the ICTU sees itself in that category.

Congress accepts that "the country" is in crisis and that "all sections of the community" will have to tighten their various belts for the time being.

On television, radio and in the press union leaders alternate between breathing fire and brimstone about the evils of the government's economic strategy — and insisting that unions will play their part in making the strategy work.

The result is confusion and hesitancy on all sides — to the extent that although every section of the working class has been due a rise since at least the beginning of March — some since the end of last November — no major group

is yet in a position to set the pace for the new round.

Instead many groups are looking warily around them to see who will be the first into action — or, more likely into the Labour Court — to establish a "norm" which the rest of us can use as a benchmark.

No major section has the look of people shaping up for a fight.

There is no possibility, of course, of the tame leopards who romp around Raglan Road suddenly changing spots and trying to rally the working class for a rumble with the bosses and the bosses' government.

If they did, the situation would be transformed. Workers would not feel isolated, factory by factory, fighting to save their own jobs, possibly at the expense of other jobs or at the price of a wage cut. They would sense themselves as part of a class fighting together for a fundamentally different way of organising things. . . a fight of which the struggle for a decent pay settlement this time round would be an integral part.

But, obviously, this is mere wishful thinking. There is no lead going to come from Congress, or from the top leader-

ship of the biggest unions.

The campaign for a fight-back has to be waged on the shop-floor.

And when resistance happens — as at Ranks — every effort must be made to broaden it, to link up with it from outside, if possible to form organisational links between one action and another.

And it has to be realised that, while an ounce of action is worth a ton of theory, no fight will succeed in the end if it fails to challenge not just the management directly in a particular firing line, but the whole creaking system of which every poor-mouthing management is part.

Build the jobs march

IF GARRETT Fitzgerald were to be believed then its just plain greed and selfishness that has got this country where it is.

Not mind you the greed of Fitzgerald's own friends in business — but the rest of us who are looking for higher wages.

When workers occupy to defend their jobs then, according to Prof. Fitzgerald they become the biggest criminals of all. They are just scaring away investors who are knocking at the door to provide us with jobs.

It is high time that a different side of the story was heard.

In April a jobs march will go from Cork to Dublin. It will highlight the fact that the majority of unemployed want to work and get no joy living on peanut.

"The People's March for Decent Jobs" is on again for the second year running. The march will leave Cork on April 25th and will arrive in Dublin on May 1st.

The route will be through Dun-garvan, Waterford, Kilkenny, Car-

low, and Newbridge. It will be met by coach loads of workers and unemployed in all the major towns.

It will also join up with the Dublin Trades Council Demonstration in Dublin.

The major theme of this year's march will be: Opposition to all redundancies and closures.

Occupy to demand nationalisation without loss of jobs.

There will be 50 unemployed marching and they will also be doing public meetings, visiting factories and supporting strikes, sit-ins or any other struggles they encounter on the march.

So get along and meet the marchers on May 1st and show your support.

The march will also be followed by a Rock gig.

If you get sick every time you see Fitzgerald, then this is the march for you. Get on it! Build to support it. And above all continue the fight once the march is over.

by PADDY CARROLL



Tax marches are one thing but the ICTU wont mobilise on pay.

WORKER FUND

During 1983 we need £1000 for the production of THE WORKER. The money is needed to improve the regularity and quality of the paper.

We have no advertisers or rich backers to pay for its production. We are appealing to all our supporters and readers to send a donation to the paper.

With each issue we will keep you informed of the progress towards our £1000 target.

The total to date is £497. Thanks to all who donated and keep the money pouring in!

Send your donation to:

The Worker, 41 Herberton Park, Rialto, Dublin 8. (Cheques payable to 'The Worker.')

Women-only Demos No Way Forward

THE SITING of nuclear weapons in Europe has met with massive opposition.

CND in Britain, the Greens in Germany and demonstrations throughout Europe have successfully resonated the message loud and clear: No to Nuclear weapons.

Within that movement women have had a special focus. Greenham Common, where women have staged a protest around the proposed Cruise missile site, has been only part of a big International Women for Peace movement involving many thousands of women.

The ripples of that movement have been felt in Ireland. With the Southern Republic formally outside NATO, the issue of hosting missile sites has not been directly relevant. But many of the ideas of the peace movement — particularly the role of women in that movement, have struck a chord among some people here.



It is not then particularly, women who should oppose them. Rather the whole of the working class — men and women — must together oppose Thatcher's patriotism and Reagan's warmongering. The message must be as it was from the German socialist Karl Liebknecht in the First World War: "We want nothing to do with your wars. The enemy is at home."

bomb? Hasn't the fact that it has been women-only restricted the amount of men, and women (who cannot so easily leave house and home for a week's stay at a peace camp) who have become involved?

Surely stopping Cruise is about more than the principle of non-violent women-only resistance. The movement has to be made as big and as effective as possible and that means not being "exclusive", but including everyone that can do something against Cruise.

The importance of locating the enemy and of how you fight it is not only relevant to the Greenham Common protest. It carries lessons for us here, as we fight the amendment. The fact that the amendment attacks women does not mean that either all men support it or that women alone should fight it. Nuala Fennell is in favour of it and many socialist men are against it. We need a massive mixed campaign against Nuala, Gemma and the boys.

by MARNIE HOLBOROW

Yet the Greenham Common women argue that it is particularly women who are concerned with peace: "Women are the bearers of life" and as mothers have a special concern with the threat of nuclear war. The argument is dangerously conservative and to boot an insult to women. The emphasis on the mother role pushes women back to the traditional, passive, procreant objects that makes nonsense of the long fight for control of our fertility. Must we say it again? We are not exclusively mothers. Secondly, the implication is that women, "bearers of life", are instinctively peace-loving. We are not. Women in the North or occupying the Ranks factory are as determined, "aggressive", "violent" fighters as any male.

It is presumably following the argument that it is male wars, and that women are particularly concerned with peace, that has led the Greenham Common protest to have insisted on women only events. Certainly women being hauled off in front of television cameras may have made more of an impact on the news and caught the imagination of such newspapers as the "Guardian", but haven't they also become easier for the government to handle than, say, a massive demonstration against the

Down Dublin's Grafton Street, for example, on International Women's Day this year, a couple of hundred Irish women chanted "Take the toys off the Boys" under the theme of women for peace.

Obviously support for the campaign against nuclear weapons, against the war-mongering of Thatcher and Reagan, has to be built as much here, in Ireland, as anywhere else. However, the special, sometimes exclusive, emphasis on women in that fight is both misplaced and riddled with strange political conclusions.

First, wars are not either the invention, nor the preserve of men. Golda Meir and Margaret Thatcher, to name only two particularly hawkish women rulers, prove that. Equally war is not the expression of nasty human nature, male or otherwise. The Two World Wars, Vietnam and the Falklands were not the result of pent-up male aggression. They were the result of international capitalist competition, struggles for "spheres of influence," of imperialism and bosses forging new markets. As such, they

are not our wars for we gain nothing from them. They are our rulers' wars. Not "boys' wars, but ruling class wars.

FIGHT ATTACKS ON GAYS

ON MARCH 19 a demonstration took place which was the first spark of resistance to the continuing victimisation and discrimination of gays in Ireland.

Gays and non-gays alike marched from Dublin's Liberty Hall to demand the immediate repeal of legislation that defines gays as criminals and protest against the decision of Justice Gannon in letting the murderers of Declan Flynn go free.

Justice Gannon's leniency was based on the fact that the gang who murdered Declan Flynn were "respectable". This same gang admitted at least twenty cases of planned assault. Moreover it became clear after the judgement, that the Gardaí had turned a blind eye to many assaults on gays.

The Declan Flynn murder shows up as clear as day the twisted face of Irish justice.

