

the worker

Paper of the Socialist Workers Movement

'Give me bodies'

"Give me bodies." Encouraging first words for a British soldier arriving in Belfast. They came from his commanding officer.

On page 4 Allan Campbell, former British soldier serving in the North, gives a glimpse of how we are seen by the "peace-keepers".

Interview with a soldier

WHO SAYS

'THE COUNTRY'

CAN'T AFFORD IT?



TWO PEOPLE WITH PLENTY TO SMILE ABOUT. Cosgrave and his mates in the Dail have just decided to give themselves another pay rise and Paddy McGrath got a bit of a boost when his company, Waterford Glass returned a profit of £6753000. That's 43% up on last year. How many workers got a 43% pay rise? But then, the country can't afford it . . .

The creatures who make their living scurrying around the Dublin Stock Exchange (above) can also raise a smile in the knowledge that workers' "restraint" is helping to pay for the upkeep of the life to which they have become accustomed.

AND WHEN THEY CAN'T STEAL ENOUGH LEGALLY...

WHERE WERE the headlines? Shouldn't it have been splashed all over the front pages? Over a quarter of a million pounds was stolen last year and there was hardly a peep from the papers. No questions in the Dail. No commotion.

The money was stolen quietly, by very respectable thieves. When they were caught they received fines and were sent on their way. Only £83,000 was recovered out of about £300,000.

The money was stolen by respectable businessmen by means of tax frauds.

Just seven of them. A bookie, a manufacturer, a general merchant, a solicitor, two vets and a doctor.

And they were just the ones who were caught.

Imagine the kind of headlines if seven unemployed people ripped off an average of £40,000 each from the dole!

One law for the rich...

IT'S THEIR favourite answer. As prices hit the roof and keep on going. As the dole queues grow longer. As wages are held down and thousands of women find that they have to fight every inch of the way towards equal pay. When we ask why we are told that "The Country" can't afford it.

Yet, during the month of February, just five Irish companies announced profits amounting to over 64½ million pounds! Several more million in profits were announced by thirteen other companies.

And that's not counting the banks or the many other companies which announce their profits throughout the other eleven months of the

year. So, what is "the country" which can't afford jobs, wages, decent housing and proper hospitals and schools?

The truth is that there is no "country". Ireland is not a boat in which we all sail together, bosses and workers, politicians and unemployed, rich and poor. This society is divided into two "countries": those with the power and those

without. The first "country" controls the direction of the boat. The rest of us are below decks. So, if we're all in the same boat, we're the ones who do the bloody rowing. And, when things get rough, we're the ones who get thrown overboard onto the dole queues in order to preserve the wealth and profits of those who rule.

And while they urge us to

"do our bit for the country" they are all too aware that their interests are different from ours. That's why they build up the forces which exist to protect their "country", the army and the police. That's why they encourage the existence of a police "heavy gang" to intimidate and stamp out opposition.

We cannot afford loyalty to a non-existent "country" for which we are supposed to tighten our belts, grit our teeth and make more sacrifices.

ORGANISE

We can only give loyalty to our own class — the working class. And we do that by resisting every aim of the bosses and their mates in the Dail. By resisting the loss of every job. By fighting to increase our wages and supporting every struggle for equal pay. By supporting every initiative to organise the unemployed for a real fight back. And by organising to resist and turn back the tide of intimidation and repression.

And that's a fight which our class can't afford not to take on.

PROFITS

GUINNESS
£39 million. £9½ of which came from the James Gate Brewery in Dublin.

GREEN GROUP
£363,522

RANK (which put 67 people on the dole in Limerick recently)
£1,672,820

IRISH DISTILLERS
£2,088,322

P.J. CARROLL
£6,829,000. But they have adopted a new method of accounting which brings it down to a mere £4,142,000

WATERFORD GLASS
£6,753,000 (up 43%)

SMURFITS: consultants
predict £10½ million profit this year.

UNIDARE
£1,478,000 (up 24%)

INDEPENDENT NEWS-PAPERS' £1,400,000



"Our country is facing a most serious crisis and you talk about feeding your kids..."

IT'S ONLY HUMAN NATURE

Socialism will never work — human nature will never allow it" Or... "It's fine, this idea of a socialist society but you'll never get the workers to do anything about it. All they're interested in is racing, football and over-time.

Thinking About Capitalism

by Mary Burns

PEOPLE who accept and trot out this pessimistic view of society are easy meat for the capitalist system, because they accept that only a minority are capable of making decisions and running society. And that the price for this is allowing them to increase their own wealth and power at the expense and misery of the majority.

Long ago, Marx said that the dominant ideas in any society are the ideas of the class which rules that society. ie: the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. It is from the dominant ideas of a system based on dog-eat-dog that the notion comes that we are all flawed with some sort of original sin which corrupts our natures.

We are told that we are naturally competitive and cannot organise for the collective good. Rubbish. Every day even under the grind of capitalism, workers learn cooperation and solidarity. It was that cooperation which built up, in every industrial country, by blood, sweat, tears and solidarity, the trade union movement.

Our nature, in fact, tends towards cooperation out of necessity. It is the present system which divides us in a hundred different ways, forces us to compete for jobs and a living wage. Competition is the life-blood of that system and in the process it corrupts our own natures away from the natural desire to cooperate as would be the case in a humane, sane society.

The capitalist disaster is all around us, clear to see. But for most people capitalism is "the best system we've got." But we can't afford to be pessimistic. If the capitalist is in trouble we must let him drown and take up the task of running society ourselves.

By letting ourselves think of ourselves as they think of us — that they have natural, superior abilities (inherited or not) — which give them the right to exploit us — we are accepting their ideas and playing into their hands.

There is an alternative form of society worth fighting for. Under socialism, with society run from the bottom up, with every factory and every housing estate controlled by those who live there, with councils democratically elected and accountable, it will become possible to plan the resources of society according to human need.

There will be no question of throwing people out of work, leaving machines idle or destroying surplus food. Basic human needs will be provided for. This could happen now, even with existing resources. But it's not profitable. The competition of the system would stand for it.

The forms of organisation needed to build that society will be created in the struggle against the present system. The cooperation workers need in order to fight the attacks of the bosses will breed the cooperation needed to overthrow the whole crazy system. Everytime capitalism puts the boot into us, or tries to, it digs its own grave a little deeper.

We've got the numbers, the strength, the motivation and the humanity to fight and win. The fact that some workers don't see this at the moment is a condition created and maintained by the people who don't want us to see it.

AMIN: Those who sneer are the ones who taught him

IS UGANDA being run by a raving lunatic who ought to be locked up for his own safety and that of everyone around him? If you have been following the recent reports about the doings of Idi Amin you probably think so.

And you could be right. Some of his behaviour is harmless enough. Why shouldn't he proclaim himself King of Scotland? Why shouldn't he offer free advice to Nixon on handling Watergate? After so many years of forced subjection in so many countries by British imperialism it doesn't even seem such a bad idea that British diplomats should have to kneel before him.

But the deaths of bishops and government ministers thought to oppose him, and the reports of mass killings of Christian soldiers and officers in his army are much more serious.

There have been purges before. Shortly after taking power, Amin conducted purges in which thousands of soldiers and civilians from the Acholi and Baganda tribes were liquidated.

There is no real reason to doubt that Amin has been responsible for many bloody and brutal acts.

But the real question is not one of his own mental health. The question is: Why is this man in power? How did he get there?

And you won't find the answer in the British press which loves to taunt him and deride him.

Amin rose to power with the unflinching assistance of white, imperialist interests.

