

Socialist Worker

For a Workers Republic and International Socialism

Public Sector freeze

FIGHT NOW ON PAY

South Africa on the run

IT now looks as if some public sector workers are shaping up for a fight against the Government's proposed wage freeze.

The teachers' unions are promising one day strikes in October and the ESB workers are proposing similar, and perhaps all out, industrial action.

And it's no wonder that public sector workers are fighting back. Over the last few years, wages in the public sector have fallen in real terms even more than those in the private sector. Despite all the media trumpeting about "high wage levels" in the public sector, the truth is very different.

For example, the average income in the Civil Service is £11,000 per annum or take home of around £140-150 per week. But this is the average. It includes engineers who earn up to £19,000 p.a., Principal Officers who earn up to £21,000, Assistant Secretaries who rake in as much as £26,000 a year and Secretaries who cream off at least £24,000 a year.

The bulk of civil servants however are clerical officers. They earn between £5,500 and £9,000 a year, ie £104 to £190 per week gross which comes out at £75-130 take home pay a week. Not a lot to keep a family on and certainly not the kind of money the *Evening Herald* likes to make out civil servants earn!

Of course, one of the reasons public sector wages are so low, we're told, is because of the job security these workers enjoy. Anyone who believes this particular myth should have a chat with the former workers of Irish Shipping or Irish Steel! The latter have lost hundreds of jobs in recent years and the blackmail used on them last month by the government is a fair indication of just how secure the remaining jobs aren't.

Teachers have also been

feeling the effects of public service expenditure cuts. Schools are closing and unemployment among teachers has shot up. The 10% increase they are going on strike about isn't their 25th round wage claim. It is a special award made to them by an independent public service arbitrator, Hugh Geoghegan S.C.

Senior barristers are not well known for their radical views. Perhaps this is why Mr Geoghegan was chosen as an arbitrator. This arbitration service was set up as a way of dampening public service militancy. All disputes have to go arbitration and all parties have to agree to abide by the outcome. The outcome is usually in the government's favour. This time it wasn't. The teachers were thought to deserve a special increase of 10%. The government didn't like the way the "independent arbitrator" wasn't, as usual, taking their side. So they decided to reject the award.

Action

Fortunately, the three teachers' unions are taking united action on this. Such unity cannot but massively increase their strength. Meanwhile rank-and-file teachers, in particular those involved in the Broad Left must argue to extend the action to all-out strikes to ensure victory.

Meanwhile other public sector workers are looking at private sector settlements for the 25th pay round and demanding similar increases for themselves. Of 85 settlements, covering 30 or more workers, known to the ICTU at the end of July, most were of twelve months' duration with no pay pause. They provided for increases of between 7% and 12% with the majority 8-9%. These settlements cover a total of about 9,500 workers (Waterford Glass was not included).

Some examples of bigger firms agreements are: Crown

Controls Galway (200 workers) 10% rise in one phase; Bort Hardmetals Shannon (175) 9.9% in two phases; Johnson and Johnson, Dublin (150) 8.2% in two phases. All these are twelve month agreements. Meanwhile Hollister, Ballina (350 workers) won a 12.5% deal over eighteen months and Bausch and Lomb in Waterford (200) settled for 19.2% over two years.

Given this level of pay rise in the private sector, Fitz-Gerald, Boland and crew are being more than unrealistic if they think that public sector workers will lie down and take nothing but job losses and worsening conditions.

This is why ESB workers are going on strike. The strike on September 10 is against the company's "rationalisation" plan which could mean at least 500 workers losing their jobs. Most of these job losses would be in places like Athlone Galway, Portlaoise and Tralee — the kind of towns where it's not easy to find another job.

Both the white collar unions TASS and the ESB Officers Association have voted overwhelmingly for industrial action in defence of jobs. The strike on Tuesday 10th marks the start of that campaign. The action needs to be broadened out now to other ESB workers and to include a fight on wages. If this happens, the Christmas candles will be used early this year!

Workers in the Post Office and Telecommunications Union (formally POWU) have got it right. They are calling for united public sector action against the proposed pay freeze. This is the only way to fight. If one group of workers were to strike and be beaten, others may well think there's no point in fighting. United action for a pay rise in line with the cost of living and against any job losses can win.

Such action is vital if public sector workers are to build the kind of organisation necessary

to defend their standard of living, fight the recruitment embargo, cuts in expenditure and, ultimately, to prevent redundancies in the public service.

NOW is the time to fight!



STOP PRESS! Black workers struck at seven goldmines and collieries owned by three mining houses at the beginning of September. Mine bosses feared that the strike — originally of nearly 30,000 workers — would spread to surrounding mines if the bosses attempted to dismiss the workers. At the same time the South African Government was forced to suspend payments of foreign debts pending renegotiation. Background page two.



SOUTH AFRICA

SMOULDERING VOLCANO

WHITE South Africa is in deep trouble.

The rising tide of black revolt is causing panic among the country's white rulers.

