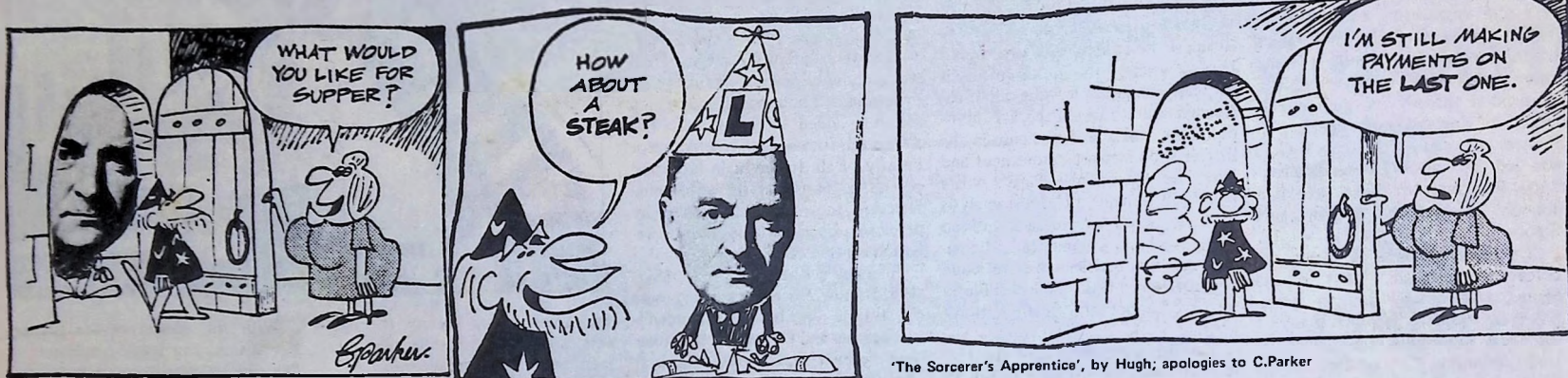


# the worker

FOR A WORKERS' REPUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

## UP AND UP GO PRICES



'The Sorcerer's Apprentice', by Hugh; apologies to C.Parker

### SMASH THE NATIONAL WAGE AGREEMENT!

Want to make some money quick? Put a side of beef into a deep-freezer for a while, and then sell it again. The profits are fantastic.

Food prices are again leading the field in a hell-for-leather race which we always lose. Food prices went up 4 per cent in the month of January alone. At that rate, we could be back to bread and dripping before long. Beef is a luxury — retail prices are estimated to have gone up between 30 and 40 per cent in the last year. But some places have pushed up prices by that much in the last two months!

It's not surprising that the attempts of the various parties to make 'national security' the main issue in the General Election fell flat. Everybody was complaining about rising prices. The promises came thick and fast — no V.A.T. on food, 'strict price control' and so on.

The Coalition promise to take V.A.T. off food looked attractive enough. Labour and Fine Gael even contrived to make it sound radical. But it was neither new or radical. A very prominent businessman suggested it in 'Business and Finance' — a bosses' journal — last year. The head of the Federated Union of Employers (F.U.E.) suggested it in the 'Irish Times' last month. These gentlemen want V.A.T. off food in order — quite cynically — to discourage workers pressing for higher wages.

What about price control then? Fianna Fail said we had it already. The Coalition and more left-wing bodies said we needed more of it. But nobody can say what it could look like — other than a more powerful National Prices Commission. But can we really expect the bosses' own state machine to control rising prices caused by the crazy capitalist

system itself? Tomas MacGiolla, of Sinn Fein (Officials) has been reported as saying that Sinn Fein demands a national prices commission that is not a fraud and a charade'. Some hope!

Rising prices are at the very heart of the economic system today. They are caused by the drive for higher profits, financial speculation, moving capital around, and all the things which are the roots of the system. Does anybody seriously expect the businessmen of Fine Gael to put an axe to the roots?

Instead of encouraging such false hopes, the aim of trade unionists must be to push the working class movement into direct action against the powers and privileges of the bosses.

The first aim must be to smash the National Wage Agreement. No multitude of promises about price control could give good reason for accepting this agreement. The aim and purpose is to hold down wages. The aim of anything the Coalition cooks up on wages and prices will be the same. They have explicitly said they want to continue the national Wage Agreements, or 'voluntary wage restraint', as they call it. Some voluntary agreement that is when workers are forced to observe it, and employers can get out of it!

No wages agreement could be 'fair' or really 'voluntary' as soon as the bosses rule — with the help of the union leaders. The answer to rising prices must be to go on an all-out offensive for real, substantial wage increases, opposing any form of wage restraint.

The rank-and-file must force the unions to fight now for a NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE OF £30 for 35 HOURS, using industrial action to enforce it.

### LABOUR IN GOVERNMENT~ no joy for the workers

The election of a National Coalition government is a victory for some politicians: Fine Gael politicians and certain others who have the nerve to call themselves 'Labour'. It is not a victory for the working class.

A few points came out of the election results. The Labour Party gained seats, but it lost votes. Over the whole state, the Labour vote went down from 17 per cent to 14 per cent. The fall in the Labour vote in Dublin was very noticeable. Large sections of the Dublin working class who in the Sixties turned to the Labour Party in the hope that it was going to bring a change in the system, have now been disillusioned. Some have turned to Sinn Fein, others, perhaps, have lost confidence in politics.

It is the task of the Socialist Workers Movement, and other revolutionaries, to show them that there is another sort of politics, apart from parliamentary politics. The fight for socialist ideas in the trade unions, a determined struggle against all the attacks of the system, and the building of a workers' political organisation, can offer a road ahead.

In six of the eight constituencies outside Dublin where Labour was defending seats, the party's share of the vote went down. The seats were retained, and others gained, with the help of transfers from Fine Gael. The Labour Party have been put into the government piggy-back on top of Fine Gael. Fine Gael can drop them later on.

The defeats of Labour in 1969 were not caused by the so-called Red Scare. That much is now quite clear. They resulted from having no party machine, and from the decline in the personal loyalty vote.

Sinn Fein ('Officials') got a little less votes than might have been expected. However, many Sinn Fein voters gave second preferences to Labour, so this does show that Sinn Fein has been to some extent successful in portraying itself as a left-wing party. (Not that the Labour Party is left-wing; it certainly is not. But many of the Labour Party's supporters vote for it because they think it stands for the working class).

In their campaign, Sinn Fein showed great confusion as to why they were going forward at all. Tomas MacGiolla said that all their candidates had good records of agitation; they were seeking a mandate to pursue their policies in the Dail, and power to put them into practice. At Bodenstown last year Sean Garland spoke about entering the Dail in order to transform it. But it is a trap and an illusion to imagine that power lies in parliament or that parliament can be transformed into an instrument of the workers.

#### PLATFORM

Revolutionary socialists can in some circumstances stand for parliament and take their seats in it, trying to use it as a platform, such as Bernadette Devlin has done. But they must always remember that the real power to change the system lies outside parliament on the shop-floor and in the streets.

The Officials' failure to see the limitations of the Dail — or, at any rate, to point them out to the voters — meant that the policies they put forward could only be reforms. They were competing on the same battleground as Fianna Fail and the

National Coalition. Their 'Election News' devoted a page to farmers, and not one sentence to the problems of the worker on the factory floor. They did not mention, either the repression against political activists, and such laws as the Amendment to the Offences against the State Act.

#### WHAT NOW?

What do we do now? Obviously, we can't just sit back and watch the promises being broken. It's clear that the regular crises of the international economy are not going to allow the Coalition to bring in any radical reforms. They will try to blame inflation on the workers, and bring in wage restraint with the help of the union leaders. Remember what Garret Fitzgerald said during that election campaign: 'The National Coalition, because of the close relations between the Labour Party and the trade union movement and because of the Coalition's commitment to social justice has it in its power to do what Fianna Fail cannot do — secure the trust and confidence of the representatives of workers in hammering out an agreed policy to tackle inflation.'

Trade unionists must start organising now to oppose any such deal. Form rank-and-file groups, factory committees, and action groups, and make it clear that no package for holding down wages will be accepted. Fight to make the trade unions represent their members, and put pressure on the government, especially the Labour Party, to keep the promises it has made.

The Coalition promised to 'halt redundancies', demand that it nationalises any company declaring closure.

The Coalition promised to 'reduce unemployment' demand that it legislates for a 35-hour week to create more jobs.

The Coalition promised the 'elimination of poverty', demand that it sets a national minimum wage of £30 and doubles social benefits.