He began his career as a NGO in the British Army in Kenya. His job was to help smash the growing black nationalist movement there,

the Land and Freedom Army, the so-called Mau Mau.

The thuggery he used recommended him to his British superiors. They ensured that when Uganda became independent he was one of the most powerful black army officers. They believed they could rely on him.

Arms

In May 1970, the then President of Uganda, Milton Obote, made a mildly left-wing gesture by taking over a majority of the share in several British companies. Later, he criticised the decision of the Heath government to sell arms to S. Africa.

From this time on, Amin was being promoted as a successor to Obote. He came to power after a military coup



There was a time when Amin was looked upon with favour by those who now find that he is butchering in his own interests instead of theirs. Here he is, in 1971, with Moshe Dayan leading Israeli warhawk.

in January 1971. The London papers described him as 'benevolent', 'hard-working', 'dedicated', and known for his 'warm-hearted generosity'.

When it became clear that the economic policies which Amin had inherited from those pulling the strings were not going to work, he had to find scape-goats. He turned on the Asians living in Uganda.

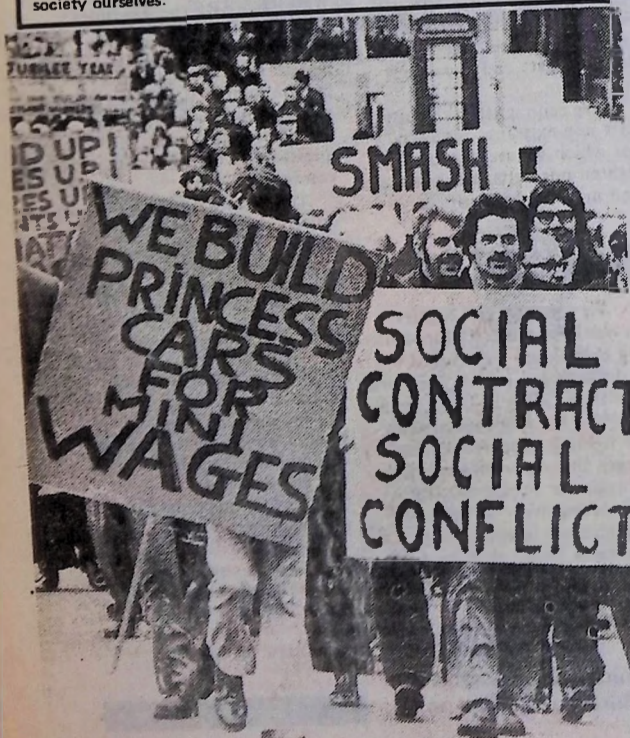
Thinking he could benefit from some of the new-found wealth of the Arab oil countries, he threw out his Israeli advisors, and espoused the Palestinian cause.

Like so many governments in the underdeveloped world, Amin's regime zig-zagged in a desperate attempt to retain popularity and to deal with the impact of the world economic crisis.

Amin cannot last much

longer. His political base is disappearing. He is not just imagining those plots to overthrow him. The Western interests who used him for some years now find him an embarrassment. They are, no doubt, preparing to get rid of him.

Even if Amin is overthrown before the year is out, the cycle of brutality and of national rivalry is bound to continue. Economic and social conditions in Uganda make 'normal' bourgeois rule impossible. More petty dictators will follow Amin - until the working people of East Africa are strong enough to throw the lot out.



WE'VE had enough. After the last few years of being told to tighten their belts and getting nothing in return workers all over Europe are fighting back against unemployment, cuts in government social spending, price rises and wage agreements.

As one of the leaders of the thousands of toolroom workers who were on strike against the Social Contract in eleven Leyland factories throughout Britain put it: "We've had Phase One and

British Leyland workers march and strike against the Social Contract.

Phase Two. Before that we had the Heath government's freeze and at the end we're worse off. All the sacrifice by workers has made no difference." The Leyland shop stewards' combine is calling for a national conference of shop stewards against the Social Contract for 3rd April and for a national strike against the Social Contract on 13th April next.

These calls got a very significant boost when they were endorsed by an unofficial rank and file conference of 1200 trade union delegates organised by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions. At last it has become very clear that it is not possible to rely on left wing M.P.s and union leaders to lead the fight. As John Deason, secre-

tary of the Right to Work Campaign, said: "It wasn't Frank Chapple the right winger who sold us the Contract, it was Michael Foot and Jack Jones, the great left wingers...It is only the rank and file that we can trust."

Also in Britain 54,000 workers had a one day stoppage against cuts in social services and there may be a one day national bus strike as part of a T.G.W.U. campaign against cuts in road passenger transport spending. (C.I.E. please take note!)

Elsewhere in Europe in Holland, Belgium, Denmark and West Germany, countries which are often held up as models to us, where workers are not "greedy" etc. workers are also fighting to defend their living standards. Holland has been hit by the

biggest strike wave since the war where workers are striking for wage increases to keep them automatically up with price rises, plus two per cent on top of that.

In Denmark, just as the elections were taking place, 1000 workers in a Copenhagen daily newspaper went on strike against the use of new technology which would mean the loss of 300 jobs. Twenty-five other newspapers were shut in solidarity with the strikers.

We in Ireland have accepted yet another National Wage Agreement, which everyone, even the bosses, says will mean a further drop in our living standards. If we are to stop this we must follow the lead of our brothers and sisters in Europe and fight back!

WHAT WE THINK

Can wage restraint solve unemployment?

A NEW National Wage Agreement has been accepted that will last 14 months. Increasing apathy on the subject has meant a decline in voting and less discussion about the issue in the trade union branches and sections.

Every Wage Agreement has been sold on two promises. None of them have lived up to those promises.

Firstly, we have been told that wage agreements help the lower paid. But with percentage increases and income tax cuts, it is the lower paid who get least out of this Agreement.

But an even bigger stick for beating us into acceptance of the wage agreements is the assurance that this is the only way we can begin to get the unemployed off the dole queues.

That argument runs something like this: We are living in a crisis situation where we must all make sacrifices. If workers put in for high wage claims more factories will go to the wall. But if we 'tighten our belts' there will be more money for investment. And that means more jobs.

Let's look at the facts. Not everyone makes sacrifices. Tom Roche, a director of Cement Roadstone, and of Bula Ltd., made a cool £3 million simply by scooping up mineral rights. What a sacrifice!

Profits at Unidare and Waterford Glass were reported to have

gone up again last month. Shareholders in Waterford Glass have been reassured by financial commentators that the bright jewels they possess have 'lost nothing of their sparkle.'

The last Budget was described without any hint of shame as an 'incentive' Budget - a Budget to give incentive to the investors and profiteers.

Sacrifice

Only the working class is making sacrifices. And the bosses, will admit as much. On the very same day on which the trade unions voted to accept the National Agreement, the business section of the 'Irish Times' ran a headline which might have been even more interesting if it had appeared while voting was still going on on the Agreement. 'Wage Agreement means a cut in standard of living' it said.

But do the sacrifices of those at work help the unemployed?

On the contrary, they have the opposite effect. National Agreements, by limiting plant bargaining, have encouraged more overtime and productivity deals as workers run to keep up with the rising cost of living. And, however little most trade unionists will want to recognise it, that means possibilities to create more jobs are being sold.

Wage Agreements have led to a weakening of shop floor organisation, as power is concentrated in the hands of an ever smaller number of full-time union officials. This means that bosses find it easier to cut back manning levels and to get rid of so-called 'restructive practices.'

A wage cut can only benefit the profit margins of the capitalists. And increased profits for them do not mean that those who gain them are going to invest the surplus to provide more jobs.