The value of the country's currency—the Rand—stood at 78 cents a year ago. By late August it had fallen to less than half that value when devaluing was suspended on the gold and foreign exchange markets. The price of gold—South Africa's most important

revenue earner—has swung madly and unpredictably up and down over the last few months.

Inflation, 11% in January, has soared to 16%, wildly out of line with world trends.

Foreign debt stands at 19 billion dollars, of which 12 billion represents short-term loans due for repayment over the next few months.

In the past, western banks have renewed these loans as a

matter of course. But increasingly they are demanding immediate repayment because they have lost confidence in the ability of the Apartheid regime to hold on.

But South Africa hasn't the foreign exchange to pay up. If it cannot negotiate a humiliating re-scheduling package—complete with IMF strings—it faces a real possibility of default.

And that would mean all future trade would have to be cash-on-the-bank.

The state of emergency announced by Premier PW Botha last month—sanctioning the most brutal repression and draconian restrictions—has failed to crush black militancy. In Soweto, 800 schoolkids, some as young as six, were arrested under emergency legislation for boycotting lessons; practically the entire leadership of the United Democratic Front is in jail and shootings by the cops, not to mention beatings, whippings and tear-gassing, are daily commonplaces.

Yet none of this has been able to pacify the townships.

But the biggest and darkest cloud in the racist regime's firmament is the power of the black working class. As we go to press plans are on again for a strike of black mine workers. Last month, a strike of the entire black mine workforce of half a million was only forestalled by the largest mine owner, Anglo-American, stumping up a 22% increase in pay with holiday and other improvements. Other companies followed suit, but three companies, General Mining Corporation, Gold Fields and Anglo-Vaal refused to match the Anglo-American offer. It is on these three companies that the strike plan is centred. The course of this strike is unpredictable. 80% of the 150,000-strong South African National Union of Mine-workers' membership is in mines owned by Anglo-American. But it is expected that non-members will join the strike. And experience shows that the strike is likely to spread to the mines which have already settled. Miners are likely to demand, in addition to the wage and holiday increases already claimed, an end to job reservation in the mines.

At the moment all the skilled jobs in the mines are reserved for white workers. For example, to get a well-

paid job it is necessary to hold a Blasting Certificate.

Blacks are ineligible to obtain this qualification.

Whites in the mines enjoy enormous wages as a result of this colour bar. Arus Paulus, head of the whites' mine union, expressed the racism of his members when he defended job reservation thus:

"When in Rome, do as the Romans. This is our [whites] country and it should be run in our interests."

Forty per cent of South Africa's black miners are migratory workers from, for example Mozambique, Malawi or the "Homelands".

In the past employers have tried to break strikes by sacking these workers and having them deported. In the current atmosphere few expect them to get away with it this time. The political nature of the strike is likely to deepen very quickly in such circumstances.

NUM leader Cyril Ramophosa expresses the mood of his members:

"Black people have been pushed too far—this is the time we must seize it!"

Against this background south African bosses are running scared. The Associated Chambers of Commerce of South Africa and other bosses' organisations jointly issued a statement on August 29 calling on Botha to open negotiations with black leaders—including those in jail like Nelson Mandela, a leader of the outlawed African National Congress. They urged the Government to declare itself in favour of moving away from racial discrimination and to speed the lifting of the state of emergency. In a separate move the Anglo-American Corporation is planning to talk with exiled nationalist leaders in Zambia.

MILITANCY

Clearly the rise of black militancy has impressed on sections of the white South African ruling class the need to offer concessions, political and economic, to head off an agitation that threatens to overturn the whole rotten apple cart.

These business interests hope that a few carrots thrown at blacks can stop the clock.

Their concessions would not add up to a lot. An amelioration of the pass and influx laws; a few more sinecures for middle class blacks; the illusion of power sharing. Life for the mass of

WORLD VIEW

compiled by TOM O'DONOGHUE

PHILIPPINES

A MASSIVE crackdown on trade unionists is expected soon if advice from the International Monetary Fund is heeded by President Marcos. This year has seen a record number of strikes in the country.

Compared with 282 strikes in all last year, there have already been 215 strikes in the first six months of 1985. This has resulted in a 15% drop in industrial production in the first quarter. Most of the strikes have been declared illegal, with soldiers being sent in to break up picket lines. Fourteen have been killed in such incidents since January. A strike can be declared illegal if the factory is deemed to be "vital to the national interest". In one recent strike, a fish sauce factory was so classified, and soldiers and police were sent in.

Now, in the face of pressure from international creditors, union leaders fear that a complete ban on all strikes will be imposed. This will not be something new. A similar situation existed in the country for the nine years following the imposition of martial law in 1972.

INDIA

AFTER a visit to Bhopal, a delegation from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in Brussels has concluded that the accident which claimed 2,500 lives at the Union Carbide plant could easily have been prevented. According to the delegation, the contributing factors to the worst industrial accident in history included insufficient attention to safety; dangerous operating procedures; faulty equipment; and deep cuts in maintenance. Three out of four safety systems designed to prevent or neutralise a leakage of methyl isocyanate were out of order. A key maintenance supervisor was laid off less than a week before the accident to reduce costs. Within the plant, instructions were written in English despite the fact that the majority of workers speak Hindi only.