Capitalist law is directed first and foremost against the working class and poor in Society. Justice O Huaigh has become famous among the poor of Dublin for his fascist-like dealings with those who are brought before him. Looking over his glasses at his morning sessions in Court No 6 he shouts at and degrades those before him.

His sentences are designed — as are his insults — to simply punish without any regard to the continuing sickness of poverty and want in capitalist society which causes crime.

More than this, judges want to uphold the so-called moral fibre of capitalist society. Their morals are based on oppression and victimisation. The oppression of women and the capitalist morality of a "woman's place is in the home looking after her children and her man" means that judges will therefore be more inclined to treat women with contempt. In many rape cases an excuse is often accepted that the woman led men on, or was "asking for it" by wearing a mini-skirt. Because women are oppressed, the law is oppressive to women.

The same conclusion can be drawn for gay men and women. It is not proper in bourgeois eyes for gays to be walking the streets at night. And if they get beaten or murdered, well surely they were asking for it.

Hence a woman who steals from a supermarket will get six months. A factory worker who takes home a spare part for a machine will get six months. But a gang of "respectable" lads murdering a homosexual is a little more understandable.

The attitudes of judges under capitalism is like the rest of the ruling class — hammer the workers and treat the oppressed with draconian laws and double standards.

However it would be a mistake to call for harsher sentences to be introduced to deal with attacks on gays. Demanding a tougher approach from capitalist courts adds judges will do nothing to protect gays from attack.

The only real effect of such a demand would be to give greater

power to the police and courts which would be used against the poor and oppressed.

In Britain, for example, in order to deal with the continuing crime of rape against women many feminists called for tougher police measures. Rather than making gains for women, the demand simply strengthens the hand of the authorities to be tougher on all "crime" which means the cops getting tougher in working class areas.

In the end it rebounds on gays and women. A stronger police will be more efficient at rounding up gays as they did after the Charles Self murder. The police cannot be counted on to defend gays — the Gardaí uphold the "law" and that law is the toughest in Europe AGAINST homosexuals.

Capitalism fills peoples heads with every kind of stupid superstition and prejudice. When workers are fighting the boss, the power of these silly and dangerous ideas against gays, etc. is weakened. But when workers feel weak and lack the self-confidence to fight they find some solace in prejudice.

No matter how unpopular it makes them, socialists must constantly fight these ideas and defend the rights of the oppressed. The best and only defence for the oppressed is a strong, selfconfident and fighting working class.

It is the class system and the capitalist mess that is the root cause of all oppression. Women's liberation, gay liberation and indeed the liberation of those who suffer under the jackboot of the British Army in the North can only be truly realised when a party is built which organises the workers to smash the system for ever.

by DERMOT BYRNE

Nicky Kelly - Anger Mounts



It is not often that the police have to admit to a frame up.

But in 1980, two prisoners Osgur Breathnach and Brian McNally, were freed after an appeal court found that statements used to convict them were lies. A case of justice winning through, you might think. Not quite. The third defendant, Nicky Kelly, is still in prison serving a 12 year sentence for a crime he did not commit. Why?

Nicky Kelly suffered horrific torture at the hands of the notorious Heavy Gang. Two doctors testified that he had extensive bruising and swelling. The Heavy Gang was formed inside the Garda for one purpose — beating confes-

sions out of republicans and socialists. The case of Nicky Kelly, Breathnach and McNally highlighted their activities and led to their official disbandment.

After this experience Nicky Kelly made a fairly rational deci-

sion that there wasn't much justice to be had from the Special Criminal Court. He fled to America before the end of his trial. There he was admitted to a Mental Hospital suffering from severe anxiety neurosis after his torture.

It was only after the successful appeal of Breathnach and McNally that Nicky Kelly voluntarily returned to Ireland. His intention was to clear his name, to live in this country in freedom.

It was not to be. He was immediately locked up and his own subsequent appeal turned down.

The Nicky Kelly case has all the classic signs of a frame-up. But there is more to it.

The credibility of the Special Criminal Court demands that an innocent man serve 12 years. For that court was based on confessions; on the evidence based on statements of a Garda superintendent. It was a court designed to place a veneer of respectability on a conveyor belt system for locking up republican militants.

The Special Criminal Court cannot openly admit it locked up people after beating. There are too many still in Portlaoise. It has to shroud the issue in legal jargon. The legal jargon ran out for Nicky Kelly. He can only be freed by the Coalition Minister of Justice, Michael Noonan.

Noonan won't act unless he is pressured. There are too many powerful elements of the Garda who feel that what is needed is further repressive measures rather than concessions. It's up to the trade unions and workers organisations to press for his release.

Information on Nicky Kelly supplied from Release Committee
11, Grange Terrace,
Blackrock, Co Dublin;
Tel: 801438 - 331463

ANTI-AMENDMENT CAMPAIGN

by Goretti Horgan

THE ANTI-Amendment Campaign has won a massive victory. That is what the new wording which the government has come up with for the Amendment means. The push must now be on to greater victories by bringing the arguments against ANY anti-abortion amendment to the people who have the power to stop it — the working class.

While this new wording is a major victory — since it leaves the way open for the Dail to legalise abortion — we must be clear that we are totally against ANY amendment and why. This Amendment is part of a broader right wing attack on women. It is no coincidence that it is being introduced now at a time of growing unemployment and deepening recession.

Putting any anti-abortion amendment into the constitution

is a way of saying to women "You have no right over your body; you have no right to have sex without getting pregnant; your role is in the home with your children, not as part of the work-force. It puts women, especially, in the role of scapegoat for capitalism — portraying them as somehow less worthy of a job, as that part of the work-force that should be last hired and first fired. The ideas behind the amendment are a way of dividing women and men workers in order to rule them.

There is a real lull in the Anti-Amendment Campaign at the moment as it becomes more and more possible that the referendum may be dropped altogether. This gives a real opportunity to those of us who want to see the legal and safe abortion available here in Ireland free on the National Health on demand. We can stress that the amendment will make no difference to the thousands of Irish

women who go to England every year for abortions — they will go anyway.

In fact with the present economic situation, cut backs in health services, education and the public sector generally, more and more women are being forced to have abortions from economic necessity. There can, then, be nothing "pro-life" about such a meaningless hypocritical step taken under these circumstances.

More than that, the present law has to be attacked. Under that law, abortion is prohibited under any circumstances, even when a woman's health is in danger, or even where a woman is pregnant as a result of rape or incest. And the punishment given out under that law to a woman who has an abortion for any reason can be life imprisonment. Such a law is clearly unacceptable to anyone who values the lives, and the quality of life, of independent, thinking already-

born women. Most people in Ireland are against abortion on demand; we realise that. But the majority of Irish people don't put abortion for a woman who has been raped or whose life is endangered by the pregnancy in the same category as abortion on demand. And whatever people's views on abortion, they don't want to see a woman put in jail because of having an abortion.

There's no doubt about it but the present situation is a major victory for the Anti Amendment Campaign. The right wing have outsmarted themselves, even if the amendment goes to the referendum and is included in the constitution, they will have been defeated in their aim of keeping the Irish people from coming around to believing that women have the right to control their fertility, if necessary by abortion. All the talk over the last few months has brought more and more people to

questioning the Church and the law's total ban on abortion and many people are coming to accept that the decision whether or not to have an abortion is one that can only be made by the woman herself.

However, rather than resting on our laurels, we must now redouble our efforts to defeat totally the reactionary forces behind this amendment. Otherwise it is possible that the passing of the amendment could give the anti-abortion forces the kind of atmosphere that would allow them to roll back our advances.

To ensure this total defeat we must play down the very technical arguments about the Constitution, and when life begins which have been used in the past and start to push those arguments that relate to everyday life. In the present economic situation the genuine pro-life people are not those who are worried about fertilised eggs but the people who by fighting all spending cuts, show their concern for the lives of people, men, women and children, who are already born and who have to face the problem of making ends meet.