Even this will not produce a really just society. The workers will have to build their own political organisation, a revolutionary socialist party, which can advocate the mass action of the working class in place of Tweedlejack and Tweedleliam.

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This issue includes:

BRITAIN'S HAND IN THE SECTARIAN KILLINGS — page 4  
TIME, BROTHERS, PLEASE! — the attitudes of trade union officials, and the need for rank-and-file committees in the unions (page 5)

CIE ROAD FREIGHT STRIKE — the answer to 'tough' management (page 3)

# REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNIONISM

The first years of this century saw a massive upsurge of industrial militancy in most of the advanced countries. These years also saw the international emergence of syndicalism and revolutionary trade unionism. This was a conscious reaction against the reformist attitudes of most of the socialist parties. But it was an inadequate response — the question of state power were left out. In Part Six of this series we will deal with the Russian revolution, and parallel revolutionary attempts in other countries, including Ireland.

## Part Five in a series on the History of Socialism

In America the turn of the century saw the spread of the ideas of Daniel De Leon; in England his ideas inspired the syndicalists of the Socialist Labour Party and many rank-and-file trade unionists in the mining, transport and engineering industries; in Ireland, James Connolly and James Larkin struggled to build a trade union which would defeat capitalism — inspired directly by their experiences in England and America. In France, the main union, the C.G.T. was led by conscious syndicalists. Sorel was one of those who had actually worked out a syndicalist theory.

Syndicalism failed as a way of defeating capitalism. Many of its ideas and methods live on today however, and have provided many of the best traditions and ideals of trade unionism. The syndicalists believed that trade unionism was much more than a way of defending or advancing workers' wages and conditions or providing a few benefits. To them, trade unionism, organising all workers, irrespective of trade or skill was the way for workers to take power. Some, like the 'Wobblies' in America, the Industrial Workers of the World, strove to build one great union of all workers, aiming to take power through a general strike. James Connolly's pamphlet, "Socialism Made Easy", follows these principles. In England the SLP tried to put this into action but after they had organised the Singer factory on the Clyde, were defeated by a lock out. The English miners waged industrial unionism as an immediate step to win industrial democracy.

These blueprints for Socialism came to little. But much is of value to us today. Syndicalists were disillusioned with the existing unions. They blamed bureaucracy of the Unions for their failure to fight for workers' interests. They attempted to assert the control of the rank and file as against the union officials. An early member of the Sheffield Amalgamation Committee, J.T. Murphy, who was a leading figure in the British shop stewards movement and later the Communist Party, wrote what still remains a classical analysis of trade union bureaucracy entitled "The Workers' Committee". His answer to the problem was to build organisations of the rank-and-file at factory, district, and finally national level.

Another contribution of the syndicalists was to give the slogan of working class unity a practical meaning. The Wobblies' slogan of "An injury to one is an injury to all" is as important today as then. It was in this period, at the beginning of the 20th century, that the solidarity strike and the backing of goods, in Irish trade union movement and outside, dubbed as "Larkinism", became a widespread reality.

Between 1910 and 1920, syndicalist ideas spread with the upsurge of industrial militancy. In America the Wobblies were involved in a decade of unprecedented revolt among the poorest sections of the industrial working class. In Ireland the 1913 strike set a light traditions within the Irish labour movement which will outlive today's miserable trade union leaders. But it was in Britain that

industrial revolt reached and sustained its peak. In 1913 more days were lost through strikes than before or since, bar 1926, the year of the General Strike.

With the 1914 war came increased hardship. Wages were under attack, strikes were outlawed, safeguards on working conditions and practices were undermined. Food shortages and conscription added to the burden. The skilled craft workers reacted most bitterly of all. In the main industrial centres, in particular the armaments factories, the workers responded by developing powerful shop-floor organisation centred on the shop stewards.

In many centres, the Clyde, Sheffield, Barrow, Coventry and Tyneside the struggle went beyond the individual factories and Workers' Committees were formed representing the best organised factories. By late 1916 this had developed into a national movement. One of the most prominent Workers' Committees, the Clyde Workers, included such figures as Willie Gallagher, Muir and McManus. They stated: "We will support the officials just so long as they rightly represent the workers, but we will act independently immediately they misrepresent them. Being composed of delegates from every shop and untrammelled by obsolete rule and law, we claim to represent the true feelings of the workers".

The shop stewards' movement, however, made a fetish of "Rank and Fileism". On the Clyde, their failure to check the union officials from within the union left them to be outmanoeuvred on several important occasions. In Sheffield, by way of contrast, where the workers committee was almost the same as



the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, District Committee, the movement was much more secure.

Their distrust of leadership, as part of their explanation of trade union bureaucracy, meant their own movement failed to act on a national scale at opportune moments. The shop stewards' movement also never came to grips with the question of the state and failed to grasp the connection between the industrial and the political struggle. This was a direct legacy of the political traditions of the British left and of syndicalism. There was the view of the Socialist Democratic Federation: "Our object is the organisation of the workers for political action. Is there anyone so foolish as to suppose that armed revolt is possible? Or that workers will organise to fight, or to strike, for that which they will not vote?" The SLP, which broke from the Socialist Democratic Federation, only once bothered to stand for parliament — and that was in 1918.

With the impact of the Russian Revolution, the leading militants of the shop stewards movement were coming to recognise that seizure of power was neither the result of parliamentary action nor simply achieved through a congress of industrial unions. They did see the importance of the workers committee however — they showed how the working class could create its own organisations for the seizure of power. 'The Worker', paper of the shop stewards movement, wrote about the 1919 strike which crippled Belfast: "The Soviet government of Russia sprang from the Workers Committees from the unofficial rank and file movement of the Russian people. The shop stewards are the first stage in the Soviet development, and when you read of the Workers Committee taking over virtual control in Belfast, you are reading part of the history of the Russian Revolution in your own land". C.G.



Bloody Sunday 1913

The late 1890s and early 1900s saw an upsurge in working class action in Ireland. There were two very important strikes, one in Belfast in 1907 and the other in Dublin in 1913, which marked the entry of unskilled workers into trade unions for the first time. The importance of these events are that Catholic and Protestant workers united in Belfast and began to think along common class lines. In Dublin there was the lockout and out of it grew a working class army, the Irish Citizen Army.

The strike in Belfast started on York dock about non-union labour. Jim Larkin was at that time an organiser for the National Union of Dock Labourers. He persuaded the men to go back to work. When they turned up for work they found their jobs had been taken by blacklegs. It was clear that the Belfast Steamship Company wanted to get rid of the workers and union. This is clear from a letter Larkin showed the workers from the Shipping Federation.



## LARKIN IN ACTION

Then the carters struck work in sympathy with the dockers. There was a threat to Larkin's leadership but a Protestant socialist said the attempt to divide the men on religious lines would not be successful. 1000 coal-men were added to 1500 dockers and carters. A crisis situation was reached when the police, some of whom had had to protect the blacklegs, mutinied over working conditions. Next day the coalmen's strike was settled on almost the same terms and conditions as before. The carters returned to work with better wages but not trade union rights. The dockers were beaten hard down and went back defeated. But Larkin had shown the possibility of workers' unity.

An offspring of the Orange Order, the Independent Orange Order, made up of working-class Protestants, had supported the strike. Collections were made at meetings and the point was made time and time again: workers were to gain from the strike. At a rally a leading member of the I.O.O., Lindsay Crawford, and Larkin were the principal speakers.

In 1909 Larkin broke with the British dockers union and founded the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. This grew over the next few years, which saw several strikes in different parts of Ireland in which Larkin and Connolly

took leading parts. In Dublin, 1913 started with a bang with thirty strikes. In January there was a dockers' strike against the oldest company. The strikers won and the rest of the companies gave in to Larkin's demand. Larkin organised farm labourers into the I.T.G.W.U. Then he turned to the tram workers.

At this stage Larkin's main enemy was William Martin Murphy. He owned Independent Newspapers and several other businesses. He was engaged in a vendetta against the I.T.G.W.U. The trams stopped in August, and what was known as the great lock-out started. Connolly, who was in Belfast, came down to Dublin. The Irish Citizens' Army was formed as a protective force against the enemies of the working class. The strike spread and 20,000 wage-earners were involved who with their families were over a third of the people of Dublin. All the time the I.T.G.W.U. was growing. Murphy got the employers into a band and, to work for them, workers had to say they would not join a union or would resign from it.