The delegation gained access to union documents demanding improved health and safety measures, some of which dated back to '76. At least five accidents involving toxic leaks had occurred in the four years up to the massive tragedy of December 3 last year.

EL SALVADOR

THE five groups in the left wing rebel coalition, FMLN, have announced plans to unite in a single revolutionary organisation. The intention is to step up the fight against the US-backed government of Napoleon Duarte. Until now the FMLN has been more of a loose umbrella grouping, but a recent statement said that political and tactical differences had been resolved.

The guerrillas have declared an indefinite ban on traffic movement throughout the country and have recently burnt several vehicles which ventured out of the urban centres. They have combined this activity with the destruction of power lines in their continuing assault on the country's economy.

Meanwhile, the bishops of the country have provoked the wrath of the guerrillas by issuing a statement condemning the "extreme left". It is now thought that the Salvadoran Church will become as divided as that in Nicaragua.

CHILE

THE Government of General Pinochet is facing its most serious crisis in twelve years of military rule. In recent weeks 22 members of the para-military police—Carabineros—have been arrested for involvement in politically motivated murder. Fourteen of those arrested are alleged to have formed part of the death squad which cut the throats of three leading members of the Communist Party at the end of March. During protests against these killings at the beginning of August, 200 were arrested and a fourteen-year-old boy was shot dead.

In an attempt to diffuse the growing unrest, a quarter of the country's leading police officers have been retired. This has led to rumours of a possible coup attempt by the officers concerned. Meanwhile, beatings and torture of opponents of the regime continue.

DENMARK

IN common with other European countries, high unemployment is being exploited by rightwing and neo-fascist groups to fuel racist sentiment. In recent weeks there has been an alarming increase in the number of racially-motivated attacks. In one particular case, a small hotel in the part of Kalundborg, housing 60 Iranian refugees, was the scene of several nights' violence as hundreds of youths attacked the building with bottles and rocks. In other incidents hostels have been petrol-bombed and Danish girls who keep company with foreigners have been threatened.

There are over 100,000 "foreigners" in Denmark. Most are Europeans but there are large numbers of Turks (20,000), Yugoslavs (8,000) and Pakistanis (6,500). The latter groups are the objects of most of the racist hatred. The vast majority emigrated to Denmark in the late sixties and early eighties under a government "guest-worker" programme at a time of labour shortages. Now, with unemployment at a quarter of a million, these workers are easy targets for racist propaganda. In Parliament, the extreme rightwing Progress Party has called for repatriation of all immigrants.

blacks would remain that of impoverished hewers of wood and drawers of water for international capitalism.

And it is far from clear that such reforms would dampen down the black revolt. Having forced the regime to concede a few reforms would be more likely to enhance the confidence of black workers.

But there is another problem for the "reformers". Four million whites enjoy the highest standard of living on this planet as a direct result of racism. It is quite usual for a white worker to have black servants. This reflects both the high level of white wages and the low level of black wages. Any advancement for

black workers would inevitably arouse the hostility of the mass of Afrikaners. And these are precisely the people the ruling Nationalist Party of Botha and Co depends upon for mass support for the regime.

Western bourgeois governments urge cosmetic reform. Some may even attempt by sanctions to pressurise Pretoria in this direction. But underneath all the rhetoric they are tied to South African racism. By their banks, their investment and their trade—by world capitalism.

The black workers of South Africa have their bosses on the run.

That's what all the fuss is about. —KEVIN WINGFIELD

NEWS FROM SWM

MEMBERS of the SWM in Dublin have been active in support of the UCD cleaners. The cleaners called for mass pickets on the gates of the college at 5am and SWM members joined the pickets on a number of mornings. Dublin Central branch organised a lively social for the strikers which packed in 80 people and raised £100 for the strike fund.

PORTLAOISE has become the centre for a new political party. Named the People's Party of Ireland it is the mouthpiece of independent councillor Hession McCormack. The founding meeting attracted a grand total of ten people. The policies were a bit vague. In a wide ranging speech, the meeting was told about the local graveyard gates, the need to defend traditional values, and how Hession met a man who could bring jobs to Portlaoise. The new party had no new answers.

But Portlaoise SWM are not taking this rubbish lying down. They attended the meeting to put over their views on why Ireland needs a socialist answer rather than a new brand of old cures. The People's Party of Ireland couldn't take the devastating criticism of the comrades. The meeting was closed down. "Heckling by local Trotskyists" is how the local paper described SWM's intervention.

SOCIALIST WORKER is expanding from 8 to 12 pages in November. It will carry more features on the revolutionary tradition, a letters page and more news from around the country. It also aims to show the stark horrors of the effects of capitalism on how working class people are treated in their hospitals, schools, factories, etc.

The expansion means a big push on sales is needed. Over the last two years that expansion has already got under way with the paper being sold in new towns. Kilkenny and Derry now have a regular Socialist Worker sale. But we are still short of sellers in many parts of Ireland. Even in Dublin the paper is still only available in some areas.