Many employers and financiers prefer to place their money where labour is cheapest and where there are no trade unions, or put



NEXT YEAR'S WAGE AGREEMENT? Not only have the bosses been holding down our wages with National Wage Agreements, they have made serious inroads into the independence of our unions. All they're short of doing is tucking Liberty Hall under their arm . . .

We can answer that question with a sharp NO! Unemployment has risen to record heights over the past few years while wages were held down by National Wage Agreements. Still, too many trade unionists are swayed by the arguments of the bosses, the government and the union leaders. It's the job of socialists in the unions to shatter the myths used to blackmail us into tightening our belts.

of the general recession to rationalise production, invest in new labour-saving machinery, speed up the lines. All that means erosion of jobs.

Once again, we can use none other than the 'Irish Times' as our source. 'Businessmen were concentrating on making industry more efficient rather than expanding the physical side of their enterprise. This can lead to further unemployment since it constitutes the substitution of capital for labour.' (8th December, 1976)

Within two weeks of the National Agreement being accepted, massive price increases on basic commodities were chalked up. And unemployment is still going up. They don't even make an effort to make their own lying propaganda about National Agreements look convincing.

It's time to call a halt.

It's time to organise in our unions for rank and file action and for union democracy so that the leadership of the unions don't put the chains on us again.

Safe

'Business confidence' is reported to be low here. Many employers still have a vision of Richie Ryan as Karl Marx reincarnate. And the long-promised boom in the world economy has not arrived. It's much more tempting to hold on to money or put it into safe havens than to risk it on industrial investment.

Even in those situations where the bosses are investing some or all of the extra surplus they are getting from workers, very little of that goes to 'create' jobs. Competition is hotting up between big firms and so their effort, and their money, goes into making their own enterprises 'more efficient'. Many have used the cover

SHOCK HORROR!

We expose a dole scrounger

EVERY now and then some little right-wing fart from the FUE or the League of Decency (or both) launches a blast of abuse at the dole "scroungers", who are sitting around the pubs emerging only to pick up a fistful of the tax-payers money.

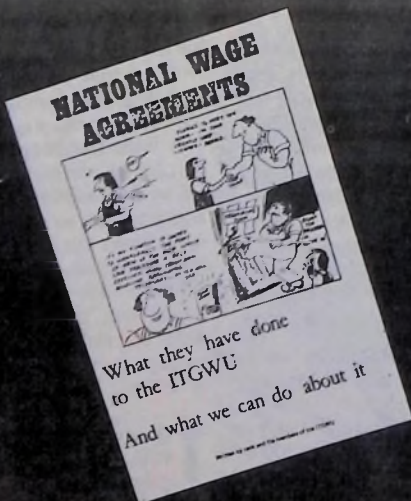
Ever-mindful of our duty as a crusading newspaper THE WORKER set out to find and expose these parasites. And, at Dublin's Werburgh Street dole queue, we promptly found one.

His name is Thomas St. John and that's his picture below. We have conclusive proof that his "redundancy payment" was £27,300, and we have observed him driving a car which is slightly shorter than O'Connell Bridge. Reliable sources tell us that his house in Belmont Avenue (converted from two houses to one mansion) has a marble hallway and that the sitting room is equipped with a grand piano and a stereo system, the speakers of which cost a cool £100 each.



Tommy, of course, has very little in common with the average recipient of dole money. He is managing director of the firm which recently made 40 workers redundant from the Academy and Ambassador cinemas.

Next time someone starts mouthing about dole scroungers - remember Tommy.



THE UNION OFFICIAL WHO WANTED A FIGHT (and what we can do about it)

AT THE February meeting of the Dublin District Council of the ITGWU, one of the delegates quite properly lashed the officials for their lip-service on unemployment.

He in turn was attacked by a Branch Secretary who pointed to the delegate and said that he was a member of a political organisation and had his speeches prepared.

The delegate replied that he was not politically affiliated - unlike the Branch Secretary, a member of the Labour Party - and informed those present who didn't already know that the same Branch Secretary had recently ordered one of his

stewards, engaged in a sit-in, out of his office.

At this the Secretary offered to have the delegate "out", outside. As the meeting ended the Secretary stormed out after the delegate but fortunately didn't catch up with him.

It appears that the the full-time officials are prepared to defend their inactivity on unemployment with their fists.

But the ITGWU officialdom was also challenged on another front recently. In February, a number of rank-and-file members of the ITGWU produced a small pamphlet against the National Wage Agreement, which they dis-

tributed to union members. It's called "National Wage Agreements-What they have done to the ITGWU and What we can do about it".

In itself, it is the first sign of an alternative, from within the union, to the policy of wage restraint proclaimed by the union leadership.

But there is a need for a greater number of Irish Transport members to come together and organise - not just against Wage Agreements but also for a real defence of jobs, for action on equal pay and for democracy within the union.

An organised grouping would bring together the now isolated

members who have been beavering away for years for reforms within the union. - especially if such a grouping used a bulletin to reach a wider audience.

DON'T forget the Dublin Council of Trade Unions' unemployment march on Saturday, March 12 at 3.00 p.m. at Parnell Square with meeting at GPO.

THESE six lines from Liberty make up the entire amount of publicity and support given by the ITGWU paper to the Dublin Unemployment march. Liberty is edited by Micky Mullen. On the other hand, the previous issue carried a four-page "guide" to the National Wage Agreement with the NEC's recommendation to accept. 160,000 of these were printed.

Letters

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

THE PROVOS A complaint and a reply

THE GROWING importance of the need to a fight against repression is becoming more obvious. The 'emergency' laws can be used for breaking strikes and for media censorship. Any fight against repression will probably help the Provos. The SWM appears to see this as a good thing as the Provos are seen as 'anti-imperialist'. The Provos certainly are not socialist but are they even 'anti-imperialist'?

The outcome of the 1970 arms trial left many questions unanswered. Haughey and Gibbons both directly contradicted each other at the trial. From this one can assume that at least one of them was involved in giving other people's money to the Provos. Both of these men are champions of private enterprise. Therefore, who benefits from the Provo campaign? British businesses are blown up and this helps American businesses. This is not very 'anti-imperialist'. The Provos have received a lot of financial support from American businessmen. The Ancient Order of Hibernians in America, along with other right-wing groups, support them. The Provos have said in America that they are "in the forefront of the battle against communism and marxism". For once, they tell the truth.

The Provos' campaign consists mainly of robbing banks and shooting and bombing people (most of them workers). Presumably, the murders of ten innocent workers, returning home in their minivan in Armagh, were committed by the Provos or their sympathisers. Again, this was hardly 'anti-imperialist'.

In 'International Socialism 92', the SWM criticises 'Militant' for opposing "on an equal basis the 'terrorism' and 'sectarianism' of loyalist and republican organisations". However, in my opinion, 'Militant' are right here. I think the fact that the Provos are helped by the fight against repression should be seen as a necessary evil.

The 'Where We Stand' sec-

tion in 'Socialist Worker' [paper of the SWM's fraternal organisation in Britain, the SWP - Editor] says "We support all genuine national liberation movements". I fully agree with this. Perhaps if the SWM were to change "FOR THE DEFENCE OF ANTI-IMPERIALISTS" to "FOR THE DEFENCE OF GENUINE ANTI-IMPERIALISTS" in the 'What We Stand For' section, and were to debate who were genuine anti-imperialists, then the policies of the movement would be improved.

The present attitude of the SWM towards the Provos is ridiculous. It's almost the same as if Paul Foot said "We don't agree with the National Front but we will support the poor chaps if the police lay a finger on them."