There were protest meetings and pickets. Two people were batoned to death at one meeting. Several other people were killed and children starved to death. World wide support from trade unions came and large sums of money and food from British unions. Railwaymen in part

of Britain went on strike in support of the Irish trade unionists. There was defeat and victory when it ended. The defeat, that the trade unionists. There were defeat and victory when it ended. The defeat, that the workers signed a document saying they would not join a union. The victory, that they joined anyway and the I.T.G.W.U. increased its membership.

Where this mass movement of workers was defeated and made no long term gains, was that the most conscious among them did not try and put the struggles in the political context. Larkin was editor of the Irish Worker which sold 90,000 copies, but the paper was not used as a political organ. The struggles of 1907 to 1913 were defeated by lack of a political direction. The Irish Labour Party, set up by the Irish trade unions in 1912, was slow to get off the ground, and then kept itself out of the crucial political struggles that were going on.



# C.I.E. GETS TOUGHER~ and gets a strike!

The strike of C.I.E. road-freight workers which ended on 25th February was merely the tip of an ice-berg. 'The strike has been coming for two years', said one of the men who picketed all day and night. And the strike committee stated: 'We are determined to fight this to the end'. The fight is by no means finished, although the men are now back at work.

The C.I.E. management had tried to snatch part of the worker's pay packets from them. When the men went on long journeys which kept them at work for 24 hours, they used to get the next day's pay although they were not at work. Suddenly, C.I.E. stopped giving this day's pay and if a man did not report for work after doing a 24-hour run (which is nearly impossible), he was stopped a day's pay.

One striker told THE WORKER that he had worked a 37-hour run (including rests), and when he missed the next day, he lost a day's pay. He had been paid overtime for some of those 37 hours, but he did not get the usual day's pay.

Men working on horse boxes at Dublin Airport had their schedules changed, such that they might finish at all hours of the morning. The company used to take the men home if they finished late. But now C.I.E. management is saying that 'the lift was a gift' and have stopped giving it. At four in the morning, in any weather, men would have to walk from Broadstone to Ballyfermot.

Management have started a new 'tough' phase. One new manager, in particular, has been coming heavy on the men. The workers have been told by management that their instruct-



Men on these jobs stay away from home 36 hours or more

ions are to get a profit out of road freight. Their reply was that C.I.E. were charging top rates, and getting the business. But the company's intention has been made clear; a recent speech by top management stated that the work-force was too big. A consultant's report said that there was room to increase productivity - and that means to reduce manning. The strike committee pointed out to THE WORKER that the management itself was top heavy, and that they could certainly cut costs by having less assistant managers. It might make the job a bit more tolerable as well. The strikers have been recalling

the days when management ruled with the 'iron fist', and the worker's representation was weaker. It seems now to be going back to that, and C.I.E. workers can only rely on rank-and-file strength to resist it.


Many of the strikers felt bitter about the role of the trade union officials, and felt they were fighting them as much as management. 'You might as well have your granny on the board of C.I.E. as Denis Larkin', said one. His union, the Workers Union of Ireland, was not represented at a meeting on the first Thursday of the strike. Is that what they mean by 'worker participation' - having

Denis Larkin on the Board?

Throughout, the strike was unofficial, and the workers picketed Liberty Hall in order to get some move out of the union leaders. However, the strike was won - at least the first round. C.I.E. agreed to suspend the 'roster' which had given rise to the dispute, and have started talks. But look who they are talking to - those same union officials who all along had refused to give their support to the strike. How could they speak for the workers now?

The victory could be turned to defeat if the union officials are allowed take over. The C.I.E. workers must demand that the rank-and-file controls the negotiations, and has the final say on any proposals.

D. D.



A one-day stoppage by Waterford busmen brought satisfaction where four months of representations and requests had failed. Since last October the unions representing the busmen, the National Busmen's Union, and the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, have been asking local C.I.E. management to overhaul and replace buses which were mechanically faulty or in bad condition. They threatened strike action, and then extended the strike notice. Finally, on Friday, 23 February, the busmen did not work. By that same evening the company promised several new buses at the weekend, a few more the following week, and a proper overhaul of the whole fleet.

## DUNLOP COMMITTEE TO BE FORMED?

The works committee of Irish Dunlop's Waterford factory (Irish Rubber Products) has sent out a letter of thanks to the many factories, union committees, and individuals who supported them in their three-month strike.

The letter, signed by John Cloono, shop steward, points out 'the most important lesson we learned from the dispute was that only by unity of action and purpose, plus a level of class consciousness can workers overcome this great social evil of the Seventies, i.e. redundancy'.

That class consciousness is now being brought to bear in attempts to form a committee representing all Dunlop workers in Ireland. It is

hoped then to link up with the British and European committees.

In spite of the difficulties which the Dunlop and Pirelli companies are having - or which they claim - with their marriage, workers' representatives from four countries where the group has plants have been meeting. As the committee's report of their meeting last November says.

"The merger between the two companies has brought unemployment, factory closures, short-time working and insecurity. The multinational group has also pursued a strategy of increasing production and investment in countries with fascist-type regimes such as Spain, Greece, Turkey and Brazil (and many African and Asian countries) where workers are denied the most

elementary trade union rights."

They are refusing to be black-mailed by the talks of a crisis in the company. If there are any further attempts at rationalisation within the group leading to further unemployment, the workers will recognise and respond with demonstrations of concrete solidarity, including industrial action in all four countries represented at the Conference.

It does not take much imagination to recognise that Waterford and Cork Dunlop workers might be in a very different situation today if they had been involved in such an agreement before they were hit by 'rationalisation'.

B.T.

## GARDA CONVICTED

(read the small print)

This month's prize for unbiased journalism must go to The Wicklow People of 9th February. It records how an Arklow garda was found guilty of assaulting two Dublin campers last summer.

The story is headlined "Fined for assaulting campers at Arklow." It starts off: "Thomas J. Phelan, of 59 Main Street, Arklow, was fined £5 at Arklow Court on two charges of assaulting Jimmy O'Toole and John Sherlock, both of Cashel Avenue Kimmage, Dublin..." After reading through 14 inches of print there is a reference to "Garda Phelan". No

relation of the defendant, you assume. After reading another nine inches of type, you find: "Mr. O'Connor (solicitor), said that this was a serious case for Garda Phelan, as if he was found guilty in this court his future would be destroyed."

But only those who have the time and energy to read to this point, almost at the end of the report, would ever guess that the man found guilty was a member of those well-known protectors of the public, the Garda Síochána. People's confidence in the forces of law and order must be maintained, you see.

## ARE YOU ALL ERROR-PRONE

Humans aren't fallible, after all. The Irish Management Institute is holding a course in March to explain 'why people err' and to outline methods to overcome, or at least reduce human error. The programme tells us that "it has been highly successful in a number of military industries in the US and it now holds promise of reduced unit costs, and fewer defects and customer complaints".

The topics to be treated at the conference under the title 'Man in the Industrial Setting' include "chance versus error proneness".

Apparently, the traditional approach to improving quality in production was to sack the worker, but now "ergonomic design principles" allows amangement to mould workers. This has "implications for improving human performance in production, including some monumental goals in design of military and civilian equipment and systems".

Like the monumental goof of the Vietnam War, for instance?

## Douglas workers win~

The strike at Douglas Engineering Ltd. on the Waterford Industrial Estate has ended with a first-round victory for the workers. After three weeks on strike, the dismissed worker was re-instated. The workers have still many hurdles to clear before full union rights and decent conditions are established in the factory. The boss is still objecting to the shop steward representing the work-

ers, and still chops and changes men and jobs as he pleases.

The workers have put in a claim for better pay and conditions through their union, the Irish Transport and General Workers Union. After their initial victory, they are in a good position to get a favourable settlement out of the management. They are trying - as one point in their claim - to negotiate a decent bonus scheme, where up to now there have been no bonuses at all.

Douglas has so far offered no more than a phased introduction of the 40-hour week, and a pay rise in May under the terms of the 14th round (first phase). There has been no mention of protective clothing, canteen facilities, or bonus payments. There must be no let-up until these things have been won.

The example of the Douglas workers has spread. The workers in a French-owned factory next door have now joined the Irish Transport and General Workers Union. The way is now open to get 100 per cent unionisation on the Industrial Estate.

## TENANTS AND THE COALITION

The Constitution of the National Association of Tenants' Organisations (N.A.T.O.) states that the association is 'non-political and non-sectarian'. That clause is causing more and more confusion every day.