That is why in the run-up to the expansion to 12 pages we are making a big sales drive. We urge any supporter of the paper to take five copies each month and sell them to their workmates or friends. Send us back the money for whatever you sell. Orders for the paper can be made to the Sales Organiser, SWM, POBox 1643 Dublin 8.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

DUBLIN: Thursday 19th September/Why the third world is starving/speaker: TOM O'DONOGHUE/CIE Hall, Marlborough St, 8 pm.

DUNDALK: Wednesday 11th September/Smash Apartheid/speaker: PAUL O'BRIEN & speakers from DUNNES STRIKERS/venue: Wine Tavern, Park Street.

REGULAR MEETINGS

DUBLIN SOUTH: meets every Tuesday, Kilbride's Pub, Thomas St.

DUBLIN CENTRAL: meets Thursdays, details phone 971036.

WATERFORD: meets every Monday, details local paper seller.

GALWAY: meets Tuesday, details local paper seller.

DUNDALK: meets every second Wednesday, details phone 38888

CORK: meets every Thursday: details phone 932828

For further details or information on meetings in Belfast, Portlaoise, Dungarvan—contact local paper seller or write to national address: SWM, POBox 1648, Dublin 8.

Provo Right rules in Galway

FRANK GLYNN of Tuam was one of Sinn Fein's successes in last June's local elections, being re-elected to the local council. Sinn Fein's election literature described him as a "Company Director". His credentials in this field stem from being Managing Director of Glynn's (Milltown) Ltd., Managing Director Tuam) Ltd., Chairman Board of Directors AHL (1975-80), Member of the Irish Management Institute, Member of Tuam Chamber of Commerce, Member of the National Council of the Irish Hardware Association and Director and Secretary of Milltown (Co. Galway) Development Co Ltd.

Glynn received a major boost in the election from

Independent candidate and supermarket owner Joe Burke, 140 of whose transfers he received.

The general consensus among the local petit-bourgeois and capitalist elements is that Frank and Joe would make a great team. And so they would, since they share the same primary interest of all capitalists—fattening their wallets at the expense of the workers they employ. But there's one snag: Frank is a Republican and as we all know Republicans support the anti-imperialist struggle not only in the North but throughout the world... or do they?

Glynn is a bit hazy on this minor point. In recent years he has never actually come

out openly in support of the IRA. Even when chairman of Galway County Council in 1980 he remained remarkably silent during the first H Block hunger-strike, being more concerned with issuing welcomes for the Pope's visit. And at the recent Easter Commemoration in Tuam, Frank either blatantly refused or conveniently forgot to read out the IRA Army Council statement... although in theory all Sinn Fein public representatives are supposed to give "unequivocal support" to the IRA.

Then there was Frank's open backing for the visit of Ronald Reagan and support for the anti-abortion Amendment, in flagrant contradiction to the line of his organisation.

Glynn is an out-and-out capitalist who represents the traditional, conservative nationalist wing of the Republican Movement. He is not alone. He is supported by the O Bradaighs, for example, and together they constitute something of an autonomous clique which is allowed to exist within the Republican Movement.

GALWAY

At present there is no Sinn Fein cumann in Galway. Socialist-minded members have left in disgust or run on an independent ticket.

This situation puts the Sinn Fein leadership in a dilemma. If they try to enforce their politics they run

the risk of an open split with the conservative elements. But if they don't they can't build any sound base among the working class. So they are paralysed.

The reason socialist-minded members and outright capitalists like Glynn can co-exist in the same movement has to do with the very nature of republicanism, which holds that all class and social issues are secondary to the main issue, which to them is the "national question". It is impossible to bring about socialism through any such ideology, because it demands that workers stand by and rely on the very capitalists who have a vested interest in preventing socialism and in preserving the status quo.

This has always been true of Republicanism, as far back and further than the pre-split Sinn Fein had to make formal representations to Glynn about the lousy wages he was paying his workers.

No matter what fine resolutions are passed by Ard Theisanna an organisation founded on such an all-class ideology cannot even put itself at the head of the working class. It must fudge and compromise.

The place for socialists is in an organisation which stands openly and unashamedly FOR the working class and AGAINST those who exploit the working class. And despite the presence in Sinn Fein of many who genuinely think of themselves as socialists and who feel repugnance for what Glynn represents, Sinn Fein is not and never can become that organisation.

—GER FRANCIS
Galway SWM

ADAMS ADMISSION

GERRY ADAMS burst into print twice in recent weeks. In *An Phoblacht* (August 5) and *In Dublin* magazine (August 22) he gave interviews which dealt in some length with Sinn Fein's strategy, north and south of the border and with the problems of constitutionalism.

In *An Phoblacht* Adams concludes that "after 15 years of the SDLP constitutionalism is not the way to go about securing freedom and they must start looking for an alternative." But what is the alternative?

In the *In Dublin* interview Adams admits that the IRA cannot on its own force the withdrawal of the Brits. So how are the sectarian state in the north and the capitalist state in the south to be smashed and independence achieved?