If space is available, a reply from SWM to this letter would be appreciated.

Fraternally,
WORKER Reader.

■ ■

EDITORIAL REPLY: The Provos are not a consistently socialist organisation. But that doesn't make them a totally capitalist organisation. They are confused and divided among themselves as to what sort of society they want.

Imperialism is the form which capitalism takes in Ireland—specifically, British imperialism. The important fact is that the Provos are fighting British imperialism. They devote more energy to this than to fighting "communism and marxism", if they are doing that at all.

The SWM has always criticised the Provos' methods. Of course we do not agree with shooting or bombing innocent workers. It is the task of revolutionary socialists to point out that these actions only increase sectarianism, and do not harm imperialism at all. However, in saying this, we are criticising fellow anti-imperialists. The terrorism and sectarianism of loyalist organisations come from a backward section of capitalism, with nothing progressive whatever about it.

In the last analysis, only the working class can win the

anti-imperialist struggle, and only on a socialist basis. But we must defend those who are fighting the struggle, even when they do not have a consciously socialist viewpoint. Just as we defend the workers' right to strike, even when they are not socialists.

Sometimes workers might not choose the best methods. For example, they might go on strike against the withdrawal of overtime, when it would be better to strike for a living wage without overtime. But when they are striking, they are fighting capitalism. And the Provos' fight is against imperialism. Both are in the correct direction.

There's nothing significant about us leaving out the word "genuine". The point is, not to support puppet "liberation movements" like the FNLA in Angola, or the one which is now the government of North Korea. The Provos are not puppets of American imperialism, as our reader seems to suggest, but a genuine response to the problem of British imperialism. There is no capitalist solution to the national question in Ireland, not even a takeover by American imperialism.

FASCIST

Does our reader think that the Provos are fascists like the National Front in England? We don't defend fascists—or Protestant sectarians, for that matter; any more than we would defend a Catholic sectarian. Because of the weakness of the socialist movement in Ireland, the Provo leadership chooses ineffective ways of fighting imperialism—sometimes, even sectarian ways. But also because of that weakness, if the Provos were smashed by repression, their supporters would be disillusioned and dispirited.

We must build a socialist movement to show their supporters there is a way forward which avoids this—a socialist way, based on the power of the working class.

Letters are welcome on any subject relating to socialism and the working class struggle in general, but please keep them short.

'Give me bodies' said the officer

An interview with an ex-British Army soldier

ALLAN CAMPBELL was a young Scottish worker who, like so many others, found himself facing a long stretch on the dole. And, like so many others, he joined the army. There are over a million and a half on the British dole queues and it is from there that many of the soldiers who find themselves in the North are recruited.

Allan served his three years in the British army, eight months of that in the North, and left. What he saw and the role he was forced to play in occupying the six counties brought him to make a choice, to decide which side he is on. He is now an active socialist, a member of the Socialist Workers Party in Britain. THE WORKER recently interviewed him about life in the North from the other side of the gun barrel.

I joined the army because I had served three years as an apprentice fitter, then got laid off and found out that there aren't many people who want an 18 year old apprentice. It was really depressing on the dole with nothing to do and I must have been easy meat for the army recruiting adverts. The old rubbish about joining up for three years of sun, sand and sex — with a trade to my name at the end of it.

The first few weeks were OK. We hung around Edinburgh with not very much to do — and even the sergeant was friendly. But then the fifteen mile hikes with full pack were laid on and the whole thing got very sour. Nine weeks after signing on I wanted out, but it wasn't on. They showed me this rule which said I could only buy myself out before the eight week. Previously, I'd been told ten weeks, but now I was stuck. Three weeks later I was in Singapore.

Looking back, it wasn't too bad. We spent a lot of time in the jungle, sleeping in tents and lighting fires. Like real-life action men. At weekends we all got really drunk. Drink was cheap and the wages seemed to go a long way.

Then came the news that we were going to Belfast. Reaction to this was mixed. Of course you had the hard men who wanted to see some action to show off the skills they had learned. But a lot of us were worried.

After a short stop in Edinburgh we landed in Belfast. I was in No. 2 Platoon, Royal Highland Fusiliers, stationed in Glasmullen Gardens.

On the first day we were all assembled in the Army Hospital to be given a "pep talk" by the C/O. His name was Lt. Colonel McKay and he told us "the picnic is over" and that we had had it easy up to now. He wanted to see results. "Give me bodies", he said more than once in his speech. "I want to see bodies."

Incidentally, this man was later put to pasture behind a desk in some branch of the civil service because his previous exploits in Aden became known. When serving in Aden he was second in command to "Mad Mitch" Mitchell. When "Mad Mitch" retired he wrote a book about his army life and this book confirmed that McKay disposed of twenty "terrorists". After a British soldier was shot he had 25 suspects rounded up. Twenty vanished, their bodies dispersed in various parts of the town. When this came to light it was too embarrassing, even for the army, so he had to go.

There was continuous briefing over the next few days, and they told us what was expected of us. They told us the "period of test" of a new Battalion came in the first few days. We were to "make our presence felt". They judged the army's efficiency by the number of arrests made in this time. So, with great enthusiasm the "early calls" were made.

These "head checks" were made particularly on families which had relations "inside". One family could count on three or four checks per tour.

All this, we were told, was to establish our authority from the start. If we asserted our

dominance immediately we would have a safe tour.

Many of the blokes I was serving with would have been OK, but three years training in the army brought out the aggression in them. Then you would find yourself during the day being bored on some stake-out or else getting the kind of abuse that an occupying army always gets. At night you'd be locked up in the barracks with little to do, nothing to drink. It meant that when you went out next day you would look for a target to vent your frustration on.

On one occasion I was going down Andersonstown Road in a jeep, past a drinking club. A shot was fired and we went back to the club to look, feeling a bit scared, thinking it could be a set-up. Anyway, we took up positions outside the club. Then a couple of us saw this army jeep driving off at full speed. This seemed strange at the time. Always after an incident the company are supposed to take up positions in case trouble breaks out. Not just drive off.

I then went into the club with two others. There were two dead. I went up to the barman who was lying sprawled on the counter. There was a hole the size of a 50p piece in his back. His blood was spewing out on the counter. On the ground in front of him was another bloke. He was dead too. He'd obviously been standing in front of the barman at the time.

The people inside were going wild. I thought we were going to be lynched except that reinforcements arrived. An internal inquiry was held and

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EAMONN McCANN

The fight for equal pay page 3



the whole thing was hushed up. But the story goes that one of the soldiers who drove off in that jeep did the shooting. He claimed he was taking aim at someone entering the club with a gun and that he fired and missed.

His gun was a 6.72 SLR rifle which can kill at up to 1,000 yards. He fired from fifty. The bullet went through the wooden wall of the club through the barman and into the guy he was serving.

Six weeks later I saw this

soldier in a pub in Edinburgh, drinking his pint as if the killings had never happened. He told me he got off and that was that.

I did two tours in Belfast and then my time was up and I found myself back on the dole. But those three years had had an effect. They politicised me and I was eager to fight back against the system which put me in that situation, repressing other workers.

Through their agitation on the doles I got involved with the Right To Work Campaign.

Recently I joined the Socialist Workers Party. The way I figure it is that it can be easy to be an armchair socialist, saying this and that is wrong with society but not fighting to change it. But the ruling class have no hesitation in employing and training fools to defend their society and if we're not organised and fighting back it makes their job very much easier.

to produce the evidence for the courts over six months later. The case was dismissed in the District Court. But four IRSP members were later charged again before the Special Court. Their 'trial' (if it isn't an offence to put inverted commas around that word) begins in May.