USA BACKS EL SALVADOR JUNTA WITH FOUR BILLION DOLLARS

THE RECENT tour of Central America by Pope John Paul had only one message — Peace. Time after time he argued that there should be no resort to violence to overthrow the tyrants of the region. If you want to read a book that tells why he is talking rubbish, this is it.

After the countries of the region became independent of Spain, they found themselves under the "protection" of the United States. That country, through its Munroe doctrine of 1823, claimed the right to intervene militarily wherever its interests were threatened.

When a Peasant Revolt broke in El Salvador in 1932, the US sent three warships and Canada sent two.

This revolt was partly influenced by the newly-formed Stalinist party PCS (Partido Comunista de Salvador) and was suppressed by General Martinez, the military dictator who was an open admirer of Hitler and Mussolini.

He was seen to have "defeated" Communism and all dictators and governments in El Salvador since have been trying to do the same.

One of his generals said with a touch of imagery: "Communism is a tree shaken by the wind. The moving tree causes the seeds to fall. The same wind carries the seed to other places. The seed falls on fertile soil. To be done with Communism it is necessary to make the ground sterile."

This has been the attitude of all dictators since with ample support from the United States.

The Cuban revolution of 1959 and the subsequent failed invasion by US agents at the Bay of Pigs showed that the US could be beaten. Although Cuba found itself firmly aligned in the Russian

sphere of influence, its revolution had a great effect in encouraging other revolts in the region.

The PCS grew in influence in El Salvador. But they played down working class militancy because their priority was to back the "industrial bourgeoisie" against the big landowners.

It is true that even now El Salvador remains a predominantly rural society with the poorest 61 per cent of the population earning 21 per cent of the National Income, while the richest 5 per cent, mainly coffee growing and exporting families, receive 32 per cent.

But the PCS "forgot" that the so-called "industrial bourgeoisie" were tied in with the big landowners and had not the slightest intention of breaking with them.

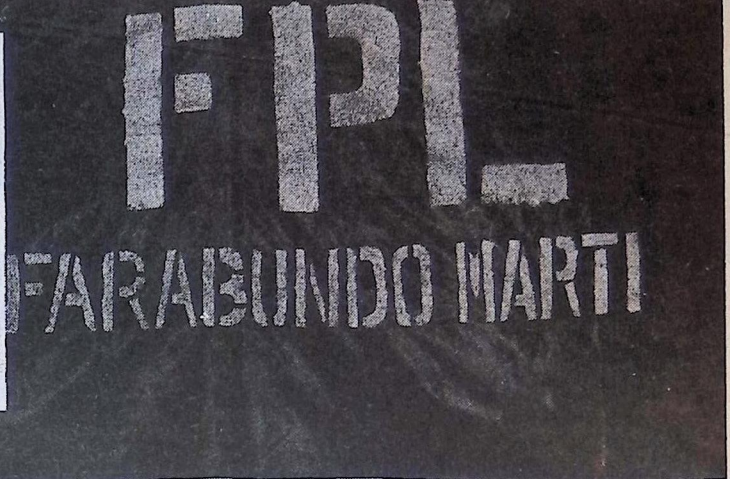


The PCS suffered major splits as its rank-and-file could no longer hold to the line of the "bourgeois-democratic path". Several smaller militaristic groups appeared. The Guerra Popula Prolongada (Long People's War) was born with kidnappings, assassinations and increased resistance.

The Molina Junta of the 1970s replied to this by releasing on the populace fascist terror groups trained in Chilean methods. The first of these was the *Falange* (1975) and they promised "extermination of all communists and their collaborators."

The other main fascist group was *Orden* who have the record for inflicting the most grotesque horrors. The great bulk of their victims were, according to Socorra Juridice,

"The United States could never permit another Nicaragua even if preventing it meant employing the most reprehensible measures."



the Church Human Rights Organisation, innocent non-combatants.

The result was that 12,501 people died in 1981 in a country with a population just over three million.

There has been what could be termed civil war since 1980. The Catholic Church — under Archbishop Romero, who had had been strongly critical of the Left — was forced to defend, after President Jimmy Carter had discovered them, "Human Rights."



In a sermon he called on soldiers not to obey orders in the killings and was himself shot with a single bullet through the heart next day.

At his funeral, the soldiers — frustrated by an eight day

strike that had been called in protest — opened fire killing a further forty people.

The revolution in El Salvador has been limited by the necessity to depend on the peasants.



Hardly involved at all was the still small, but growing, urban working class.

It got great encouragement from the Sandanista revolt in neighbouring Nicaragua.

However much they tried, the left in El Salvador found they could not imitate this. In Nicaragua the key conflicts had been mass urban insurrections, first in the provincial centres and then in the capital Managua. In El Salvador this did not happen. The military were able to impose a wide-

scale repression which held the population in a state of terror.

Somoza in Nicaragua had also been denied assistance from the USA. But now, according to one of Reagan's advisers: "The United States could never permit another Nicaragua even if preventing it meant employing the most reprehensible measures."

The main peasant army, an amalgamation of several political groups, the FMLN have grown by leaps and bounds. It now controls large areas of the countryside and is poised for a big offensive against the government forces.

The left have discovered that the USSR and Eastern Europe give moral support but little else, because of the tacit agreement that Central America is a US "zone of influence" in a world of competing Capital.

Cuba and Castro, worried about their own position, have tried to protest at this policy of the USSR but in fact did so very weakly.

In the meantime, while Reagan cuts Social Welfare and increases unemployment in America, in 1982 aid to the El Salvador regime totalled nearly four hundred billion dollars and this figure will be increased in 1983. Salvadorean troops and officers are sent to the USA for training.

Reagan has made it clear that he will — given half a chance, and despite public opinion — create another Vietnam-type war in Central America.

There must be a victory for the workers and peasants in El Salvador in order to defeat the neo-colonialism of the US.

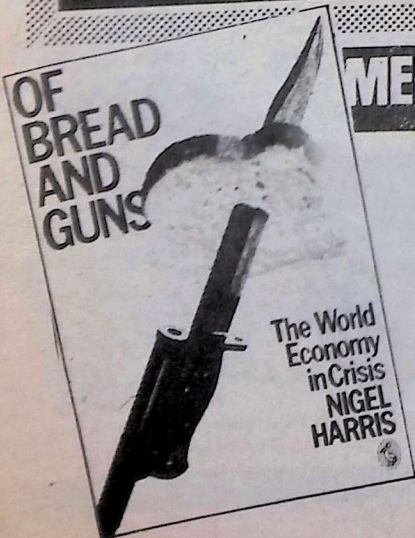
Read this book for the full picture. by JIM BLAKE

MEETINGS & ACTIVITIES

The Socialist Workers Movement is organising a speaking tour by Nigel Harris who will speak on "The World Economy in Crisis". He is the author of the book reviewed on page six, copies of which will be available at each meeting. Dates so far for the tour are provisional but should be: Cork... Tuesday April 12. Waterford... Wednesday April 13. Dublin... Thursday April 14. See insert for full details.

The Socialist Workers Movement has produced a new pamphlet "A New World for Women — the Socialist Case for Abortion", which will be reviewed in the next issue of "The Worker". Copies available at 20p (plus 20p postage) from our address.

41, Herberton Park, Rialto Dublin 8



Special offer to readers of THE WORKER:

IRE4.95 (plus £1 p. and p.) Please rush me my copy of Chris Harman's *The Lost Revolution*. I enclose £1R5.95. Return to SWM, 41 Herberton Park, Rialto, Dublin 8.

THE LOST REVOLUTION

Name.....
Address.....

What we stand for

The Socialist Workers Movement is a revolutionary workers movement organisation which aims to organise the working class in the struggle for power and for the overthrow of the existing social order.