Two weeks before the Election, the National Executive of N.A.T.O. recommended that its supporters vote for the National Coalition parties. They had met representatives of Fine Gael and Labour several times, and had come to an agreement. Evidently they were impressed by the promise in the Coalition's 'Statement of Intent' that "the unjust aspects of differential rents will be removed and a fair national system of tenant purchase will be introduced."

Seeing as how N.A.T.O. is 'non-political', it did not consider any other parts of the statement, and, indeed, tenants' meetings called to meet election candidates prohibited talk of anything else but rents and tenant purchase.

### REPRESSION

One thing, however, was very obviously missing from the 'Statement of Intent', and from the more detailed statement by Labour and Fine Gael - any mention of the repressive laws which have been used to bring rent strikers to court in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and elsewhere.

The crowning folly of the agreement between N.A.T.O. and the Coalition, however, was the promise by N.A.T.O. to call off the rent strike if a Coalition government was returned. What this amounts to is ending the strike before there are any firm guarantees on the tenants' demands. Once the rent strike is called off, it is next-to-impossible to start it again. The dangers of such a move are obvious.

The non-political bogey reared its ugly head in a weird way at a meeting of the Dublin Regional Council just before the election. Some delegates wanted to stop Donnchadha MacRaghnaill referring to his N.A.T.O.

Tenants should demand that the 'non-political' clause is removed from the N.A.T.O. Constitution. Of course there was a good reason for putting it there - to prevent local Fianna Fail parties, in particular, using tenants' organisations as 'fronts'. But the only effective way to stop that is to argue against Fianna Fail, ruling class politics.

# Britain's hand in the 'sectarian' killings

# CRAIG AND THE SDLP

The murder of two Catholic postmen in broad daylight, on a main road, and directly underneath an Army observation post, has added further to the speculation that the British Army itself is responsible for a large number of the sectarian assassinations. In this case the theory is further backed up by the following facts: 1. the assassins crossed through an army barrier seconds before the shooting; 2. the shooting took place in full view of an army post; 3. the killer stood over his victims for almost a minute before driving off; 4. the assassins drove through another army barrier only yards away from where the slayings had taken place on their return journey.

In numerous other cases it has been asserted, with strong evidence to back the allegations, that the British army's plain-clothed units have been involved directly in the killings. On top of this, there has been minimal action against loyalist killers. For many months the British tried to pretend that the assassinations were not really happening, and when they could no longer hide the facts, they made a half-hearted pretence at doing something about them. But the killings continue, and have even occurred in areas like Andersonstown where there are thousands of troops on duty at all times.

Why is it that the army tolerates, and even participates in these acts? The Official Republican movement claims that it is because the British government actually want a civil war to erupt. But they know that any major conflict such as a civil war, would affect the whole of Ireland, and put Britain's ally, Jack Lynch, in a precarious situation. The British government has no desire to see that happen. What, then, is their intention?

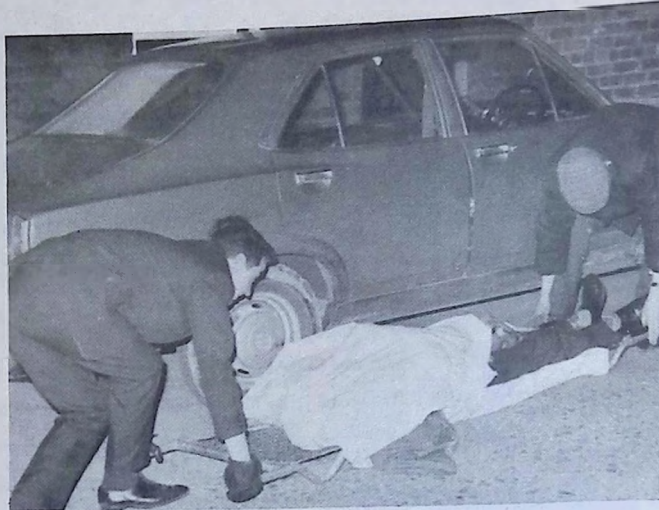
Firstly, the almost daily occurrence of sectarian killings has terrified the Catholic community in a way that the activities of the British Army alone never could have done.

This has 'softened' them in preparation for the White Paper, reducing their ability to resist. On top of that, it has enabled the Army to come back into the Catholic ghettos in the guise of 'protectors of the people', by setting up (obviously ineffective) check points. This policy has even had an effect on the Provisionals who are refraining from military action against the army in Andersonstown while these check points are in existence.

Secondly, the assassinations have given the SDLP something to talk about, and have enabled them to regain credibility in Catholic working class areas as negotiators on behalf of the people with the British Army. Paddy Devlin led a deputation of Andersonstown businessmen to meet the army, and to demand greater protection for his constituents. Gerry Fitt has been able to use the assassinations of two of his constituents to come back on the scene after his betrayal of the internees. (He met Whitelaw before the ending of internment, breaking a year-old pledge.) The re-emergence of the SDLP in this way has helped to reduce the Catholics' dependence on, and therefore the support for, the IRA. This is precisely what the British want.

Thirdly, the wave of assassinations has forced a retreat into the ghettos for those who could possibly have begun to make contact with loyalist workers, and who are becoming more and more disillusioned with their right wing leadership, (something which is itself partly a result of the assassinations). They have thus prevented any gains from being made from the further disintegration of the unionist bloc, by keeping everyone occupied with local defence.

Fourthly, the assassinations have had effect on many ordinary Protestant workers, similar to the effect the Provo bombing campaign had on Catholic workers - it has



Belfast assassination victim being lifted on to a stretcher

made them less willing to actively support the hard-liners. On many occasions in the past the army and police ignored bomb warnings, so that they could portray the Provos as mass murderers - and hoping that this would isolate them from their supporters. In the same way, the British have allowed loyalist assassinations to go unchecked in the hope that ordinary Protestant workers would become alienated from the killers. The policy is now to try to get these workers to support the Unionist Party again. That party is now masquerading as a moderate force. This strategy has had some effect: the loyalist strike after the arrest of two men believed to have been involved in killings, was a failure, and no attempt was made to repeat this tactic after the arrest of several more loyalist extremists. This all helps the British to create a moderate looking centre grouping that will support the interests of imperialism in Ireland.

Finally, the assassinations enable the British to justify keeping their army here by claiming that it is standing between two tribes of blood-thirsty lunatics who would murder everyone in sight if it were not for the restraining hand of the peace-loving Army.

*The British Army has proved in the recent past that it has no intention of protecting the anti-unionist population from the assassins. The British government has no intention of dealing with the problems which create and strengthen sectarianism. So long as imperialism and capitalism rule Ireland, there will be massive unemployment, low wages and so on, and in these conditions sectarianism and sectarian killing will continue. The sooner the British army is withdrawn, the sooner the killing will end.*

M.M.  
25 February, 1973.

As the 'crunch' period of the British White Paper drew nearer, the extreme right wing of the loyalist camp, represented by William Craig, were desperately searching for ways of maintaining their power in the Six Counties. They are aware that the new needs of imperialism in Ireland - for closer ties with the Southern ruling class, and for the integration of the Catholic middle class into the Northern State - will leave them out in the cold.

Craig's recent 'Dominion' speech is as much the death cry, as it is the war cry, of the old school of pro-imperialists. Power is their first consideration, now, as it has always been. Class power takes precedence over the link with Britain, now that that link can no longer guarantee them total control, as it has always done in the past.

Any attempt to 'go it alone', whether through negotiated independence, or through UDI, will require the support of a great many people. Craig has spent much of his time over the last year whipping up sectarian feelings among Protestant workers, condoning assassinations and anti-Catholic pogroms, in the hope that this will win him support. He has appealed to them to make huge economic sacrifices 'willingly, for the sake of Ulster', because he knows that in a UDI situation, Northern workers are going to have to take cuts in their living standards. But he knows that such appeals would have no effect on the Catholic section of the working class. So he set out to recruit the Catholic middle class to his scheme, in the hope that they could sell it to the Catholic workers. In return for a share in the running of an independent Ulster, they would act as the policemen of the Catholic section of the working class, keeping them in order while the new regime stabilised itself at the expense of their living standards.

## ENEMY

The SDLP, representatives of the Catholic middle class, took the bait. They issued a plea for a cessation of the Provo campaign, so as to enable them to join in 'meaningful discussions' with the extreme right wing. To confuse the Catholic workers, they claimed that the United Loyalist Council, of which Craig is boss, represents the interests of the Protestant workers, when it is, in fact, their worst enemy.