Adams sees the need to "republicanise" working class communities in the South and to fuse "all the local struggles—whether it's consumers, unemployed, trade unionists, women, youth—with the national question". In this way he hopes to create a stronger organisational base in the South, and win electoral support, drawing away voters from Labour and Fianna Fail. (He differentiates Sinn Fein's republicanism from Fianna Fail's by emphasising the socialist element of Sinn Fein's policies.)

"If we make as many advances as possible on the whole social dimension of republicanism, resolve the national question, then you will get a re-alignment of Irish politics on the basis that the working class people of Ireland are the majority" says Adams.

This is all very well. We

know the working people of Ireland are the majority, but this is no guarantee that they are in control of society.

Adams says that if "the people" won independence, he would like to see a republican society, a socialist society in Ireland with a planned economy. Therefore the winning of independence does not necessarily imply the overthrow of capitalism and the transfer of power into the hands of the workers majority. This is the contradiction inherent in nationalism: the solving of the national question does not necessarily imply socialism, the only guarantee that the majority of the people will achieve real freedom. On the one hand he rejects constitutionalism and parliamentary democracy and on the other he would accept it if "the people" won independence from Britain.

"Once the people win independence" he says "it's up to them to decide who they want to govern them."

Left republicans like to imply that when they talk about "the people" they mean the working class. Adams in the *In Dublin* article makes it clear that he means the traditional republican concept of "the people"—a vague alliance of workers and boss, of the majority who produce the wealth in society and the minority who exploit them, of the minority who are in power and the majority which they repress and oppress. Adams is admitting that when "the people" win independence from Britain, the working class in Ireland will be in exactly the same position as it is worldwide—exploited and oppressed, able "to decide who they want to govern them" as opposed to governing themselves.

Since the "independence" that the Provos are seeking has, then, nothing to offer the working class in the South, or for that matter the Protestant workers in the North, why should workers in the South take up the national question?

Workers, North and South have their backs against the wall at present. The bosses offensive has many groups of workers on the run. The defence of jobs and wages is the priority for most workers.

The mass of workers in the South will be involved only when it is clear that the fight is not just against the border but against capitalism. That it is for a united socialist Ireland and not an Ireland where the fight for socialism would have to begin all over again.

—JOE O'BYRNE



Members of the right-wing and notoriously racist New York cops marching in plain clothes at the head of the Sinn Fein march in Bundoran on September 1.



RECOVERING from the massive redundancy payments of last year and in spite of the incredible wages paid to those workers still on the payroll, it's nice to see that Henry Ford and Sons (Ireland) Ltd. have a little left over to make their new managing director feel at home.

The company has completed a deal to buy Scilly

Cottage, a five bedroomed house overlooking Kinsale Harbour, for a mere £180,000. Mr Hartmut Kieven, the new boss at Ford will enjoy his own private harbour and sheltered gardens. A spokesperson for the 800 sacked workers took a rather dim view of the purchase saying it was like "rubbing our noses in the dirt".

BLACK HUMOUR

THE trouble with the blacks in South Africa is that they take life too seriously. For instance, when white teenager Anna Willemse shot her black maid in the back, she found herself defending charges of assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm. However when Anna explained that she was "only joking" the judge, sharing her highly developed sense of humour let her off with a £140 fine.

Optimism too is alive and well and though living in S.A. recently enlightened members of the Sligo Rotary Club at a lunch time meeting. Viewing events from his 16 year residence in a district of Johannesburg "which is like Dalkey to Dublin" Mr Aiden Barrett informed the gathering that "there is an emergency, but the troubles have not touched us in our day-to-day life". Conceding that "the blacks have plenty of injustices" but

ever eager to look on the bright side. Mr Barrett pointed out that at least they had food. What'll they be looking for next?

NICE GUYS

THE Contras in Nicaragua have decided to clean up their act. So says Mr Carlos Icaza, attorney general and image builder for the FDN. From now on rape and murder will not be part of the training manual as the new code of conduct calls for adherence to the Geneva Convention.

The new "nice guys" image has of course nothing to do with the fact that criticism by human rights groups was losing them votes for aid in the US Congress. In fact, Mr Icaza probably hit the nail on the head when he said the new code was established "to make sure troops will know how to treat civilian population when we throw out the Sandanistas." Indeed.

PENSIONS

"A MINOR FRIAL pension is compensation for career opportunities foregone... If we do not compensate persons of ability will not forego these opportunities and government will be less skilled as a result." So speaks Fianna Fail TD, David Andrews.

This does not mean that you can now walk into the dole office expecting adequate compensation for the job you might have if these "persons of ability" thought a little less about making a quick killing and a little more about the people they would like us to believe they represent.

Nor does it mean that after three years employment workers will now qualify for pensions, just in case they might like to be working somewhere else. What it does mean is that dole payments will remain pitifully low while exorbitant taxes on workers' pay will continue to be squandered by a shower of self-indulgent side-bucks whose collective abilities amount to spending public money on themselves making the working class pay for the capitalists' crisis and pandering to the demands of international finance.

Meanwhile the semi-state chiefs are putting on their war-paint. They are, to say the least, unhappy with the government's restrictions on public sector pay.