The system under which we live, capitalism, is based on production for profit and not for human need. It is a system that leads to poverty and war, racial and sexual oppression.

Only the working class can destroy capitalism 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

There is no parliamentary road to socialism as the left in the Dail believe. The system cannot be changed by piecemeal-reform. The state machinery—the courts, parliament, the police and army—are used to maintain the dominance of the ruling class. The real power lies in the boardrooms of big business.

We stand for a workers revolution which produces a different and more democratic society—one based on councils of delegates from workplaces and localities who are democratically elected and subject to recall at any time.

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

That kind of socialism does not exist anywhere today. Workers have no control over countries like Russia, China or Poland. They are exploited by a state capitalist class. A workers revolution is required in those countries too.

A SOCIALIST ANSWER TO THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The six county Orange State is propped up by British imperialism. By bribing loyalist workers in the past with privileges in, for example, housing and jobs, Protestant workers have come to see their interests as being served by the British-backed Unionist boss class. This divides the working class and delivers a section of the workers as allies of imperialism. The Northern state is sectarian in essence and must be smashed.

The slow task of building working class unity against imperialism must be begun.

However imperialism must be fought in the here and now and we support all forces engaged in that struggle regardless of our difference of programme.

We stand for: Immediate withdrawal of the British Army. Political Status Now.

The Disbandment of the RUC and the UDR.

In the South, the bosses are junior partners with other European and American bosses in world capitalism. The main enemy is the boss at home. Nationalism or a united capitalist Ireland offers nothing to workers. The only republic worth fighting for is a workers republic.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

We believe that only through socialism can women achieve full emancipation and that their struggle is part of the whole class struggle for socialism.

FOR A RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT

The main area of political action for socialists is the mass organisation of the working class, particularly the trade unions. We fight for the independence of the unions from state interference, democratic control of all union affairs and the election of all union officials.

We oppose all anti-union legislation and all forms of national wage understandings and wage restraint. We oppose all redundancies. We say: Occupy to demand Nationalisation under workers control. Fight for a 35 hour week. We support the building of a rank and file movement which draws together militant trade unionists to oppose the class collaboration of the union leaders.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY

The SWM is a democratic centralist organisation open to all those who accept its principles and objectives. The struggle for a workers republic in Ireland is inseparable from the international struggle. The SWM fights to build a mass party of the working class as part of a revolutionary international of working class parties.

100 MARX



'Philosophers have only

History of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle

Things that...

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On the S

FREEMAN and slave, patrician and plebian, lord and serf, guild master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, that each time ended in the reconstitution of society or in the common ruin of the contending classes ...

MODERN BOURGEOIS society ... has established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

Society as a whole is more and more splitting into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other—bourgeoisie and proletariat ...

THE EXECUTIVE committee of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie ...

THE BOURGEOISIE, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together ...

BUT NOT only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that can bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—the proletariat.

IN PROPORTION as the bourgeoisie ie capital is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class developed—a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital ...

MODERN INDUSTRY has converted the little workshop of the patriarchal master into the great factory of the industrial capitalists. Masses of labourers, crowded into the factory, are organised like soldiers.

With the development of industry, the proletariat not only increases in numbers; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength the more.

THE WORKERS begin to form combinations (unions) against the bourgeoisie; they club together in order to keep up the rate of pay; they found permanent associations in order to make provision for these occasional revolts

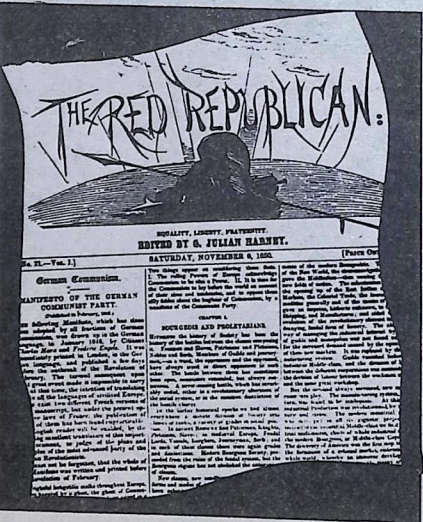
Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battle lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever expanding union of the workers ...

THE ORGANISATION of the proletarians into a class is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves. But it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier.

ALL PREVIOUS historical movements were movements or minorities or in the interests of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious independent movement of the immense majority in the interests of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air ...

THE ESSENTIAL condition for the existence and the sway of the bourgeois class is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage labour.

What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own gravediggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable ...



MODERN BOURGEOIS society is like the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells. For many decades past the history of industry and commerce is but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production.

IT IS enough to mention the commercial crises ... in these crises there breaks out an epidemic that, in all previous epochs, would have seemed an absurdity—the epidemic of over-production ...

THE CONDITIONS of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them ...

...Marx wrote



TOMAS MCGIOLLA and Michael O Higgins could probably claim to be the best known "socialists in Ireland today.

Yet both McGiolla and Higgins and the political tendencies they represent, distance themselves from Marx's view on the state.

Both believe that the Dail can be used to legislate socialist measures. By accumulating such laws, they claim, we gradually arrive at socialism.

Karl Marx took a totally opposed view. He did not see the state as a well balanced steering column that could be turned left or right to serve bosses or workers—depending who was at the wheel.

In the Communist Manifesto he wrote: "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common offices of the whole bourgeoisie."

The Ranks case provides a powerful example of what Marx referred to.

Workers are jailed for defending their jobs—but half of the current budget deficit goes uncollected as bosses simply refuse to pay their tax and PRSI bills. The bosses get off scot free.

It's class justice through and through.

The legal system trends that it is totally independent from the backrooms of the civil service. Yet the Ranks case again shows that when matters got rather urgent, the whole pretence of independence was dropped as Fitzgerald himself ordered the release.

That special organised force is society—that connects up the meanest prison screw to the top civil servant—we refer to it as the state.

What is it? Marx looked at societies which had no state in

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Name.....

Address.....

interpreted the world in various ways -

... is to change it'

MARX

"THE WORKER" special feature

State

prehistory. There order was maintained by the people at large organising their anger against individual offenders.

In class society that is no longer possible. There is no longer one people. Order has to be maintained not just against individuals - but with classes of oppressed.

A specialised repressive apparatus is required. It takes on the appearance of being above the society. But its roots lie in class society - not as a conspiracy but as a necessity.

The state is not just an instrument of oppression. It is after all the "committee for managing the common affairs of the bosses.

It organises that class as a ruling class. It articulates their ideas and gives them a 'moral superiority' that cuts them out as rulers. It disciplines those who put their specific interests as individual bosses above the general interests of their class.

Different types of states are specific to the societies and ruling class they serve.

Ours is a 'democratic' state.



Marx used the example of the Paris Commune to show what a workers' revolution would be like

KARL MARX and Frederick Engels kept a close watch on events in Ireland during their lifetime. The struggle then was led by the Fenian movement and the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The IRB was a secret organisation that floated through Irish history like a time capsule.

It's message to the Irish people in 1868 directly influenced the proclamation 50 years later in 1916.

Marx did not just write about Ireland. He took up the active defence of the Fenian prisoners, and helped to organise a massive demonstration in their defence in Hyde Park in defiance of a ban on all marches.

Marx's support was not always repaid. The great hero of Padraig Pearse, O'Donovan Rossa, became an avid racist supporter of slavery in America when he was released.

Much nonsense has been written about why Marx supported the Fenians. Some have argued that he was making an exception of Ireland in the

On Ireland

fight for international socialism,

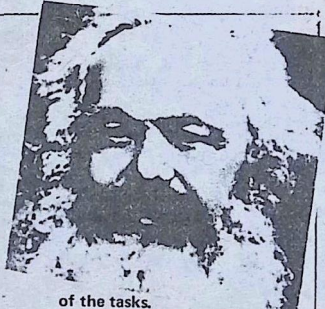
Such wilful misinterpretation of the facts of 19th century Ireland have a purpose.