One of the conditions for the SDLP achieving any power is that the Catholic workers get off the streets, and return to the normal bourgeois political processes (i.e. vote SDLP once every five years). They hoped that the idea of talks about a Dominion of Ulster might speed up this return to 'normality'. It did seem to contain the seeds of a split from Britain, and could therefore be pushed widely among Catholic workers as an alternative to supporting the Provisionals.

There should be no illusions in either the type of independent Ulster Craig wants, or in the stages-towards-a-United-Ireland envisaged by the SDLP. Both would continue to be dominated by imperialism and capitalism. Neither offers any solution to the problems facing the working class, the problems of repression, unemployment, redundancies, low wages, soaring prices, slum housing etc. So long as these problems remain, sectarianism, too, will remain. Unity between the SDLP and the forces of William Craig is the unity of essentially anti-working class forces.

Only when these common problems of all workers are taken as the starting point in the struggle against repression and British domination, will the possibility of overcoming sectarian divisions arise. Then the SDLP and the United Loyalist Council will be swept aside, and genuine working class unity be built.

M. MILLER.



Building a new dock by night

## TROUBLE IN THE YARDS

There have been rumblings of discontent in Harland and Wolff's Belfast shipyards recently. The workers there have threatened strike action, in revolt against their position - in the words of one shop steward - as 'coolies of the Western World' JIM SMYTH reports on the background to the crisis.

Japan's shipbuilding industry, almost totally destroyed in the Second World War now produces more than half the world's new ships every year, and may be producing four fifths of the yearly tonnage by 1975. In contrast, the UK now pro-

duces less ships than before the First World War - its total production of a little over a million tons is only a fraction of the total annual world production of 32 million tons.

British yards are antiquated and badly

integrated with their supply industries: their production costs are too high, and militant labour can make nonsense of delivery dates.

The demand for ships is not a constant one. It tends to go in cycles, with boom periods being followed by a slump as the number of ships in service exceeds the demands of world trade. Experts predict that the next slump has already begun: there will be a tapering off in orders until the end of the decade when the next boom is optimistically predicted. The recent spate of orders for ships to be built in British yards - the tune of £150 million is the tail end of the last boom, which ended up in the UK because Japanese and other yards have no spare capacity at the moment. This £150 million has to be set against the fact that orders in UK yards in 1972 were £80 million down on the previous year.

It may seem difficult therefore, to understand why the British government has poured £35 million into the Upper Clyde and £49 million into Harland and Wolff in the last few years. It was partly a political decision. The occupation of the Clyde frightened the Tory government; the last thing they want is to let workers think that they can run anything without the bosses. In the North some government investment was imperative: but why the shipyards?

Politically, the shipyards are important for the designs of British imperialism in Ireland. They have long been the economic basis of the prosperity of large sections of the Protestant working class in the North; directly or indirectly almost 150,000 people are dependent on the yards, whether they are the families of those who work there, or dependent on supply industries. Catholics make up less than 3% of the work force, and of these most are either female office staff or outside workers. In the short term then, it is in the interests of Britain to support an industry which employs loyalists, if in doing so it can keep their allegiance.

# TIME, BROTHERS, PLEASE!

by Ken Quinn  
Dublin No. 14 Branch W.U.I.

At this time of year, many union branches are holding their annual general meetings. For many thousands of workers this will be the only opportunity during the whole year to hear what is happening in THEIR UNION. But many of the meetings are conducted in such a way as to make a complete farce of them.

The union officials are often heard to complain about the apathy of the members, but considering the way they handle such things as general meetings it is hardly surprising that many workers feel that it is a waste of time.

Take the recent meetings of the Dublin No. 14 Operative Butchers' branch of the Workers Union of Ireland. It was due to start at 11.45 a.m. but did not get under way until 12.20. The Chairman opened the meeting with the remark "Now lads, let's hurry up and get this meeting over as the pubs will be open shortly!". In other words, we shouldn't waste valuable drinking time with "oul union affairs". It only concerns how much you get paid, your working conditions, and your very livelihood. There was never any call from the

floor of the meeting (with about 200 people present) to hurry the meeting on account of drinking hours. But the union officials on the platform never tired of reminding the meeting that it was approaching closing time. They tried to rush through an agenda of 10 or 12 items in an hour and a half. They thwarted any attempts at open, democratic discussion, and used the platform and microphone against workers who stood up to challenge them.

## OPPOSITION

One worker spoke up in opposition to the National Wage Agreement, demanding that we break it and look for £33 per week. This call got great support in the hall. In the ensuing scramble by the chairman and union officials to defend the National Wage Agreement, the chairman blurted out "You can always break the Agreement". He retracted this almost as soon as he stated it, and just got himself off the sticky ground.

That meeting was typical of many taking place all over the country - growing unrest among the rank-and-file about the National Wage Agree-



ment and other issues, above all, the behaviour of the union officials.

In an attempt to commit the union to a policy on one issue which is causing great concern, members of the Socialist Workers Movement have successfully moved the following resolution at two recent general meetings of Dublin W.U.I. branches. It will go forward to the next Annual

Conference.

*The trade union movement must face this problem with determined action. The union must refuse to accept redundancies as a price for wage rises. We must also fight any take over of Nationalisation measures*

leading to the loss of jobs and also pledge ourselves to the principle of one man - one job.

*This branch calls on the incoming National Executive to campaign with other unions for a 35-hour week with no loss of pay to create more jobs.*

In moving such resolutions, and others on repression, prices, the National Wage Agreement, etc., members of the Socialist Workers Movement have no illusions that the union officials can be relied upon to safeguard workers' jobs and living standards. We call on fellow trade unionists to form rank-and-file committees to press for more militant policies, and, above all, to make sure they are implemented. We must involve the mass of workers in such struggles as the fight against redundancies, for it is only workers' action that can effectively stop them.

## COMMITTEES

We need to extend and strengthen rank-and-file committees, constantly drawing more trade unionists into struggle - including the struggle for democracy within the trade unions. The demands we put forward include:

- All union officials should be democratically elected and subject to instant recall; they should be paid the average wage of the workers they represent.

- All negotiations must be subject to the scrutiny of the rank-and-file; the unions must make all strikes in support of trade union principle, better wages and conditions official.

- Branch general meetings should be held at least quarterly.

- Apprentices should have full adult rights within their unions. With the present state of Irish unions we do not for one moment imagine that such things can be achieved simply by the passing of resolutions. It will be a hard struggle. Join us in it.

# VICTORY FOR DUBLIN GAS WORKERS

Dublin Gas Company workers, members of the Worker's Union of Ireland No. 13 Branch, recently won an important victory. After six years of negotiations backwards and forwards appearances at the Labour Court, and piles of red tape, they have now won sick benefit for 13 weeks on full pay, and 13 weeks on half-pay. They are now on a par with workers in state and semi-state bodies, although the Gas Company is a private concern.

The gas workers have fought hard for this change, at one time threatening strike action. On other matters, too, they have been keeping the company and the union officials busy with their demands. This was the only branch of the Workers Union of Ireland which voted against the National Wage Agreement. At the branch's recent Annual General Meeting resolutions were passed calling for trade union action on the housing crisis and demanding that May Day be made a worker's holiday. There was full support, too, for a resolution moved by a member of the Socialist Workers Movement urging united trade union action to halt redundancies. From the floor, supporters of this resolution argued that if the trade union officials were not prepared to take action, then the membership would, pointing out that only the workers could defend themselves against the employers' increasing attacks.

attending the same technical college, and got the support of apprentice butchers in the No. 14 Branch of the same union.

With this victory came other minor ones, such as changes in the courses at college which the apprentices had been demanding.

Some of those involved in that struggle are now 'out of their time' and are also on the Branch Committee. They have recently given support to further demands of the apprentices - for instance, the claim for parity in 'dirty money' with qualified men.

## IGNORED

The apprentices then appealed to their Branch Committee, who ignored them. They appealed - to the General Executive Committee, who ignored them. They then put a picket on the union premises, and distributed a leaflet to explain their case to union members. The picket was maintained every evening and each Saturday for two weeks. The Branch Committee had to agree to investigate their case, and support their claims at the Executive.

However, they did not act on this, and the apprentices met to plan further action. At a general meeting of the branch to discuss a bonus/productivity scheme being offered by the Gas Company, the apprentices again put forward their claims. The issue was now being widely discussed in W.U.I. branches.