Paddy Moriarty, ESF chief executive, for instance predicts that the "best people" will leave the public sector in favour of more lucrative employment elsewhere. The problem is that the government only pays up to £42,000 for these "best people" who are now threatening to become even better people by moving to the private sector where, according to NET Chairman, Sean McHale their counterparts are earning up to £60,000.

These public-minded people see no reason why the fat cats of industry shouldn't get this kind of money. Matter of fact they see no reason why the state shouldn't pay it to them too. After all, it's coming from the same source.



TENSION is running high in Washington. Many nervous diplomats who have spent many sleepless nights are now holding their breaths in anticipation. The name of the new US ambassador to Ireland is about to be announced and every diplomat who values their career is hoping it won't be theirs.

According to Donald Regan White House Chief of Staff, (after Nancy), "everyone with an Irish name or Irish background of sorts" wants to fill the post. So much so that one potential candidate turned it down before she was even offered the coveted posting. "It's a lovely position for somebody else, even though my maiden name is O'Shaughnessy" declared the Secretary for health and Human Services, Mrs Heckler.

Meanwhile a certain resident of the Phoenix Park is oiling his right arm in preparation for the awesome task he will have to perform on behalf of our ungrateful selves.

compiled by JEAN CROSS



What we stand for

The Socialist Workers Movement is a revolutionary socialist organisation that fights for a workers' republic and international socialism. The system under which we live, capitalism, is based on production for profit—not for human need. It leads to poverty and war; racism and sexism. It is a system that can only be destroyed by the class which creates all the wealth—the working class.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

Capitalism cannot be patched up or reformed—it must be overthrown. That cannot be achieved through parliament as the Workers Party and the Labour Party argue. The real power in this society lies in the boardroom of big business. The structures of the present parliament, courts, army and police are designed to protect the interests of the ruling class against the workers. At most parliament can be used for propaganda against the system—it cannot be the instrument by which workers destroy the power of the rich. We therefore stand for a workers' revolution which produces a different and more democratic society—one based on councils of delegates from workplaces and areas who are democratically elected answerable to assemblies and subject to recall at any time.

NEITHER WASHINGTON NOR MOSCOW

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

AGAINST PARTITION

The six county Orange state is propped up by British Imperialism. That state divides the working class by the guarantee of marginal privileges in housing and jobs to Loyalist workers. The struggle of Catholic workers to rid themselves of sectarianism and bigotry can only succeed by smashing that state.

The slow task of building working class unity against imperialism must be begun. However imperialism must be fought in the here and now and we support all forces engaged in that struggle regardless of our differences of programme.

We stand for:

- The immediate withdrawal of the British Army
- The disbandment of the RUC and UDR
- No to extradition and collaboration on border security

Connolly wrote that partition would bring a carnival of reaction. He was absolutely right. Irish workers confront two reactionary states. The Southern ruling class have no longer any fundamental conflict of interest with imperialism. They have become junior players in the world capitalist system. Their state props up partition—despite their occasional nationalist rhetoric.

The 'national question' will only be solved in the course of mass working class struggle against both states. Republicanism, by limiting the struggle to nationalist goals, by appealing to all classes in Irish society, can never defeat imperialism. Only a revolutionary socialist organisation that fights openly for the Workers' Republic can unite sections of the working class who have nothing to gain from a bourgeois Eire Nua.

AGAINST ALL OPPRESSION

Revolutionaries oppose all forms of oppression that divide and weaken the working class.

- We are for real social, economic and political equality for women.
- We are for an end to discrimination against homosexuals.
- We stand for full separation of the church and state.
- We stand for secular control of the hospitals and the schools.

THE UNIONS

Today the trade union movement is dominated by a caste of bureaucrats whose principal aim is to make their compromise with the system. They have destroyed solidarity between workers by the two tier picket system. They have failed to lead any fight over tax, wage cuts and unemployment.

We stand for:

- 100 percent trade unionism
- A 35 hour week to reduce unemployment
- The election of all union officials, subject to recall
- Against redundancies. We say: occupy to demand nationalisation under workers' control
- Full independence of the unions from the state. No reliance on the Labour Courts or the arbitration schemes in the public sector

We fight for the building of a national rank and file movement that links together the best militants to provide an alternative leadership to the trade union bureaucrats.

We fight for the formation of Right to Work committees that link the unemployed to the power of the trade union movement.

THE PARTY

To achieve socialism the most class conscious sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party. The SWM aims to build such a party around its activity in the working class movement. It stands in the tradition of Marx, Lenin, Trotsky and Connolly. We urge all those who agree with our policies to come in and join the SWM.

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

The Church's 'holy' against the work

THE Catholic Church has always been on the side of the rich and powerful and this is particularly true in Ireland.

At various times there may have been a small handful of clergy who lined up with the oppressed, and this may still be true today of a tiny number of "liberation theologians":

in the third world and of priests like Fr Des Wilson in the North. But these elements have always been entirely unrepresentative of the Church itself, although they are frequently mentioned by those who want to argue that the Catholic Church is something different from what it actually is.

