

AUG 4th

# THE WORKER SUPPLEMENT

Kieran Doherty, the T.D. for Cavan/Monaghan is dead. He died only a few days after his comrade, Kevin Lynch. Kieran Doherty was forced onto a fight to the death in pursuit of five just demands. He was murdered.

Who murdered him? Certainly, Maggie Thatcher must take the prime responsibility. She has stuck to a rigid hardline position -- even to the extent of tearing apart the weak compromise of the Irish Commission for Justice and Peace.

But Thatcher was not alone. Garret Fitzgerald stuck the knife in from an early stage. After an initial show of militancy to the British Government, he turned on the H Block campaign. True to form, the Coalition attempted to drive a wedge between the relatives and the campaign. Increasingly, the charge 'subversive' is drummed out about the H Block campaign. Fitzgerald claims to Thatcher that his only reason for concern about the H Block situation is to ward off the 'subversive threat' in the South.

But none of us should be surprised with Thatcher or Fitzgerald. They are capitalist politicians. They have interests to defend. They work together--sometimes with a few strains-- to make Ireland safe for the rule of profit. And both of them know that the H Block campaign is some threat.

The silence of the Trade Union leadership has also contributed greatly to Kieran Doherty's death. They have done everything to walk away from the traditions of Connolly and Larkin. In 1920 the trade union movement struck to demand the release of republican prisoners in Mountjoy jail. After three days they were all released. Today the union leadership will not lift their little fingers to demand political status for the prisoners in the H Block.

Yet there is no doubt that only massive industrial action can bring victory for the prisoners. The H Block campaign faces

tremendous obstacles to bring that about. Some of those obstacles are of their own making. The leadership of the campaign has not put trade union work at the centre of its strategy -- despite being mandated to at conference after conference.

That must now be changed. The campaign must make it clear that the sympathy of politicians that flowed in after Kieran Doherty's death is useless -- that it is too late and too hypocritical. It must set all its action groups around the country to work for industrial action. And the most realistic form of action we can get now is a national day of action that is aimed at preventing further deaths in the H Block rather than being based on mourning after a funeral.

---

## SCABS      OUT ;

The recent CIE dispute in which AGEMOU craftsmen were fighting for a new deal to handle the new buses yet again saw the use of army strike breakers. The army also stayed on for the NDU dispute over loss of earnings.

Of course army trucks can only provide the most pathetic substitute for a bus service. It did not seriously damage the effectiveness of the strike as it did with the oil workers action last year.

But the fact is that a scab is a scab whether in civies or uniform. The state is now slowly building up a tradition of using the army as a means of smashing strikes. That tradition must now be opposed.

If strikers were to picket the army barracks in retaliation; if they were to leaflet the soldiers with their case then the government might be forced to think twice about using the army.

One thing they fear most is the possibility of disaffection from a largely working class army. The lesson of the CIE strike is that we must organise to play on that fear.

# COALITION RAMPAGE

As we predicted the Fine Gael-Labour Coalition wasted no time in launching a vicious attack on working people.

In the July Budget, the Minister for Finance, John Bruton announced VAT rates to be increased by a half; a reintroduction of the road tax; a 20% rise in postal charges, hikes in CIE fares and ESB charges and extra duties on petrol, drink and tobacco.

It does't require an economic genius to realise that these increases will hit working people the hardest. It will add at least 5% to the cost of living leading to an inflation rate of 20% by the end of the year.

And what about the Labour Party's miserable concern for 'social justice'. VAT rates on luxury goods stay exactly the same. The tax on profits was not even mentioned. Yet from this year Corporation Profits Tax was reduced to 10%. After all the allowances, the truth is that manufacturing industry will be paying no tax.

A few days after the Budget, Fitzgerald told the country that we were all living 10% beyond our means. So he clearly intends to ensure that working people suffer further cuts in their living standards.

How is he going to do it? The general direction of his strategy is already clear. The public sector workers are to be held up as scapegoats. If their wages are frozen then all the groups of workers who follow them in their wage bargaining will be affected too. The message that public sector workers are in cushy jobs and getting big increases is pounded out daily.

It's an absolute lie. Public sector workers are held rigidly to the terms of the National Wage Agreements. As a result, they have seen other groups of workers move ahead of them through productivity bargains and local deals with management. The much vaunted statistic that public sector pay has risen by thirty percent is a con trick. Much of

it has come from the increased employment undertaken by Fianna Fail and only a small amount has come from workers putting in scatch up' claims.

Fitzgerald is out to use the same methods as Thatcher. The ban on recruitment in the public sector will make for even longer dole queues. And still the trade union leaders are talking about a possible new National Understanding in the autumn.

Rank and file workers must organise to defend jobs, refusing to cover for unfilled jobs, banning excessive overtime and fighting for wage increases to maintain living standards. In the September issue of THE WORKER we will discuss these questions. Make sure of your copy now.

## SHAME ON THEM

There are three T.D.s in the Dail who claim to be socialists. Not just of the Labour Party variety but on the 'real left'. But not one of that trio - neither, Kemmy Browne or Sherlock-- actually opposed the Budget.

Kemmy actually voted for the Budget. Now this 'Limerick Socialist' claims to be totally opposed to nationalism. That is why he has supported moves to increase ~~tax~~ repression against republicans. So why did Kemmy support the budget? Because 'our' country, 'our' economy is in difficulties. Jim Kemmy is indeed the true nationalist. He puts the crisis of his own national economy above the interests of his class.

Browne and Sherlock abstained. Sherlock even claimed that the budget was anti-working class. So why did they abstain. Because they claimed they did not want to produce a new general election. This pair have come to believe that the country's stability is more important than the living standards of the working class.

We fear that the Dail socialists have now given notice of their intentions. By the end of their term they will have totally discredited themselves.