In 1971, after three years of struggle, the Executive gave the apprentices the right to vote, and representation on the Branch Committee

## LESSON

The successes that have been achieved spur the workers on to press for more, and to strengthen their position with the company and the union. By fighting for their claims openly in the union, the apprentices have been able to get the full support of others in the trade. The lesson that has been learned is clear: it is not enough just to fight on the job; the struggle has to be carried on in the union, to broaden support, and to force the union officials to act. Only by having more adequate union representation have the gas-workers been able to force new victories.

B. ROGERS  
Dublin No. 13 Branch W.U.I.



# ELECTION NOTES

Who is Kathleen Murray-Diskin? A 67-year-old retired school-teacher who stood as an independent candidate in Donegal-Leitrim and who gave Sean MacStiofain 'Our Lady of the Reses' to translate into Irish while in prison. Looking forward to a government, she told the 'Derry Journal': "A sympathetic Minister may grant Sean MacStiofain parole so that he can accompany me to Rome at Easter".

Whatever misgivings many workers may have had about Labour's Coalition pact with Fine Gael, there are still thousands who believe that Labour represents the workers' interests in the Dail. Well how about this for putting the thing in perspective? - Out of 54 Labour candidates, all but seven were in professional, executive, managerial, teaching, administrative, or trade union official posts.

The Coalition's 'statement of intent' made a promise to "halt redundancies". That well known man of principle, Eddie Collins, Fine Gael candidate in Waterford, showed how seriously he took that promise. Just weeks before the election the meat exporters' firm, Collins Bros., of which he is Managing Director, sacked a dozen workers.

The scene - a meeting of 600 students at University College, Dublin. Several politicians have spoken and are now being questioned, Kevin Boland among them. Boland is asked if he regrets having

gerry-mandered the constituencies in favour of Fianna Fail and if he regrets not having kept certain areas like Crumlin in his own constituency.

Delight all round! How can Boland answer? Will he deny having gerry-mandered? He can't admit it, or can he?

Silence as Boland steps to the microphone. "Yes", he says, "I regret having done that work. Every party in power does it. My regret is that I didn't leave Fianna Fail sooner".

Tremendous applause. A standing ovation.

But nobody asked - how could anybody take such a stupid man seriously, never mind vote for him? He admits to having been a hatchet man. He accepts that such hatchet jobs are needed. But he was stupid enough to chop himself with his hatchet.

Fine Gael just have the edge on Fianna Fail when it comes to farmers. 29 of FG candidates were farmers, as against FF's 22.

A certain active member of the Co. Wicklow Labour Party has often been offered a copy of THE WORKER, but never bought one. Until an election comes round. Suddenly our seller is transformed from a revolutionary troublemaker into a voter who must be treated kindly and gently. A copy changes hands.

We are glad that loyal devotion to the Labour Party has at least produced fourpence to spread the revolutionary message.

## MILITANT

The branch has a reputation for being 'militant'. One of the principal issues which it has been involved in was the rights of apprentices in the unions. The struggle began back in 1968, when the call was raised for the right of apprentices to vote on all union matters, and the right to have representation on their section committee. A plan of action was drawn up by the apprentices themselves. Two of them canvassed support from apprentices in other trades

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

Send to Socialist Workers' Movement, 30 Strandville Avenue, North Strand, Dublin 3

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_



Civil Servants on the march

# British workers fight the freeze

British workers are now poised for massive united action to smash Heath's wages, prices, and profits freeze. Following the lead given by gas and hospital workers, a TUC special conference has now agreed, against the leadership moderates, to a one-day national stoppage. Civil servants teachers and journalists were prominently in support of this action, showing that white collar workers now see that their interests lie with the organised working class.

Phase 1 of the freeze ends on March 31st. The Tories will then bring Phase II into operation. Wage rises will be limited by a "£1 + 4%" formula which, in cash

terms, limits rises to an average £2.50 a week.

Laughably, they claim this will help the lower paid! The limit is applied to groups, not individual workers. Heath suggests that the lower-paid demand more at the expense of higher-paid workers in the group. This is a crude attempt to set workers at one another's throats. British workers will not be fooled however — for, even the lowest paid are forbidden to get more than £5 a week.

The freeze will run for three years if necessary. But long before that, Heath hopes to conclude a voluntary deal with union leaders for a Phase III. The freeze

can be defeated on the shop floor long before then. 47,000 gas workers are showing the way. They are currently striking or working to rule across Britain. Their basic wage of £19 to £22 a week puts them among the low-paid. Redundancies have eaten away more than a third of jobs in the past five years. They have demanded £3 a week but so far have been offered a pathetic £2. They are still out. Hospital workers, traditionally among the lowest paid in Britain, have taken national strike action for the first time in a long time during the past weeks. Locomotive engine men are out too. Teachers and bank employees may soon follow suit.

However, the biggest confrontation is looming up at Ford's. The current pay deal ran out on March 1st. Now, Ford workers are looking for parity with the British Leyland settlement at Birmingham, concluded days before Phase I of Heath's freeze came into operation last November. Leyland's 25,000 workers take home an average £44 a week on measured day work, compared to Ford's basic £35 a week. 55,000 Ford workers are demanding £10 a week rise to equalise — twice the maximum permitted by the government's limit.

Ford's are well able to pay — last year they sold a record ¾ million cars in the UK and made £60 million profits. Ford workers are militant; and they recognise

their leading role in smashing the freeze. As one steward stated, "Any law which strikes against the interests of the people must be disobeyed. Direct action against such laws and those who inspire them is 100 per cent justifiable."

The Tories claim the freeze is not confined to wages, but applies to rents, profits and prices as well. Heath expects workers to believe that the bosses are losing as much as they themselves are. This is nonsense. Take the case of food prices. Loopholes are appearing everywhere. The freeze never applied to fresh meat, vegetables, etc. Now it has been removed from processed foods as well. This means that when there is an increase in the cost of food abroad, the manufacturer or shopkeeper needn't lose a penny. He can simply pass on the difference in the price. It is the housewife then who has to make ends meet. It is workers and their families who must bear the cost by reducing their standard of living. Profits are unaffected.

The freeze is an anti-working class measure through and through. If it works, it will achieve a massive drop in British workers' standard of living in years to come. But it seems that the ground is already prepared for militant action to break it.

BRIAN TORODE

# NATIONAL MANPOWER SERVICE

Politicians like to remind us of the fine job the National Manpower Service is doing to help the unemployed find jobs again. Presumably one example of this fine work is the advertisements which appeared in some papers recently for labourers in Dusseldorf, inviting applications to the National Manpower Service!

The service clearly operates in the bosses' interests. They do some weeding out of people looking for jobs, and then send the employer three or four from which to make a choice and bestow his generous offer of employment on. And even if the National Manpower Service sends three or four people, most employers don't rely on it alone. So, by the time you get to see the company where the interview has been arranged, there are already several applicants lined up.

# WHAT WE STAND FOR

## SOCIALIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Imperialism

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Workers struggles

- The Socialist Workers' Movement fights for:—
- full support for workers and small farmers in struggle;
- defence of the living standards of workers and small farmers;
- rank-and-file control and socialist leadership of the trade unions;
- the election of all trade union

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

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

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



# RELUCTANT WARRIORS

The war in the North has some reluctant fighters. One group among them has had little attention — black soldiers in the British Army.

There are few immigrants in the North, so the black man holding a rifle patrolling the narrow streets is still an unusual sight. They are seen with mixed feelings. Some don't like to jeer at them, as they would at white soldiers, because they are afraid of showing racist feelings. Others use the very fact of their colour to make the insults hit harder. Bogside women dangle bunches of bananas in front of black soldiers in the corner of William Street. But some pinpoint the real issues. A recent issue of 'Encore', a magazine produced by blacks in America for blacks, reported this comment from a Catholic worker:

"All those British bastards: are the sons of the working class — like me. But the blacks, of all people, should understand the oppression we live under. They should be at home fighting to free their own people from the oppression that grips us. We are the niggers of Ireland".

The magazine also tried to find out how black soldiers view their role. Like many English soldiers, they are driven into the army because they can't get a job. They have little choice. Being black, they

are particularly hit by unemployment. Many of them posted to the North do not like the part they play in enforcing imperialist domination:

"It's not our war, and we've no business here. Many of us protested before we came here, and some had to serve three tours of duty for complaining". These were the words of a black soldier who had been involved with over fifty others in refusing to go on patrol after the first black soldier had been killed in the North.

If morale is generally low among the British soldiers, it is rock-bottom among the blacks. They are increasingly conscious of being used as tools of a repressive system which has again and again brought their own people to their knees.