In "Labour, Nationality and Religion", James Connolly traced the politics of the Catholic Church in Ireland back to 900 years ago. He pointed out that Henry II invaded Ireland in 1169, the Pope ordered the Irish not to resist him *under pain of excommunication*. This had nothing to do

with religion. The Protestant religion hadn't been founded yet. It was just that the Vatican at the time had an alliance with England and was willing to use its spiritual weapons to back up Henry's armies.

A century and a half later in 1319 the Pope again ordered the excommunication of any Irish who took up arms against the English king.

And as is well known, when William of Orange beat James at the Battle of the Boyne a special *Te Deum*—Thanks to God—was sung in St Peter's to celebrate—even though a Protestant army had defeated a Catholic one.

Again, for its own political reasons the Vatican was in league with King William and that was the decisive factor.

Similar examples can be plucked from any period in Irish history. While the politics of the Catholic Church chopped and changed, one thing has always remained constant: the Church always backed the oppressor against the oppressed. Never has it backed a revolt of the oppressed.

In 1798 the Catholic Bishops went so far as to order priests to break the seal of the confessional and inform the authorities of any plots revealed in confession. When there was some protest about that, the bishops varied the order and commanded that absolution should not be given to United Irishmen unless they undertook to confess to the authorities. The first Irish supergrasses were recruited in confession boxes.

In the 1830s Pope Gregory banned priests from attending



PIE IN THE SKY

THE MOVING and murmuring statues of Asdee, Ballinaspittle, Cnocmacsherry and elsewhere have been a source of laughter for many people—and a cause of alarm to others.

The attitude of Marxists to the phenomenon itself is straightforward. Stone statues don't move, full stop. And they don't mutter "Padre Pio" either. People who "believe in" such things are either suffering from a fevered imagination or fooled by a trick of the light or else they so much want to believe that it's their own brain which is playing tricks on them.

And there are many people in Southern Ireland who do, desperately, want to believe in supernatural signs from above.

The things that they have been taught by the Catholic Church to accept under pain of mortal sin as fundamental truths have increasingly been shown to be nonsense. And not only nonsense, but also not in their own best interests.

They are taught they will go to hell if they use "artificial" contraceptives. But women know that if they go along with this they're condemned to be prisoners of pregnancy and child-rearing all their active adult lives.

They are told that divorce is a crime against a loving God when they can see misery and unhappiness all around them as a result of the absence of divorce.

They are instructed to

have "respect for the law" and then discover that any time they stand up and fight for their rights the law has absolutely no respect for them.

They are urged to understand that violence and killing are anathema in the sight of God, but can see clearly that the Churches don't rant from the pulpits when it is the rich and powerful like Reagan and Thatcher whose forces are using massive violence against the poor and powerless.

And so on and on. And because of this, great and growing numbers of people—most especially and importantly working class people—are no longer able to accept the authority of the Church with blind faith. In that situation they are bound to be many people—having nothing but their religion to comfort them in a cruel world—who are deeply troubled and who yearn deep down for a sign that there is a supernatural authority that they can rely on. Such a sign, by definition, has to be irrational.

A statue of the Queen of Heaven suddenly moving fits the bill exactly.

But when Marxists say that moving statues are mere nonsense we are not joining in with the trendy liberals from suburban Dublin who delight in showing their disdain for those who gather at Ballinaspittle and Asdee. These same "progressive", "liberated" sorts never risk confronting the question of religion itself

and its role in society. You'd never catch them sneering at the Mass the way they sneer at swaying statues.

Yet which is the more ridiculous: that a statue should move a couple of inches or that a piece of bread should be changed into the body of a man who died 2,000 years ago? The moving statue is more unusual, certainly. But that's only because the transformation of the piece of bread is alleged to happen in thousands of locations, many times a day, every day, year in and year out.

The reason for this contradiction is that to challenge the changing bread would be to challenge the Church itself. And they know well that down through the years the Catholic Church in Ireland has played a vitally important role in preserving the capitalist society in which their class is in a privileged position and the working class is kept down.

They are willing to disagree with some of the Church's policies. They'd like the bishops to be more "progressive". And they're happy to jeer at the "simple" faith of the statue-watchers.

But they draw the line at campaigning against the Church root and branch. Because when it comes to the crunch they themselves might need the Church to denounce revolutionaries as blasphemers and help keep capitalism intact.



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meetings of O'Connell's Repeal Movement—even though O'Connell (see review, page 6) was far from being a revolutionary.

During the Famine, starving peasants—who had no money for food—were instructed from the pulpits that it was a mortal sin to refuse to pay their rents!

Bishop Moriarty's pronouncement on the Fenians is famous: "Hell is not hot enough nor eternity long enough . . . etc".

The Land League was formally founded by the Catholic Church in 1879, 1880 and again in 1881.

In this century the Church ferociously attacked Connolly and Larkin when they set about organising Irish workers into trade unions.

During the 1913 lock-out the Bishops backed the bosses to the hilt and vigilantes organised by the Church prevented the children of locked-out workers going to England where they would have been cared for until things got better in Dublin.