They serve to justify taking a "stages theory" of what the struggle in Ireland is about today. Namely that nationalist demands must come before the class struggle, that Ireland must be united before the struggle for socialism can commence.

It is a view that many left republicans in Sinn Fein and the IRSP hold.

It is convenient for such an interpretation to hold that Marx recognised the Fenian movement as a socialist organisation of some importance.

It leads to an emphasis on half of what Marx said on Ireland in order to find a direct 'socialist' link between Tone, Davitt, Lalor and James Connolly.



of the tasks.

The need for that party is still with us. The Socialist Workers Movement is attempting to build that party today in Ireland as part of a revolutionary International of workers' parties on the basis of the authentic Marxist tradition: "The emancipation of the working class is the act of the working class itself."

an executive body - unlike a parliamentary talking shop.

It organised the supply of food and the crushing of the bourgeoisie.

It was based on delegates who could be re-called; delegates who were paid the average workers wage. Above all it was the concentration of the democracy of workers in struggle.

The smashing of the existing state; the construction of a workers state based on open democratic and above all fighting councils - that was the legacy of Karl Marx.

To come back to today's reformists.

During the Ranks dispute, Proncias de Rossa offered himself as a mediator between employers and workers.

He spoke more than he knew. The Workers Party is the permanent mediator - holding out the possibility that this state can be reformed, acting as broker between the mass of workers and its repressive powers.

The road of Karl Marx was a very different one.

by KIERAN ALLEN

Engels wrote to Marx - "Ireland still remains a Holy Isle whose aspirations must on no account be mixed with the profane class struggle. . . A nation of peasants where the bourgeoisie instil into the peasant that on no account must they know that Socialist workers are their sole allies in Europe."

Marx could not foresee how this was to change.

Today Irish workers are the vibrant force that no longer has to depend on nationalism or movements that attempt to import agrarian nationalist ideas into their midst.

Those who treat Marx's writings like a bible will therefore get it wrong.

Take the example of the Fenians. Did the Fenians not receive Marx and Engels' seal of approval? It is indeed true that Marx said that Fenianism "took root. . . in the mass of the people" and was "characterised by a socialist tendency"

Marx adds however that this socialistic tendency was "in a negative sense directed against the appropriation of the soil". Marx saw that the base of the Fenians was more linked with the small holders, and in fact Engels was to call these people "partly exploiters" and "mostly asses".

The Fenian movement was indeed progressive and anti-clerical but to call it socialist in today's understanding of the word would be twisting history to justify nationalist and non-Marxist movements today.

In Ireland today there are no stages in the struggle to end British domination in the North.

The only real force today that can complete the anti-imperialist struggle is the working class mobilisation under the leadership of a revolutionary socialist party.

It is in the struggle for socialism and workers power, not posed in Nationalist Catholic terms, but in clear class terms fighting all capitalist oppression, that workers unity of Protestant and Catholic can be built and imperialism defeated.

by DERMOT BYRNE

Marx - the tradition continues

MARX was not a mere theoretician. For him, the point was not just to describe the world, it was to change it.

He established that the conditions of a life free from exploitation and oppression was possible on the basis of the tremendous productivity

of modern industry.

That new order would be achieved by the working class overthrowing capitalism and establishing its own rule.

This would require a party basing itself on the working class and its partial struggles, developing its understanding

But it is a democracy of the free market. In the market everyone is free to sell their labour - and has no choice but to sell their labour.

In our 'democracy' there is freedom to vote - and no choice but to accept the dictatorial power of the boss inside the factory. It is a

formal democracy suited to a capitalist class in normal times.

That type of state, Marx argued, cannot be used to achieve socialism. He wrote: "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purpose."

The bosses state has to be smashed - before it strangles any attempted revolt.

A different type was required to carrying through the socialist measures. That is a state which encourages workers control of the factories; co-ordinates and plans production and organises the necessary repression against resistance.

But what form would it take? Marx could never be accused of being a utopian. His model of a workers state could not be developed - until workers themselves made an attempt to make it a reality.

That attempt came with the Paris Commune, where the newly emerging working class took over that city.

The Paris Commune was

The revolutionary ideas of

MARX

Alex Callinicos



Alex Callinicos's - a member of the British Socialist Workers Party - has just published this book setting the important revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx.

Available at £4.35 (plus 60p p&p) from Socialist Workers Movement, 41, Herberton Pl, Rialto, Dublin 8.

DESMOND'S PALS ARE PAST HOPE

BARRY DESMOND is a Labour T.D. You might have forgotten it → but the records do in fact show that he was returned from the Dun Laoghaire constituency under that very label.

Yet Desmond is a conservative through and through. His appeal is to that DunLaoghaire middle-class who pride themselves on a 'liberal' image, but look on the working class as that great mass of illiterate scroungers who want everything for nothing and strike too often.

Desmond's opposition to the Abortion referendum flatters their liberal intelligence — but his Social Welfare Bill gives them deeper gut satisfaction.

The new measure reduces the social welfare week from six days to five. It cuts payments made

under the pay related system from a maximum of 40% to 25%. It is designed to cut the living standard of all those out of work.

The boss class has increased unemployment, and Desmond in true Labour fashion is going to make sure that it's victims are hit first.

Yet what must be described as the massacre of social welfare benefits, is the logic of Labour in Coalition.

Michael Bell and Frank Prendergast protested that they only opposed the bill — and not coalition as such. It is wilful blindness. Labour in Coalition is faced with a system that is falling apart.

Reformists who turn their back on building a working class struggle, will always attack that class in order to prove their 'realism' and credibility to the bosses who run the country.

Can the Labour Party be changed from the inside? We have to say 'No'. Any parliamentary reformist party will always be dictated to by the rich. They will move further to the right in a period of crisis and throw up more Dick Springs and Barry Desmonds. You can pass all the resolutions you want inside it — but the party operates to a different design.

It's job is to tinker a bit with the system. But when the system is in crisis, they begin to tinker more and more with the already falling living standards of the working class.

Yet many inside the Labour Youth believe they still can change the beast. It is a tragedy. The Labour Party will change them first. It will drag them into a tradition of having to defend, no matter how apologetically, the likes of Desmond.

Because in order to change Labour, you must win your spurs. And part of winning the spurs is knocking on doors calling for votes for that rich man's friend Barry Desmond, T.D.

Labour has always suffocated the aspirations of its own left.

It closets them off from struggle and focuses the mind on elections. Despite its puny size, it claims to represent the aspirations of all workers — both those who fight and those who accept. But sometimes there are politics that have to be fought for amongst a minority of the class. These may be on the North or unofficial strikes or indeed gay rights. Labour's overriding concern with elections, with respectability, makes its left backpeddle fast.

A revolutionary party starts on a different basis. It starts out as the self-conscious minority of the class. That minority that breaks with the ruling class ideas that dominate throughout society.

The minority that aims to connect up with workers in struggle. The tiny fights, whether they be Ranks or Clondalkin, are worth the volumes of resolutions aimed at changing the Labour Party.

by DERMOT BYRNE

World Economy in Crisis

OF BREAD AND GUNS

The World Economy in Crisis
NIGEL HARRIS

"Liberation was the vanity of the age — sexual liberation, ethnic liberation, gender liberation, national liberation. But all without liberation from the lynch-pin of diverse ills: work, subordination as labour, the brute maintenance of world labour discipline from which flowed that monster governing all people, the State . . . Even permissiveness itself was a half truth. It somehow excluded the long trail from a Korean War to a Vietnam War, from Seveso to Soweto, from Derry to Watts. Neither the State nor capital had been displaced."—Of Bread and Guns, pages 53-4.

technical promise.