'A State Of Conspiracy' is the record of how the state has set out to smash one left-wing organisation. All socialists and trade unionists should read about this case.

The lid is being lifted on the methods being used by the 'guardians of peace'. The time is right for a determined fight back. We fully agree with the IRSP in stressing the need for a 'mass campaign against repression to be built on the basis of unity of all anti-imperialist organisations.'

Available from the WORKER BOK SERVICE, 24 Talbot St., Dublin 1.

A STATE OF CONSPIRACY

A STATE OF CONSPIRACY - that's the title of a pamphlet published by the Irish Republican Socialist Party which details the attempt by the Gardai to frame party members.

On March 31st 1976 a mail train was held up in Co. Kildare and £200,000 were taken from it. Within a week, members of the IRSP had been lifted in several parts of the country. Most of them were subjected to torture at the hands of the now famous 'Heavy Gang'.

'TRIAL'

Some were forced into signing confessions of having taken part in the robbery after beatings and threats. Mick Barrett was taken to a lonely spot in Bray where he



Detective Egan

Snooping about

N.I. strikes down

WITH wages effectively frozen, unemployment and redundancy at record levels, you would have thought that there was plenty for workers in the North to be in dispute about. But while the attacks on jobs and living standards mount up the number of strikes has fallen sharply.

In 1975 25,000 Northern workers were involved in a total of 96 stoppages, giving a total of 245,000 working days lost. In 1976 the number of workers involved in stoppages had been halved - down to 12,000. There were 59 stoppages and only 45,000 days "lost".

The trade union leadership is happy to applaud these figures as a record of good "industrial relations". But what are good industrial relations while the working class is being raped?

Tempting though it might be to blame the defeatist and collaborationist trade union leadership, the sadder truth is that these figures represent the low confidence which the decline of the popular anti-imperialist resistance, the hold of loyalism on Protestant workers, and the growing sectarianism have brought about.

The re-building of workers' confidence to fight the impact of capitalism's economic crisis is a task for all who call themselves socialists. And a clear view of that task influences

NUJ AND CENSORSHIP

THE banning of Spare Rib and Family Planning would be almost laughable if it was not part of a growing right-wing backlash against all freedom of expression - on sexual matters as well as political.

To many people it may not have been very visible until those decisions of the censorship board were taken. Even then, not very many will have felt directly affected.

Journalists working in newspapers and broadcasting will have found the process obvious for some time. Those who make the editorial decisions have either refused to recognise it or have bowed down to it.

The stand taken recently by the National Union of Journalists against increased restrictions on the press and the discussion being raised among NUJ members is to be welcomed, therefore.

Most newspaper readers or TV viewers who have been used to the smug, trivial or blatantly anti-union coverage will probably feel sceptical about this. But as was clear from the recent NUJ seminar on censorship and press freedom, there are

many journalists who are being constantly blocked and frustrated by the state and its agents, by the power of private enterprise, and by the cowardice of editors.

So, if trade unionists and political activists feel they are being misrepresented by the press, they should bring their grievances to the attention of NUJ representatives in the paper in question. Remind them of their union's stance - and be careful when attacking "the press" and "RTÉ" to distinguish between those in control and those who are just earning their living there.

QUOTE OF THE YEAR

"You've got to bear in mind that the people opposite you at the negotiating table have to take something back to their members, even if they lose the main fight. So you have to help them lose without being destroyed. Give them arguments they can use when they go back to the shop floor."

- From an article called Learn the Rules of Negotiation Before You Play the Game, in the September 1976 issue of Works Management magazine.



MANPOWER have a solution! Export the unemployed!

AN EQUAL PAY FIGHT at a Yardley factory in Basildon in Britain. 450 women are showing their determination despite the fact that the TGWU regional secretary has refused to make it official. Echos of the Irish Press?

The factory is virtually paralysed, nearly all drivers of delivery lorries have refused to pass the picket. But the convenor and nearly all the male workers are going in. The women angrily returned unanswered letters from the firm which asked them to go back.

The women have the support of other TGWU members in the area, and a collection is being raised in the nearby plants.



Two surprises for the heavy gangs

WHEN the Jamaican equivalent of our own "heavy gang" start brutalising people they get rough treatment.

According to the Jamaica DAILY GLEANER the Kingston Police Vigilante Squad got hold of an engineer from the Public Works Department and took him to the Department's compound.

This was about 9am. They proceeded to thump him around. The workers in the compound intervened and the police tried to escape. However, their exit was blocked and the workers barricaded the gates with lorries. All the workers struck. They wouldn't let the cops go until the Prime Minister or the Police Commissioner came down to sort out the heavy gang.

First, the Superintendent in charge of West Kingston visited the scene. The workers were not satisfied. Then the Assisant Commissioner arrived. The workers told him to get stuffed as well. Finally the Commissioner himself visited the compound to ask could he please have his police back. He gave an assurance that the Vigilante Squad would be suspended. If they try it on again the workers will be ready.

WORKERS in Arigna coal mines in Leitrim brought the place to a halt on the 10th of March as a protest against police repression.

Two of the workers, members of Provisional Sinn Fein were arrested under the Emergency Powers Act and 50 of their fellow workers struck

WORKER small ads

As a special service to our readers we are reproducing the following advert from an estate agent's catalogue. We are sure that there will be plenty of offers for this prime piece of property, particularly from those who are on the dole and find that time hangs heavy on their hands. It's an ideal way of getting away from all this talk of "crisis", "restraint" and sacrifice.

Castle to Let

Near Thurles, Co Tipperary
92 miles from Dublin, 45 miles from Shannon.

This magnificent property comes complete with 25 acres of land, several paddocks for horses and riding, stables, haylofts, barns and courtyards galore. "No expenses spared" in refitting the castle and the separate Mews House which comes with it. (Handy place to have if you get bored moping about the castle.)

Accessories include an indoor swimming pool and sauna, wine cellar extra Party rooms, canopied beds, separate toilet with every bed-

room, several fitted kitchens and a bidet. The grounds are well lit by spotlights, and inside is only littered with chandeliers.

There's a river running alongside the castle. Very handy for drowning any riff-raff who happen to get past the electrically operated entrance gates.

Rent? Between £1,000 and £1,300 per month. Or about £300 a week. Or £43 a day. Just less than £2 an hour. Rates extra.

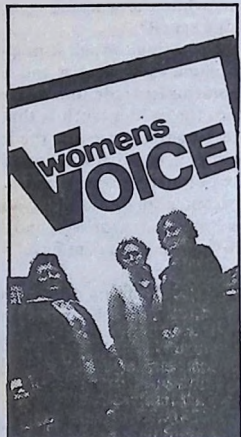
Anyone interested can receive the address of the Estate Agent from THE WORKER.

Here's hoping



THE WORKER had a photo of Brian Faulkner on his horse in the last issue. A few days later came the news that the horse rolled over and ended the ruthless career of the man who brought in internment.

We have been worrying that we may have stumbled across something. The Curse Of The Worker, perhaps. In order to test this we are printing a photo of Cosgrave on a horse. We really do hope that it's all a coincidence and that nothing happen to him. Honest.



Available from the WORKER BOOK SERVICE, 24 Talbot Street, Dublin 1.

URIS GETS THE AIM RIGHT— BUT DOESN'T PULL THE TRIGGER

TRINITY, by Leon Uris.
(Andre Deutsch.)