"In this world it is the oppressed who have continually been used to cow and kill the oppressed in the interest of the universal oppressor".

The refusal to patrol is the first sign in black soldiers of a growing determination of the working class that no section of it will be used against another section in the interest of the capitalist master.

G.M.

# U.S. MINERS TAKE OVER UNION!

*After years of struggle the rank and file miners of the American United Mine Workers have succeeded in defeating the union bureaucracy in the form of Tony Boyle, President of the UMW for the past ten years, and replacing him with Arnold Miller, the leaders of the Miners for Democracy. The fact that the rank and file can win against the bureaucracy, even when that bureaucracy is prepared to murder in order to defeat any opposition, is significant to any trade unionists trying to turn their unions, from being mere middle-men in the 'labour market', into real fighting organisations for the membership.*

The United Mineworkers have long been to the forefront of the workers' movement in the United States. During the 1930s their then President, John Lewis, helped organise the Congress of Industrial Organisations. The CIO was able after a very hard-fought struggle - many factories were occupied and there were bloody battles with the police - to organise and win very much improved conditions for the workers in the boom industries such as car assembly.

The UMW always put great emphasis on safety and health; it built its own hospitals, often the only ones within the small mining communities. It was the first major union to admit blacks into the membership, a very important step when it is realised how divided on racist lines the American working class is.

During World War II US workers were forbidden by law to strike but in 1943 the UMW struck for higher wages and a better medical and pension plan. By striking against the government and Roosevelt's Democratic Party the UMW was attacking one of its traditional allies. There were great hopes that trade union dissatisfaction with the traditional American capitalist parties, Democratic and Republican, would cause the formation of a Labour Party.

Unfortunately Lewis's fund of radicalism had been used up - he simply swung the UMW behind the Republican Party.

## UNION LOANS CASH TO MINE OWNERS

During the 1950s the previous militancy of the UMW vanished. As with all American unions the fanatical anti-communism of McCarthyism hit militants hard - they were accused of being 'reds' and often lost their union cards. Also during this time the coal industry was hard hit and instead of the union fighting against the productivity deals that were being forced on them Lewis actually encouraged them. He sold off many of the union hospitals, relaxed rulings against speed-ups and even loaned money from the Union treasury to help the mine owners automate. This meant that the Union had itself provided the money to put 2/3 of its membership out of work.

In 1962 Tony Boyle took over as President of the UMW. Under his leadership the Union became totally bureaucratic; every Union official was appointed by Boyle, including the Executive Board and District Officers. The corruption within the Union became well known. The Union owned its own bank where the Pen-



Arnold Miller (right) talking to West Virginia miners during the campaign

sion Fund dues were lodged. But no interest was ever paid on this money - it went straight into Boyle's pocket. Union elections were rigged, with ballot boxes disappearing and miners intimidated. However, the worse came in 1969.

## OPPOSITION CANDIDATE MURDERED

Joseph Yablonski attempted to run against Boyle for Union President with a programme to reform some of the 'irregularities' within the Union. He and his supporters were physically attacked during the election campaign and eventually two days after the election Yablonski, his wife and daughter were found murdered. A member of the UMW Executive Board has been accused of the murder but it seems quite clear that Boyle himself was very much involved.

## BLACK LUNG ASSOCIATION

Opposition to UMW policies over safety was growing however. During 1969 the Black Lung Association was formed in West Virginia and carried out political strikes against that State to demand official pay-

# International News

into the coal fields. That the majority of the Executive Board and all District Officers be elected. The drastic cutting of union official's salaries.

## STATE AID FOR MINERS FOR DEMOCRACY

Arnold Miller, the leader of MFD, was attacked by Boyle as a 'communist' and accused of having outside support. While the Communist accusation was clearly absurd it was true that Miller had outside support. The Federal Government actually ran the election - they had men at every polling booth all over the country. In fact the whole union was taken over by the government (at a cost of over £1.5 million) for the duration of the election. From previous experience it was obvious that no fair election could be run by the UMW.

What lessons can be learned? The use of the State against the Union bureaucracy is obviously a dangerous step. Miller and his colleagues might feel they have to repay the State with reduced union militancy. Any action that might make people feel that the State is 'independent' between capitalism and the workers is clearly wrong. The truth is that the US government wanted to get Boyle out of the way. They were murderers and thieves and no longer served any useful purpose. Union bureaucrats are only any good to the government when they keep the workers in line and Boyle was finding his 'policy' role increasingly difficult - the rank and file just would not stand being pushed around any more.

*Even if Miller turns out to be too friendly with the Government and with his friends in the Democratic Party, a transformed UMW with rank and file control will not be. It is up to the rank-and-file to make sure that Miller keeps his promises and that they themselves really do take control of the union at all levels. It is a long time since the US has seen a large rank-and-file democratically controlled union. Let us hope the trend is here to stay - the roots of the most powerful nation in the world might begin to tremble.*

PETER DAVIES  
CHICAGO

# SOUTH AFRICAN WORKERS REVOLT

(Report by exiled South African George Johannes)



The most notorious case of super-exploitation is that of a company which doubled its profits last year, but which pays a basic rate of about 8 Rand per week (about £4.40), of which the workers have to fork out 2 Rand (£1.10) for travel to work.

After a wave of strikes, South Africa now faces continuing industrial unrest among African workers. The Corporation and private employers has surrendered almost completely to the workers' demands for wage increases, which are substantial by

African standards. But the feeling is, that unless other grievances are settled, there could be much more serious trouble. The government has no intention, of course, of ending the degradation of Apartheid which is the root cause of African discontent.

50,000 African and Indian workers were on strike. During a demonstration by 7,000 workers, 200 of them broke away to march on their factory. Troops were at the ready during the unrest. The Bantu Administrative Department was invaded. The students' organisations played an important role in spearheading a new

'black consciousness'.

The current wave of agitation is taking place against a background of rip-roaring inflation and price increases which equalled those in Britain in the past few months. The government and the employers are both busily blaming each other for the crisis. Following a meeting between the Federated Chamber of Industries and the Minister for Labour, the employers said they wanted the government to investigate the living needs of the black workers and establish a realistic wage.

The Chamber and the government only

got alarmed, of course, when the workers show any signs of awareness of their conditions. The increase turned out to be only 25p on £4.25 per week. The Chamber also tried to raise the vexed question of the Africans' right to join trade unions.

Johannesburg busmen have been threatening to paralyse the city unless they get a substantial increase. There are reports of workers in other industries planning to follow suit. The most notorious case of super-exploitation is that of a company which doubled its profits last year, but which pays a basic rate of

about 8 Rand per week (about £4.40), of which the workers have to fork out 2 Rand (£1.10) for travel to work.

Apart from the industrial unrest, there have been reports of increased guerrilla activity in parts of Southern Africa, particularly in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe to the Africans), which have given rise to panic in the Smith regime, and sent shivers down Mr. Vorster's spine. It is clear that there is now considerable co-operation between the different liberation movements in Southern Africa. The extent of the guerrilla penetration into Rhodesia indicates much greater local support, and it shows too that there has been much more preparation which went undetected.

Mr. Smith is not planning to make any compromises, and, indeed, is strengthening the hold of apartheid in Rhodesia with a number of government measures: a Bill to set up regional authorities giving him almost unlimited power to establish Bantustans (black reserves); legislation modelled on that being enacted in South Africa; and regulations against meetings in tribal areas.

The British Tory government has been quite unworried by these developments and still keeps its settlement proposals on the table, although the African people overwhelmingly rejected them. Douglas-Home has been silent on the increase of apartheid legislation, and the detention of so many African people without trial. Perhaps the recent arrest of a white journalist who reports for BBC will force a squeak out of him.

The fact that Ian Smith chose to notify the British government of his plan to close the border with Zambia shows how close the contact is between the two governments. They still hope to bring about a settlement over the heads of the African population. Smith may even be hoping that the British will take action against the guerrillas.

The events of the past weeks, however, have shown that black workers in Southern Africa are not going to let their future be decided over their heads. The almost reckless courage with which they demonstrated in South African towns must be an inspiration to others, and could build a basis for an upsurge in the area of the only class which has real revolutionary force - the working class.

**BELFAST:**

# 400 BUSMEN FACE THE SACK

On April 1st, Ulsterbus will take over Belfast's Corporation bus service, and run it under the name 'Citybus'. Apart from 'hiving off' a public service for the benefit of private capitalists, the take-over will also create some 400 redundancies. The Unions involved, the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union and the General and Municipal Workers Union, state that if there are to be any redundancies, they will oppose the merger. But at the same time they are looking for 'a reasonable way out', which would save them the bother of engaging in industrial action, in the face of Government policy. They are known to favour early retirement in return for pensions and a golden hand-shake. But once they accept the principle of redundancies, it is almost impossible for them to fight against sackings when the time comes.