Third World villagers cannot cultivate effectively for want of steel implements at the same time as world output of steel rusts unsold and steel plant and workers stand idle.

Agricultural "surpluses" are ploughed back into the earth — or like skim milk, fed to cattle—while famine becomes endemic to large tracts of the world.

States, unable to control the level of investment or employment within their national patches take instead to filling the political prisons with dissidents.

We are in the age of the military junta, the tyranny of "national reconciliation." Boom turns to slump all the self-confidence of rulers turns to bull-shit with no ambition higher than survival.

"Of Bread and Guns" by Nigel Harris is about the world economy, its crisis and developments that led to the crisis.

Oversimplifying, the argument can be summed up quite simply. Pursuit of profit is the motor of capitalism, competition its discipline. Each capital must find investment at a rate of profit that allows it to grow or it will be defeated or swallowed up by its competitors.

This drive for accumulation has no room for sentimental considerations like "the social good", still less with nationality — it must find profitable opportunities, that is all.

As production becomes international in scale so do the operations of capital and the world market becomes a force that no firm or state can master.

The long boom deepened this world integration of the system. No national steel market is large enough to support a world competitive steel industry. Major motor manufacturers now operate on a world scale with gearboxes from one country, axles from another, engines from a third and assembled in a few more national sites.



Capital has no home. This is even true of the East European State Capitalist concerns. Poland had borrowed heavily on world finance markets to build up industries for export to the world market. Their bad luck was that world markets collapsed just as interest on loans reached record levels.

The long boom also saw widespread penetration of backward countries by industrial and finance capital, creating working classes tied to sweated industries at abysmal wages supervised by vicious governments anxious to appease the fickle gods of capital.

During the boom, States could pretend they had a role — to manage national economic activity. Often this only really meant provision of police and legal protection to capital and bribes by way of IDA-style grants and tax-holidays.

Even the most powerful State — the USA — could not command the tides of the world market to retreat. The States provided the guns, and the biggest states provided the biggest guns. Compelled by a military competition that had paradoxically given so much impetus to the long boom, arms race followed arms race swallowing huger resources and technologies and nuclear destruction whispered in the wings.

The average rate of profit declined — as Marxists said it must — and boom turned to slump. The efforts of States to insulate their patches from its effects only make matters worse. Imports are the inputs for exports and vice versa—the eggs too scrambled to fall from which chicken came this or that bit of egg. While sustained recovery is impossible in one patch independently of the whole, States desperately compete in dragging down wages, conditions and welfare provisions in the forlorn hope of attracting ever more reluctant capital inside its borders.

All this is of great importance in Ireland. James Connolly's words that national capitalist development was only possible at the price of dragging Irish labour down to the condition of coolies and making the working class the blacklegs of the world have never been truer.

In the face of world stagnation, plans for national self-sufficiency, for state industry to forge ahead where private has not, for recovering national economic vitality through stitching the four green fields back together, are all day-dreams and reactionary ones at that.

A world working class faces the depredations of capitalism together. It alone can conquer together. International capital and national states are the twin faces of the enemy — a world revolution the remedy.

Nigel Harris is not some trendy academic with an eye on a series of his own on Channel Four. He is a revolutionary — a member of our sister organisation in Britain, the Socialist Workers Party. He has written a serious and passionate book that will repay study and is a weapon in forging a new order.

by KEVIN WINGFIELD

"Of Bread and Guns" by Nigel Harris available at £3.30 (plus 50p p&p) from Socialist Workers Movement, 41, Herberton Park, Rialto Dublin 8.

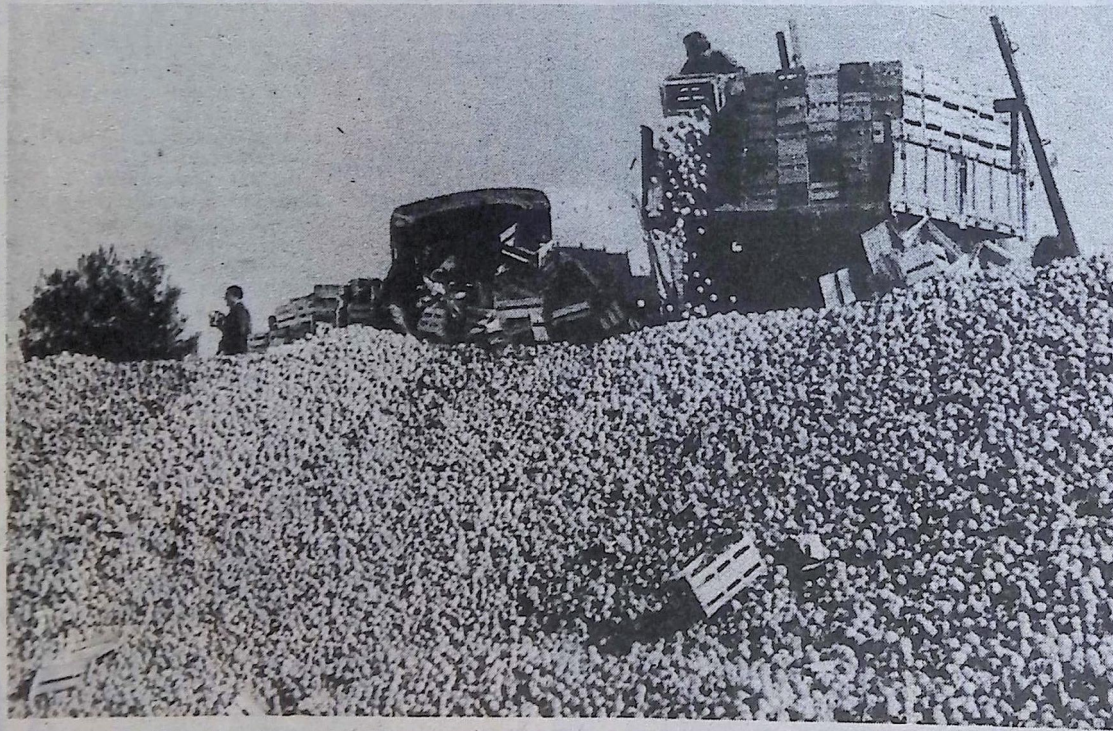
The long boom in world capitalism from the close of World War II until the 1970s created productive powers the hugeness of which made those of nineteenth century capitalism which so impressed Marx seem like peanuts.

Put another way, Man's mastery of Nature had never been so complete. One by one and with breathtaking speed, all the natural and technical obstacles to mankind's liberation from drudgery, scarcity

and backwardness seemed to be overcome — or would very soon be so.

And it was true. Since 1951 world output of steel has increased four times over; production of food is technically capable of banishing forever the empty belly; and modern medicines could eliminate most of the diseases that foreshorten the lives of so many around the world.

And yet the social achievement stands in stark contradiction to the



Apples being dumped—yet another symbol of the system in crisis

PRSI — EXTEND THE ACTION

AS WE go to press, the campaign against the new draconian tax measures is just beginning.

The clerical workers at Waterford Glass are refusing to deduct tax and PRSI from the wages of

the workforce. This will cost the government a million pounds in lost revenue.

The Waterford Glass shop stewards are calling on workers throughout the country to follow

their example. Shop Steward Tommy Hogan told "The Worker" "We have to extend action if we are to win. We must make sure it is not just ATGWU members that are fighting.

"We want to see that every worker will see this as a way of fighting the Coalition's anti-worker budget."

And that fightback is possible if other groups of workers take the same action.

Shop steward Jimmy Kelly said "We want to make it clear that our action is not directed against the unemployed.

"The Waterford Glass Shop Stewards Committee has a record of support for the unemployed in their struggle that beats John Carroll."