Any novel dealing with Irish politics that receives a bad review from the Belfast Telegraph is a 'must' for socialists. I have used this yardstick for longer than I care to remember and so it was with confidence (albeit tempered with the realisation that Uris is Israel's most persuasive propagandist) that I hurried to the local library. Don't by this book by the way, it's far too expensive. Get your local library to order it. I am glad to say that my faith in the Telegraph remains unaltered. Not only is Trinity a very good read but as an account of the Northern state and as an explanation of the present violence it stands as a beacon in a sea of pulp.

All of the pulp fiction produced in the last seven years has concentrated on recent events in the North without

attempting to place them in their historical context. British propaganda is implicitly accepted, i.e. an outdated religious war which the participants are portrayed as stupid psychopathic brutes who need to be dragged kicking and screaming into the latter half of the twentieth century. One is left with the impression that most of these instant novelists arrived here on the morning plane, barricaded themselves in the Europa Hotel with an outdated map of the city, horror stories culled from the page of the Sun and Mirror ample supplies of Bushmills best and six hours later would see them winging back to safety in London with the embryo of a best seller tucked in their breast pockets. Uris on the other hand spent a year in this country and did his research especially on social history very well.

His description of the famine, factory conditions in Derry and the poverty of Belfast alone make Trinity worth reading. If he has a fault here it's in his use of language. As far as I know expletives such as 'horseshit' or 'man' were not in current use in the Ireland of the 1880's.

Trinity traces the misfortunes of Connor Larkin, the son of a poor tenant farmer from Donegal between 1880 and 1914. The backcloth is Ireland moving towards partition and racked by poverty, unemployment and violence (not much has changed). Uris pulls no punches. British imperialism and unionist big business are the villains of this piece. Sir Frederick Weed, the Belfast shipping magnate, is seen cynically allying his family through marriage with Anglo aristocracy while at the same time searching for a political alliance with the then moribund Orange Order. The implication is clear

British Imperialism is under attack and in order to continue its rule must consolidate and divide the people. Thus we see the sectarian politics and therefore the present violence is the brainchild of British capitalism. Connor Larkin knows this but throughout his story one is aware of his, and also I suspect Uris', belief that native Irish capitalism would treat everyone much fairer. The result is depressingly familiar. It is the British not the system that must be rooted out. And so Connor retreats into military elitism and finds his martyr's grave. This then is Trinity's fault. Uris spells out clearly the causes of Ireland's trouble — Capitalism and Imperialism — but shrinks from the obvious solution — Socialism.



A NEW book club has been started which is rather different from the usual type of club. Its aim is to make it easier for busy and committed socialists to get books which will be interesting and useful to them in the struggle. The books will be a selection of the best paperback books and pamphlets available at the time.

To join, all you have to do is send £4.50 per quarter to the address below.

The next quarter's books will be:
1) The First Shop Stewards Movement: James Hinton's book covers the rise of the shop stewards

movement at the end of the first world war.
2) God's Bit Of Wood: by Sembene Ousmane. In 1947-8 the railway workers on the Dakar-Niger line in French West Africa came out on strike. This novel is the story of the struggle.
3) Stella Browne, by Sheila Rowbotham. A biography of the women's rights leader in the inter-war years.
4) The Dispossessed: by Ursula Le Guin: A novel of an imaginary society which forces the reader to view today's society in new ways.
All the above books, plus one other to be announced, for £4.50.

JOIN US IN THE FIGHT.

SWM What we stand for

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

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

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

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

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

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

NO SOCIALISM IN ISOLATION: Capitalism is an international system and can only be overthrown by the working class internationally. Socialism in a single country cannot survive. We work for solidarity with workers in other countries and support the struggles of oppressed peoples against imperialism. Along with revolutionary organisations elsewhere we aim to build an international of working class parties.

RUSSIA AND CHINA NO MODEL: The attempts of the Russian working class to build socialism were halted by the failure of their revolution to spread. The Stalinist rulers established a new type of society based on exploitation and oppression. Russia, the countries of Eastern Europe, China and Cuba are not socialist or "communist" — the workers are not in control. We oppose these regimes as we oppose Western capitalism.

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

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

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

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

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

FOR FULL EQUALITY FOR WOMEN which can only be won if women themselves are organised to fight for their demands and if that struggle is part of the fight for workers' power.
FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE in order to break the hold of reactionary ideas on workers, and remove a principal obstacle to women's equality. We support the demands for contraception and abortion to be made available on request.
FOR DEFENCE OF ANTI-IMPERIALISTS who face the full force of state repression. We fight for the abolition of repressive laws and for the withdrawal of the British Army. We support the self-defence on working class areas against military and sectarian attack. We fight to build a united front of working class and anti-imperialist organisations for those aims.
FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS' PARTY which can draw the most advanced, class-conscious workers together to fight for the political leadership of the working class. A revolutionary socialist leadership based in the working class can have a decisive influence especially in periods of upheaval.

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

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

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____

Join us in the fight **SWM**

NEWS

IN BRIEF... IN

MADEERING LTD. is a manufacturer and exporter of medical goods in Tallaght, Co. Dublin. It has been the company's practice to lay off a number of workers during slack periods. This is bad enough, but now they are making people redundant altogether. Lately they have announced seven redundancies (four women and three men).

First the workers were told they were being laid off, then when the union official, Frank Gannon of the No. 14 Branch ITGWU, arrived, it was announced that the lay-offs were permanent—denying his previous message. The seven workers just happen to include a couple of shop stewards. One of the women—a shop steward in the canteen—was told by a

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

supervisor that she was 'out' because she was fighting for the women on the floor.

This particular steward has been victimised before, not too long ago. Because she made one uncharacteristic angry threat—to knock someone's block off—she was hauled up to the office, accused of breaking the company rules, and instantly dismissed.

The intervention of the union official got her a 'mercy pardon' and a week's suspension without pay. But shouldn't he have had the whole place on strike until she was re-instated without loss of

BRIEF... IN BRIEF

pay and with an apology from such a 'cocky' management.

THE RUSH is on to get the massive new Irish Life block in Dublin's Abbey Street finished. And recently, the men working for Aluminium Systems putting in window frames won extra concessions for overtime work.

They had been offered overtime until 9.00 p.m. every night and all day Saturday and Sunday. To press a demand for 15% bonus for moving on to the site the men banned overtime. The Site Committee representing all sections, banned all materials from the company coming on to the site. The claim was granted.

TELEPHONISTS FIGHT FOR EQUAL PAY



The Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, Mr. Conor Cruise-O'Brien, gave us this exclusive comment on being told of the strike.

1200 FEMALE telephonists in Dublin have started a series of strikes for equal pay. Pickets have been placed on all the major Dublin exchanges and government departments—and the action is beginning to bite.

Newspaper headlines of "pandemonium" and "chaos" may be, as usual, a little exaggerated but there is no doubt that some services are being seriously screwed—especially government departments. Even the bosses' organisation, the Confederation of Irish Industry, has stated that it is "keeping its eye" on the situation.

It's great to see—but it's been a long time coming. The original claim was first lodged way back in 1969. Protracted negotiations with the Department produced nothing and it was referred to the Equal Pay Commissioner. And down there, it was kicked upstairs to the Labour Court where, in August of last year, it was turned down again.

Immediately the women began a semi-official work-to-rule, but the Post Office Workers Union persuaded them to call it off in favour of yet more talks with the Department.

Last week these talks broke down and this time—their patience at an end—the women voted overwhelmingly at general meetings for all-out strike action. Under this sort of pressure the POWU executive had no alternative but to make it official.

And that in itself is a victory for the women when you remember that the last official POWU strike was over twenty years ago!