For the workers who will be employed by the new company hours will increase, and wages fall. At present the Ulsterbus one-man operators work a fifty-hour week, compared to the forty hours worked

by Corporation bus-men. In return they are paid £3 a week less, and have neither a sick pay scheme, nor a pension scheme. Ulsterbus boss, Werner Heubeck, has the reputation of being the man who 'dragged the Ulster Transport Authority bus service out of the red'. Given the wages and conditions of 'his' workers, it is no wonder. Undoubtedly he has been given the task of doing the same job on Belfast's bus service. This will involve not only attacks on the workers' living standards, with the introduction of one-man buses, but will also result in fewer services for the public.

The union leaders have been loud in condemning sectarianism lately. Well, here is an issue, involving both Catholic and Protestant workers, where they can prove that they really do have the interests of all workers at heart. Busmen should hold mass meetings as soon as possible and demand that the Unions fight against the sackings. They must be forced to oppose all redundancies on principle.



Unemployed in Derry. Will Belfast busmen and Essex workers join their ranks?

They must demand a reduction in the working week to 35 hours for everyone, with a guaranteed minimum wage of £35. In the event of the merger going ahead, they must ensure that wages and conditions are at least equal to the best before the merger, and that there is a full sick

pay and pension scheme. If Ulsterbus try to get out of it by complaining that they cannot afford it, then they must not be given control of the bus service.

When a number of city businessmen threatened a rates strike unless they were subsidised for their

loss of profits because of the troubles, the government handed over a cool million. Yet they are apparently powerless to save the jobs of 400 workers, by subsidising a public transport system.

M. MILLER



## PRICEY FUN

Great! Work is over for another week. Tonight we're going out. But a shock is in store. Just because the factory or office is closed doesn't mean they stop robbing the workers. Entertainment

in Dublin costs the earth - and more.

Before you get into the Old Sheelling you fork out 50p. Then each pint inside costs 22p. Late night films have gone up from 50p to 60p, and the National Prices Commission recently allowed price increases for a couple of cinema chains. Admission to 'Sloopies' jumped from 70p to 80p overnight (literally). An orange drink in the same club costs 8p one week, 9p the next.

Captain America's Cookhouse may have the best hamburgers outside America, but they also charge 25p for a cup of tea at night (you don't see many working class kids around there anyway). The waitresses get the crumbs.

These mobile hamburger and chip stands serve lousy food at exorbitant prices - 10p for a handful of chips.

To get into the Revolution club costs 80p to £1. I suppose you have to pay for that gimmicky advertising as well as everything else. Bottles of wine at the club cost at least twice the price of wine in a supermarket.

There is only one bowling alley in Dublin. So, by the time you have got to Stillorgan from anywhere else you have already forked out fares. The first game costs 35p and every game after that is 30p. Little extras, like 5p to put your coat in the cloakroom, and 10p for a paper-cup of coke, keep the proprietors of this place, and of dance-halls happy.

It's not that workers resent spending money for their entertainment (perhaps they should), but the rising prices force us to keep on checking our pockets. What's to be done?

Well, the Sligo Young Socialists and others in that part of the country have shown one possible answer. They have been picketing ballrooms against rising admission charges, and frightening the owners to such an extent that they have got court injunctions to stop the pickets. The idea could be spread.

## DES DERWIN

★★★★★★★★★★

at any time since 1913. At the beginning of the year, all the flour mills in the country were at a standstill; 2,200 workers were refusing to accept a wage-cut. Cork dockers also refused a wage-cut which Dublin dockers had accepted, and stopped all traffic through the port. There were lock-outs and workers' occupations in many parts of the country.

That mood hit Waterford too. Following a dispute between unions as to who should do a particular job, the gas-workers decided to throw out their manager. When he returned to the gas works from the dockside, where he had been trying to settle the demarcation dispute, the workers had hoisted a Red Flag over the works. They demanded the keys of the safe from him, and gave him six hours to get out of town. He refused to comply and moved the money out under Garda protection.

That was on the Saturday. On the following Monday morning, workers and management met. The workers agreed to a secret ballot as to whether or not they would continue to work under the manager, Mr. Ellacott. If the vote was in favour of a return to 'normal', they would take down the Red Flag.

The next day's vote gave a unanimous rejection of the manager. A committee of I.T.G.W.U. members took control of the works, and the Red Flag stayed. That same afternoon, the committee issued a statement that work would be continued as usual "in the interests of shareholders and consumers". Later in the week, they asked consumers to make

## DERRY:

# ESSEX TO CLOSE?

It was thought for some time that Essex International had definite plans for an extension to their industrial plant in Derry. However, a few days ago a rumour reached the shop floor that this was not so, that quite the opposite was true and Essex intended to close their Derry factory.

To avoid panic among the workers, the Managing Director called the union officials to his office and stated that although a new branch of the firm had been opened in Scotland the Derry plant would remain in operation. The proposed extension was merely postponed due to the "civil unrest". However, no official guarantee of this was forthcoming.

The position seems clear enough. In May 1974 the five-year subsidies to Essex in Derry expire. By that time the factory in Ayrshire should be in full production and nothing can be done to ensure that Essex will not simply leave the Six Counties, making redundant another 300

workers. Derry cannot afford to lose this factory.

The factory union is, unfortunately, virtually ineffective and totally isolated. Derry's M.P., John Hume, has been approached by the shop-stewards and asked what action he intended to take. He informed them that he already knew of the Scottish factory and would "see Mr. Whitelaw" about what could be done. Not a reassuring prospect.

There is an urgent need for action by the affiliated union in England, the AUEW. But it will be a difficult task to persuade English workers to support those of the Bogside and Creggan at the present time.

So where does the Derry worker stand? Alone, it would seem, unless there is to be support from our fellow Irish workers in the 26 Counties.

Essex Worker

## WATERFORD (1923):

# RED FLAG OVER THE GASWORKS

\* to the tune of 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow'

"There is only one flag of real revolt that I know - the Red Flag". These were the words of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union organiser when he addressed the Waterford Branch AGM in February 1923, just over fifty years ago.



He was congratulating the gas workers of the town who had occupied their place of work and hoisted the red flag above it. "I congratulate them on the step they have taken". (Applause).

Just before the organiser, Baird, had spoken, the Secretary's report had been interrupted. Mr. Thomas Dunne, remembered by many Water-

ford workers was reading the report when a number of members walked into the hall, one of whom carried a red flag. As they took their seats they were enthusiastically applauded".

The occupation of Waterford Gas Works - sometimes known as the Gas Works Soviet - took place against a background of social and political upheaval throughout the country - and, indeed, abroad. The Civil War was raging, and the Free State forces were executing prisoners every second day. The French had occupied part of Germany, and there were massive strikes against them. In England, the unemployed were on the march.

The Irish Transport and General Workers Union had grown at a phenomenal rate after the war. In 1923 it had more members in dispute than

the payments to the usual collectors, and threatened to cut off supplies to those who did not.

The dispute had a considerable impact on the town, but apparently was not equally appreciated by all. The press reports of the next meeting of the Workers' Council and Labour Party (later Trades Council) indicate that it was not mentioned there.

The occupation had repercussions outside the town, too. The week after the initial take-over, Cork flour-mill workers went back into one of the strike-bound flour mills and hoisted the Red Flag. They promised to supply bread at cost price and to pay for materials, but, not surprisingly, got no co-operation from the mill owners.

Jim Larkin returned to Ireland from America at this time, and one of the first things he got involved in was a dispute about setting up a conference to settle the Waterford Gas Works dispute. There were times when workers were not prepared to settle for just anything. Even the

official paper of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union was saying that there was "no such thing as community of interests between the working class and the capitalist class".

Unhappily, however, that awareness was never directed into a struggle for political power. The defiance shown by the Waterford gas workers and by workers throughout the country led to few lasting gains, as the labour leaders found their niche in the new state. Later in the 1920's, there were wage-cuts again.

To those people who say that the working class can never control its own affairs, and that socialism is impossible, the experience of those rebellious years of the early-1920's is one answer.

## BRIAN TRENCH

It is not clear from press reports just how the gas-works dispute ended. Do any of our older Waterford readers have memories of this? Please contact one of our sellers if you have.

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