The call must go out at the Tax march to demand that the ICTU and the leaders of the unions all give every support to this action and make the budget unworkable.

INDUSTRIAL NEWS

IT is often assumed that women are the most conservative section of the population.

Shop stewards and others who should know better will sometimes say "they are only here for pin money, they won't fight".

DUNNES VICTORY

THE workers at Dunnes Stores won a victory after being in dispute and all-out strike.

But the way the strike was handled and the scabbing by fellow-members of the IUDWC has left a bitter taste.

"The Worker" talked to a Shop Steward who works at Dunnes in Dublin.

She said: "This dispute was over union recognition, union dues to be deducted from pay and our demand that part timers should get the same hourly rate as full time workers. We wanted an end to the situation where part timers were being taken on, sometimes in great numbers and then being let go — hired and fired at will. We wanted more full timers.

"Meetings were organised with the workers and support for the strike was overwhelming. But there were Shop Stewards from North Earl St. and Mary St. who appeared to be in management's confidence rather than side with the workers.

"A leaflet was distributed signed by two Shop Stewards claiming that if there was a strike, workers would lose their jobs. We are convinced this was the work of management."

This was then followed by the famous "Back to Work march".

"This was no spontaneous outburst — placards had been professionally printed, and the workers lost no pay for taking a few hours off work. Management was clearly behind this episode.

Equally reactionary is the claim — sometimes advanced by feminists — that women's interests are quite separate from men's.

We take the view that men and women workers have a world to gain by standing together.

Recent struggles have proved this — if proof was needed. At Ranks, the jailed

occupiers' wives took their place in a magnificent show of solidarity.

And at Dunnes Stores, women strikers overcame great difficulties to achieve a fantastic victory.

BARBARA WILSON spoke to a Dunnes Shop Steward and Breda Trimble, fighting wife of Ranks occupier Alan.



"Congress sanctioned the 'All-Out'. The strike was uneven — quite a few shops closed entirely but some remained open staffed by scabs.

"Some of the shops had only a few picketing but we were helped out by support from workers at Burton's and Roches Stores. Also many members of the public refused to pass the pickets. The effects on Dunnes was dramatic. Management quickly conceded extra pay to the part timers."

The strikers actions forced the Labour Court to recommend acceptance of recognition, the check-off and standard hourly rates for part time staff. They did not concede fixed overall rates and recom-

mended that this should be settled by local negotiation.

Reflecting after the strike, she told "The Worker": "It was only when talk of a strike was in the air that we began to get any service from the union officials.

"Because many young girls working part time do not see themselves as permanent workers, it makes the need for union organisation that much more important. With good on the job organisation they can come to see that only through solidarity can we ever win anything.

"To see how even Shop Stewards can stab the rank and file in the bank is disgraceful but it has made me and all the other workers involved in the strike more determined than ever to stand up to management.

Pizzaland fight harassment

THE STRIKE at Pizzaland in Grafton Street and O'Connell Street in Dublin has been going on since the end of February. The dispute centres on the dismissal of two managers and the demotion of another to the position of cook.

The 23 workers on strike have a constant picket on both premises which is proving very effective despite the determination of the owner to keep them open. He has already brought scab labour from England including three cooks.

The workers, some on rates as low as £1.60 an hour, have

suffered a year of harassment and personal abuse by the company so much so that one manager of long service came back from holidays to find that there was no job for him.

Since the strike started they have suffered harassment of a different sort from the company. Because of the large number of foreign workers some were without work permits. The company informed the police. Two Sri Lankans — here for over four years — have already been hauled off to the Aliens office, and may face deportation. This is something the union the ITGWU must resist.

The official strike must also be spread to the Cork branch to

bring more pressure on management and the scabs.

Carol Murphy and Raouf Adley were both very determined to see the strike through for as long as it takes. When I met them on the Grafton St picket line there was only one customer in the place. After a while he emerged from a door via a fire escape with the bill in his pocket.

Ten minutes later one of the staff came out to ask us if we had seen anyone coming out.

If the company has friends like this, they don't need enemies.

RANKS FIGHT ON-SUPPORT THEM

In an exclusive story for the "Worker" PAULINE GRAY, the daughter of one of the jailed Ranks Workers writes:

IT WOULD appear that the government has effectively "played down" the Ranks dispute in the media. So much so that a large proportion of the general public are not aware that the dispute has not been settled and the workers are in the same position as when they started.

If we cast our minds back to November 1982, the employers attempted to bring in selective redundancies at the Phibsboro plant — they intended to keep on twenty of the original employees.

They would then bring in non-union workers — known in the trade as "hackers" — to make deliveries to various bakeries throughout the country.

The rest of the workers were to be made redundant, but not under the terms of a written agreement of 1978, as the Company claimed inability to pay.



The workers put the deal to a vote, rejected it entirely and went on official strike. When notice was served, the Company announced closure for February 4, 1983.

However the real trouble began when Eddie Browne — Group Secretary of the ITGWU — called for a second vote, informing the workers that there was little hope of getting higher redundancy payments from the Company.

Up to now, the plant at Phibsboro had been treated as a separate identity. However, this time the ITGWU saw fit to amalgamate the votes of Phibsboro with those of Limerick.

Unfortunately, the Limerick workers, and some of the Phibsboro workers — misguided by the union — voted to accept the low redundancy payments.

The union withdrew sanction from the strike and the dispute at Phibsboro became unofficial. The question is Why a second vote?

A typical example of another sell-out by the ITGWU who have been reduced to a mere conciliator work in this Country by bad leadership. But during this dispute we have seen that the real strength behind the unions is not the rotten leaders growing fat on Union Contributions, but the people on the people on the bottom on the shop floors. It is they that have the real power and showed an example of it when they defied the union leaders during this dispute.

Fourteen workers occupied the premises demanding that a liquidator be brought in to assess the Company's assets. The Company got an injunction against the occupiers and they were imprisoned.

Apparently we have a new category of prisoner in this Country — a Striker! It's ironic that the same government points the finger to the East and condemns the jailing of strikers in Poland but when it happens on their own door-step, it's an entirely different matter.

So important, in fact, that the Labour Party leader — "representative of the working class" — was content to turn a blind eye to the whole affair.

Public opinion turned against the government for allowing the use of repressive legislation in an industrial dispute and massive support grew for the jailed strikers — stop-

BREDA TRIMBLE wife of jailed Ranks worker ALAN speaks out about the struggle:

BRENDA TRIMBLE talked about how she and the other women became involved in the Ranks dispute.

"Of course, we supported our husbands' occupation of the factory — it was the only thing left for them to do as Ranks had refused to honour the 1978 agreement on redundancy payments.

"When the union — the ITGWU — made the occupation unofficial, we knew we had to get support from other workers ourselves.

"We went round factories and the docks and got promises of tremendous support at a Shop Stewards meeting organised by the Dublin Trades Council. The feeling was of anger, not just at the jailings, but at the way the union had let them down."

During the next few days, ESB, Corpo, Rowntree McIntosh, Car and Dock workers all struck from work and took to the streets in protest.

The union was forced to act. Brenda takes up the story: "Eddie Browne, the Group Secretary had done nothing, he

hadn't even bothered to see the men in prison.

"Some of the women saw him in Liberty Hall and had to push him to see the men.

"When the men were released from prison early that Saturday morning, it was obvious that fewer would march on the Trades Council organised march and that some of the steam would go out of the dispute.

"The Government and Union had obviously got together — with no consultation with the men — to try to smash the strike. They hoped the demonstration would collapse.

"We are still fighting and we need the support of fellow workers and donations to keep going and win nationalisation."

Reflecting on the experience Brenda Trimble comments:

"We knew it was up to ordinary workers — men and women taking action. That frightened the government and union into releasing the men.

"It is only the actions of workers together that can ever take on this crazy system."

pages occurred in many firms to show their solidarity with the workers and a general strike was threatened.