Throughout all this time, the equal pay claim has remained exactly the same—the same basic rate as the male night telephonists. You might think it's a fairly straight forward claim to prove as well. After all, there's absolutely no difference between a female hand "plugging out and plugging in" and a male one.

Waterford Glass marriage ban ended

WOMEN in Waterford Glass won an important victory recently. The Labour Court finally agreed that married women do have a right to work and that Waterford Glass had to end its marriage ban. Up until that decision women had to leave their jobs six months after they got married. As well, Waterford Glass must rehire all the married women who want their jobs back.

Not so, says the Department, the men are willing to work at night so they should get paid more. No mention of the fact that they enjoy a 25% night differential for doing so anyway. The Department's case just doesn't stand up.

On top of that, the rises being claimed—about £5 a week—are only applicable to those women over twenty-five years of age, and they're less than a quarter of the total female workforce!

So why have the Department, the Equal Pay Commissioner and the Labour Court all turned down the claim? Margaret DeCourcy of the Strike Committee put her finger on it. "They're afraid of the repercussions throughout the industry. It's that simple. If we win the way we open to thousands of other women workers."

FARCE

"Even worse we'll have got it through strike action and that's the last thing they want. Everyone will realise what a farce the Labour Court is and that the only way to win is to take action."

And the famous seven-month long Trico strike in England last year proved just that.

If the telephonists do win, they will have also provided the labour movement with another valuable service—they'll have smashed a hole right through the new National Wage Agreement, which expressly forbids strike action in pursuit of equal pay.

This is actually an important victory for all Irish women. Particularly at this time when married women's right to work is under attack by the government, the bosses, the press, and even by other workers. Constantly, women are being encouraged to give up their jobs and go back home to help the bosses out of their crisis. Waterford Glass is not the only industry

Ironically the POWU executive gave official backing to the strike on the very day it announced it would be voting in favour of the new Agreement! Their decision may just—we live in hope—embarrass the executive of the Irish ITGWU who recently turned down official backing for an equal pay strike in the Irish Press.

Right now the chances of success in the telephonists' strike look good but the important thing must be to keep up the momentum. The POWU has no strike fund and this has to some extent dictated the policy of Dublin-only, women-only individual stoppages being adopted in favour of an all-out national strike.

Eileen Walshe, of the Strike Committee explains, "There's no doubt that the ordinary members are all on for full-scale action. Country branches are asking to come out and the men are supporting us to the hilt. If we climbed down now we'd be shot. But the executive have told us this is the best way of doing it though—maybe they're right. The money situation is a bit of a problem alright. But if we need to escalate the picketing we will. The officials may be a bit cautious but the members aren't. As long as we are calling the tune we should be okay."

Let's hope so. The telephonists' strike is the most important action working women in Ireland have taken in recent years. It must be won. And that means maximum support from the labour, trade union and womens movement. They are fighting for all of us and with our support they will win

try where women were actually forced back home. We can't count on the Labour Court to support women's rights. The Labour Court has shown its true bias in all the equal pay decisions. So it must be up to women themselves to organise

on the shop floor and in their unions for the right to work and for equal pay.

THE LIMERICK BLACKLIST

IF YOU think that the bosses don't organise to get rid of union militants—then you are wrong. Workers at the South African owned firm of De Beers in Shannon Industrial Estate have brought to light the existence of a blacklist by the local bosses in their area.

A few weeks ago, a local militant was sacked in his probationary period. Nothing unusual there you might say. But this was the third time he was sacked in the same way. The shop stewards at the De Beers smell a rat.

The first time this bloke got the sack was in Draper Erin. As soon as he was elected steward, he got the boot. Another steward who

supported his right to work was also sacked.

The second time around it was Burlington Ltd. They even had the cheek to tell him it had nothing to do with his political beliefs;

Third it was De Beers. This is a vicious anti-union firm which has stopped a closed shop getting in. Workers at De Beers began an occupation of the administration when they got the story. They issued a call for support from other workers. Factories like S.P.S.E.I., Premier Pacific and Lana Knit all stopped for two hours.

As things were getting hot, for the bosses they turned to their trusted ally—Frank Prendergast, ITGWU official and Labour Party councillor

or in Limerick city. Prendergast forced the issue to the Labour Court, despite widespread opposition. But the biggest joke of all was that everyone knew where the Labour Court stands—they had already stood over the bosses' right to sack the same bloke from Draper Erin!

DUES

Why did Prendergast do it? The ITGWU has got a closed shop in almost every factory in Shannon. There is no other general union around. Now, a closed shop is a good thing—if it won through a struggle, and in order to strengthen union organisation and militancy. But Prendergast won the closed shop in order to rake in the dues from the check-off system. In return he guarantees to respect management "prerogatives" in every agreement he signs. He also agrees to disciplinary action against unofficial strikers in other factories.

That's why the union officials will not oppose the blacklist. They have worked hand in glove with the bosses to stamp out any form of trade union militancy in Shannon.

And it is for the same reason that we need to build a shop stewards committee linking every factory in the industrial estate. Such a committee could spread the struggle against the blacklist and for the protection and advancement of workers' interests, neutralising the effect and influence of people like Prendergast.

ICM STRIKE

T.G. RICE, boss of Irish Catering Machines, Pearse St. Dublin hung a "Come in We're Open" notice on the door of the depot—a real 'v' sign to the pickets as they passed by.

It's a small shop of 10 workers 2 of whom are apprentices, who last June, joined the A.G.E.M.O.U. The boss has refused to pay wage agreement increases and the apprentice rates. On March 14th they walked out for a £6 increase and the rates for the apprentices. Little is passing the pickets and the support from the socks is good, but to stay out they need our support. They asking for collections from all factories with A.G.E.M.O.U. members in Dublin. As the shop steward put it: "It will be a great boost for all the small non union shops round here to get organised."

UNIDARE

DES DERWIN
(Section Committee)

IF YOU HAD gone to Gillespie (the Managing Director) and banged those books on the table in front of him, maybe you would have got something. The Unidare worker who directed those words to his Branch Secretary at the annual general meeting held in February was expressing his frustration with the failure of the union representatives to make any headway in the company during the past year.

Time and time again at that AGM the expressions of dissatisfaction were heard from the floor.

The bosses and the government would have warmed to Arthur Kelly, the Branch Secretary, as he replied. The National Wage Agreement limits claims. It prevents 'actions'. You have to consider the National Wage Agreement.

A proposal from the floor of the meeting that the senior shop steward be elected there and then and not be left to the Section Committee to appoint was strongly opposed from the platform. This would exclude all those who were not at the AGM. This would mean changing Standing Orders and that requires a week's notice. The resolution was not allowed.

The new-found respect for Standing Orders it touching. It

didn't stop the Section Committee from cancelling the AGM last year.

The Branch Secretary and the section negotiators were taken to task for their softness on certain issues and told they were not doing 'enough leaning on these people' to get concessions like Good Friday as a holiday.

The meeting did, however, direct the Section Committee to approach other unions in order to set up an inter-union committee on the site again. Some new people were elected to the Section Committee. The signs are that the membership on the floor will be looking for a more determined stand on earnings and conditions in the year ahead.

During the previous month we had heard the Managing Director appeal for moderation in union demands. McStay, the company chairman, followed up with a letter on the same lines to all employees.

But now the profit figures have been released—£1,478,000. There is obviously plenty of room to force improvements on sick pay, bonus, grade movements, protective clothing.