Garret Fitzgerald felt obliged to say a few words to the nation with a general strike and march, arranged by the ICTU, looming over the government's head. On February 25, he informed the Country that a general strike would be suicidal in the current economic climate and that nobody could release the Ranks strikers only themselves by purging their contempt.

The next day, Saturday morning February 26 at 1 a.m. the workers were awoken from their sleep and told they were free to go.

Apparently some magical formula had been worked out during the night and an agreement had been reached. The employees had not been consulted and knew of no such agreement.

The government and trade union officials were obviously afraid of the growing support and used the strikers' release as a ploy to smash the support that had been gained since the time of their imprisonment.

The media are continuing to "play-down" the dispute and are refusing to give it any great coverage, but the workers are continuing their occupation of the premises.

Jobless Youngsters reckon the cost

AN ANCO sponsored survey under taken by unemployed school-leavers in Finglas has come up with startling results.

It showed Finglas to be one of the most affected areas by unemployment in Dublin. It discovered a rate of 25% unemployed in Finglas when the national rate was 13%.

In south Finglas 31% were without work. The figures without taking account the recent school leavers who can't claim the dole.

All the people interviewed said they felt a real drop in living standards after losing their jobs.

Those who never had a job said they had barely enough to survive on, not to mention socialising.

A video has been made to show life on the dole during the interviewing of unemployed youth.

There was great support shown for the Ranks workers, who are occupying for nationalisation. An unemployed action group has now been set up in Finglas.

It's aim is to support every struggle against loss of jobs. The group has leafleted Premier Dairies advising workers to fight the redundancies, and have also been involved in the Rank's dispute.

This kind of solidarity shown by unemployed towards workers' struggles can only bring about a recognition that the employed and unemployed are fighting a common cause.

The employed of today may be on the dole tomorrow and only by fighting together, they can change the system.

by PADDY CARROLL

THE WORKER

FOR WORKERS POWER AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

TAX Make the Bosses pay

'Forum for a New Ireland' - Another talking shop

JOHN HUME has achieved one of his life ambitions. He has managed to drag the Southern Coalition into a "Forum for a new Ireland." That, combined with the EEC investigation into the Northern "problem" is his most successful card since Sunningdale. Hume badly needs credibility. The SDLP is in tatters. Cut off from any official body in the North itself, it has begun to decay at the roots.

That is not to say that the Fitzgerald/Hume forum can achieve anything. It will advocate a bosses republic which offers nothing to the mass of nationalist workers who have borne the brunt of the struggle - still less to loyalist workers. It is an attempt to prove that the ruling class in the South is prepared to live up to the responsibilities and crack down on subversion - provided they are given a say in running the North.

But the struggle in the North is not just for a "Green Republic" which adds the dole queues of Belfast to those of Dublin. The struggle began against discrimination. But as it developed thousands have come to realise that there is something wrong with the system itself.

Hume's forum will become another talking shop. In late forties, a similar body was established - the Anti Partition League. Its leading propagandist was Conor Cruise O'Brien. It produced two or three pitiful pamphlets and disbanded. Bourgeois nationalism has never produced anything but poor platitudes.

However, the key aim is to breathe life into the SDLP. From that point of view it represents a real danger to all those prepared to fight against Stormont and



for something better than a "new Ireland". For the struggle in the North has reached stalemate. The massive vote for Sinn Fein led to a surge of euphoria. But it was passive. Gerry Adams may have established himself as an excellent constituency worker - but it has pushed many more into active struggle against the state.

As long as that stalemate exists, the new initiative - no matter how pathetic - can also win some support. After all, if you are sitting back in your living room, there can be as much reason to believe Hume's forum can do the trick as well as the Provos' Armalite and voting paper.

Sinn Fein is presently concentrating on building its organisation. It put tremendous effort into tiny bye-elections like that at Carrickmore. But they can produce no more than morale boosters.

The real question is when do the votes get translated into action on the streets. The Republican tradition of substituting for mass action - whether through the ballot or the bomb - could whittle away the gains that have been made.

One effect of Hume's forum will be to give the other talking shop - the Assembly - a focus for their anger. It will provide it with a popular issue for loyalist workers to revive the fight for a returned Stormont. The sleeping Assembly could quickly become the vicious monster its supporters want.

In this situation a clear socialist voice is needed. One that opposes the new forum not just because it represents the forces of verbal nationalism - but also because its aim is capitalist stability. One that argues that for the rebuilding of the movement on the streets rather than in the councils and local parliamentary clinics.

THE TAX issue is a slow burning fuse under the Southern State. From April 5, many workers will actually see a drop in their pay packets.

Ever since the last budget, workers opposition has been mounting.

Protests and half-day stoppages have been organised by the ITGWU and Matt Merrigan of the ATGWU has called for clerical workers to black the PRSI returns.

But if we are not to be used as a stage army like the last tax campaign, then we have to be absolutely clear on the issues at stake.

Two years ago the tax campaign began through spontaneous work stoppages at Aer Lingus.

The ICTU was seen as a continual block on the movement - and the leadership fell to the Dublin Trades Council.

This time around, it is the official trade union bureaucracy which is setting the movement to motion.

Why? The trade union bureaucrats are terrified of not being able to control the movement. They saw the vacuum of leadership last time around.

More recently, they saw the weakness of the ITGWU at Rank. Those who want to moderate the protest must first show some sign of militancy.

The union leaders have not the slightest intention of doing anything other than a half day stoppage for a ritual march.

But they do intend to use the tax issue as a cover for their retreat on wages.

Union leaders who regard strike action with a holy terror are now proposing industrial action on tax - and putting wage claims into cold storage.

How do socialists respond? Irish workers pay more tax

for one reason - their bosses pay less.

Both native and foreign capital are heavily subsidised by the state. According to a recent report Southern Ireland tops the league on incentives for industry.

Not only do the bosses pay a pittance in tax and receive major grants - but they do not even live up to their minimal obligations.

The crucial class character of the tax issue was diluted last time around.

The marches were massive but totally silent. There was no clear goal, no clear understanding of why workers pay so much.

The protest was more of a symbol than a struggle.

There are political reasons for this. The politics which dominated the left of the movement were those of the Workers Party.

They support multi-nationals in what they see as their role of industrialising Ireland. Their attacks were reserved for the small-time dodges and evaders; the farmers and the professional classes. It is a way of evading the central issue - the bosses pay hardly a penny.

This time the slogan must ring out clearly: "Make the bosses Pay!"

But we must fight on two fronts. Tax demos should not cover a retreat on wages - instead they should form a springboard for re-launching those almost fragmented wage claims. In the end it is a fight for our living standards.

That means opposing the present strategy of the union bureaucrats. When they propose action on cuts we agree. But we go further. Make the bosses pay is our slogan.

But we also say Bring the Wage Claim forward. Organise to fight to protect living standards.



The last tax marches were more of a symbol than a struggle.

the
worker

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Ranks - Thankyou

ON February 17, the Socialist Workers Movement held a benefit social for the Ranks workers. That evening we received the following thank-you letter:-

"We wish to take this opportunity to thank all the people who took part in Saturday's demonstration of solidarity with the imprisoned Ranks workers. We also wish to thank the people who protested outside Mountjoy after their long day's work and also the people present here tonight. We know no progress or victory is possible without you and the support you have shown. We urge you to continue to support this fight, for when workers show unity they can never be defeated. This is a message from the imprisoned Ranks workers.

SIGNED: Harry Fleming, Paddy McLoughlin, Alan Trimble, Bernard Bonnie, Tony Keogh, Ronnie McDonald, Tony Grey, Roy Lyons, Ray Power, Davey Power, Dermot O'Donnell, Paddy Gannon, Eddie Walsh, Joe Duffy and Seamus Tracey.