The new committee is going to be expected to improve reporting back and consultation with the members.

the worker

Paper of the Socialist Workers Movement

Interview
with a
soldier

SEE
PAGE
FOUR

Police torture

EDDIE ROONEY WAS PUSHED from a second storey rear window of the RUC Springfield Road barracks in Belfast. The RUC says Rooney jumped. Somehow after 14 hours of interrogation, they claim, he managed to fling himself through bullet proof glass. Rooney, 25 years old from Ballymurphy, is now in hospital with a 50-50 chance of survival. Last June, the RUC told Sean Moore, also from Ballymurphy, they would throw him out the window. This time, it seems they have actually done it.

Earlier that week the BBC Tonight programme interviewed two Catholic men from Fermanagh. Bernard O'Connor, a teacher, and Michael Lavelle, a production controller, described the torture they went through while being interrogated in the Castlereagh RUC centre in Belfast. A track-suit top was put over O'Connor's head and tied around his neck in hood style. His nose and mouth were blocked off. "I couldn't breathe, and I actually found my stomach trying to come up when I was gasping for my last breath." The police said they would assassinate O'Connor. Then they threatened to take him to the top of the

Shankill Road and notify the UVF so that they could do the assassination. How many of the bodies found in and near the Shankill Road have been the result of RUC planning?

The RUC practice torture regularly to make their victims sign statements. Just so they can convict and jail more "terrorists". How many innocent men and women are in British jails because they were tortured? Or because their lives and the lives of their families were threatened by the RUC? O'Connor and Lavelle resisted, refused to sign. The charges were dropped. Obviously the RUC thugs weren't getting their way with

Eddie Rooney. So they took care of him in their own sadistic way.

Roy Mason and the security forces continue to deny that torture is being used. In Strasbourg, the British attorney-general Sam Silkin says that Britain will not use those torture methods again. But working-class people in Northern Ireland are potential victims of torture every day. It is a usual occurrence for a man or woman to spend hours or days in the RUC torture centres. The press and the politicians like Gerry Fitt hypocritically choose to ignore RUC and army tactics. It takes a case like Eddie Rooney being thrown out of a window to get their attention.

CONTROL

The tortures, the killings and the sectarian assassinations have been going on for years. And they will continue as long as the British government insists on using its military and its police to control this sectarian statelet.



ARDOYNE BUILDING WORKERS STRIKE AGAINST TROOPS

RECENTLY WHEN the troops came to lift workers off a building site in Ardoyne, all the workers downed their tools and went on strike. They stayed off the site for two days in this latest protest against army harassment and arrests. For months now the British Army have been coming into the sites in Flax St. and Valsheda Park and lifting workers including ex-internees. Now when Brits come on to the sites, all the workers on both sites are dropping their tools and going into the canteen hut.

The workers are also harassed on the way to and from work. The Army knows the workers and just waits for

them on the road. One worker told us how he had been lifted at least four times from inside or outside the Valsheda site. He was questioned by an army officer - ridiculous questions because they already had had all the information on him. He had his photo taken and was then taken outside (each time) where he had to stand face up against a rough wall for one or two hours. Then he was released. It's nothing but harassment.

This treatment is nothing new to these workers. Last summer the troops fired shots at the building site, claiming that they had spotted a gunman, but the workers denied this and walked off the site.

That time they used dumper trucks and machinery from the site to block the junction of the Crumlin and Woodvale Roads.

SPREAD

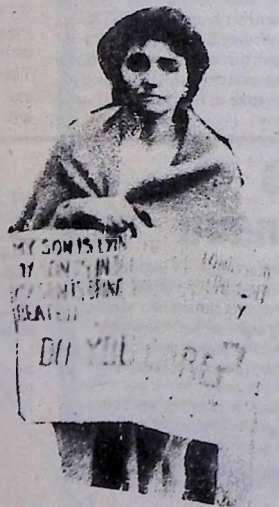
These building workers should be supported in carrying out these protests. The Housing Executive allows the British Army freedom to enter sites and lift workers. If the workers continue and spread these protests, the Housing Executive will be served fair warning - if you want your houses, keep the army off the sites!

SUPPORT THE STATUS ISSUE

FOUR Belfast women dressed only in blankets, chained themselves to gates near Westminster on the occasion of one year since the removal of political status for republican prisoners in the north. Other women, mothers and relatives of prisoners, demonstrated at 10 Downing Street and the offices of the Daily Telegraph. A picket was also held by women at the petty sessions court in Belfast and a march down the Falls Road marked a week of protest against the removal of political status.

The march, organised by the Relatives' Action Committee, gathered enthusiastic support as it made its way down from the Whiterock Road down the Falls. Large crowds came out to support political status despite poor organising and competitive Sinn Fein rallies held elsewhere. It was planned to march to the city centre to hold a rally. But the Paras and RUC were in the way. They blocked the route and the RUC announced that any attempt to march into the city would be met

with arrests. The Paras and their guns and saracens were there to talk to other prisoners. They get no visits and are allowed only one letter a month. The only contact they have is with the warders and the priest."



back up the threat. Once again Catholics were denied the right to have a political protest in Belfast city centre.

Today 73 men sit in solitary confinement in their cells in Long Kesh. One mother explained, "They are not allowed anything in the cell, not even religious books. They get no smokes, can't

The British government on the one hand says there is a war on. But they try to deny that the struggle is political. The torture in Castlereagh and other RUC barracks, the horrors of H block, and the atrocities the British troops commit every day on the streets are all part of British capitalism's war. The defence of political status is an important part of the resistance to British rule.

PARAS IN TURF LODGE

THE PARAS came in shooting from the hip on a Friday afternoon. They fired 200 rounds with women and children out on the streets.

Two Turf Lodge women told The Worker what it was like. "On Friday when the

ON THE DOLE

"THEY WANTED me to make shrouds." That was the only job interview 17 year old Geraldine from Ardoyne has ever been sent to. And she didn't even get that. After a year and a half on the dole! This rotten society is condemning thousands of school leavers like Geraldine to waste their young lives on the dole queue.

The latest unemployment figures show that 2,434 Northern Ireland school leavers from last spring are still looking for work. But the crisis is more obvious when you see how many young people under the age of 20 are still on the dole queue. It's 9,585 at latest count. That means one out of every four girls you know are on the dole. And one out of every eight boys can't get a job. These boys and girls were told that the more education they got, the better

chance they had of getting a job. But it's just not true. After they finished school many of these boys and girls did apprenticeships or studied in the Tech or one of the Government Training Centres. But there are no jobs when they finish their course.

And things are not going to get any better. With industry declining in the north and more skilled, experienced workers joining the dole queue every month, there is going to be more competition for the few jobs available.

out with whistles and binlids, wee boys threw stones. They ran away. You should have seen them run across the fields."

Foot patrols and raids are very rare these days in Turf Lodge. Because the people are organised there. But the raids are not completely ended. The soldiers come in

shots started someone rang a bell. The soldiers went mad. They kicked in doors and raided houses. They even beat a man who has only one leg."

"After they shot up the houses, women came

The government and the trade union leaders are doing nothing about this crisis. In fact the government is making things worse with their social service cuts. They are destroying more jobs. And the trade unions are not fighting the redundancies. They give up the jobs and quibble about the amount of redundancy money the workers are going to get.

It's up to young people themselves to take action. School leavers in many areas of Belfast are working with the Belfast Unemployed Action Committee to organise a fight for jobs. They want to put an end to life on the dole queue. They want to force the trade unions to fight. Join them. Help organise in your area. Watch for news of meetings or ask your Worker seller for details.

quietly to back doors about 4.30 a.m., the hardest time to organise resistance.

Earlier the women had shifts all night to watch for troops. These had been effective in preventing house raids. It's this kind of resistance that must be reinforced and spread to other areas.