Naturally, the Church denounced the '16 rising and the "Irish Catholic" gloated at Connolly's execution.

They denounced the War of Independence until it became too popular for that to wear with the workers. They then concentrated on ensuring that the most right-wing elements in Republicanism like Cosgrave and Griffith had control of the Movement.

Once the Free State was set up they fulminated against any challenge to the rule of the new capitalist elite, which took over. In the 20s and 30s there was scarcely a strike in

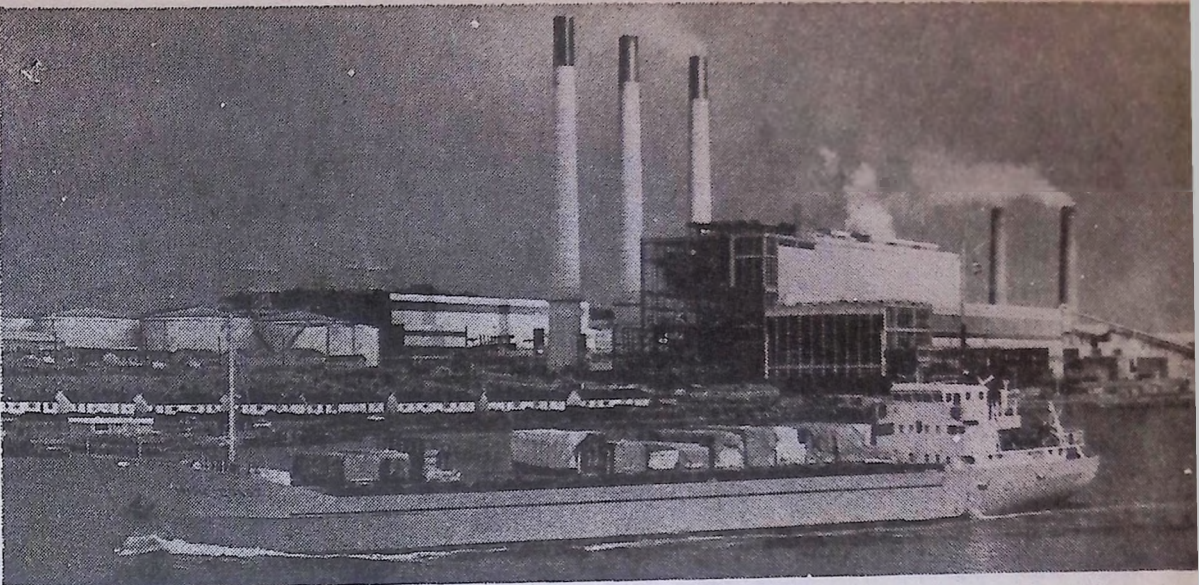
the country which the local bishops didn't denounce.

When they couldn't get their way with attacking trade unionism as such, they used their muscle to prevent socialists gaining any influence. No Lenten Pastoral or retreat sermon was complete without a violent attack on "reds", "communists", "atheist agitators" and so forth. Excommunications were a dime a dozen of anybody who stood up for the working class and campaigned for socialism—any brand of socialism, although the farther left it was the quicker the excommunication would come.

Peadar O'Donnell was excommunicated, as was George Gilmore, Mick Price and dozens of others.

And of course the bishops were internationalist in their support for viciously anti-working class politicians like Franco. As the Christy Moore song puts it: "The Bishops blessed the Blueshirts in Dun Laoghaire/As they sailed beneath the Swastika to Spain".

And so it is down to the present day. From the constant one-sided attacks on anti-imperialist violence (no churchman has ever appealed to the faithful not to join the British Army or the RUC) to the interventions of bishops to appeal for "moderation" any time workers look like confronting the bosses over pay, conditions or redundancies, it is evident that the one thing which really is eternal about the Catholic Church is its backing for the exploiters against the exploited.



Profits before people at Cork chemical plant

THE Pfizer Chemical Corporation at Ringaskiddy Co Cork was established in December 1968 as a wholly-owned subsidiary of the trans-national Pfizer Incorporated. The establishment of the Irish subsidiary followed the refusal by the authorities in the United States the United Kingdom to grant Pfizer's planning permission for a chemical complex to manufacture citric acid and associated products.

The Irish authorities welcomed Pfizers with open arms and grants of £7.5 m. for building the plant. While Cork County Council did impose what were at the time stringent conditions on the disposal of effluent, over the years the company has been able to get round these controls with impunity.

A review study on effluent disposal carried out by the company in 1977 reported to the main Board in New York that "the company do not conform to their consent conditions." The report goes on to recommend steps which should be taken to comply with County Council planning permission.

To date, the recommendations in this report have not been adopted and the company continues to operate in breach of the planning regulations.

Perhaps this is not surprising when one considers a further conclusion of this report. "Irish law tends to be non-specific in effluent matters, reflecting the unadvanced state of the economy. On the other hand, Irish law has made many provisions which give wide ranging powers to the Government Agencies. These powers are rarely used, partly because the technical support is not available to the regulatory departments and also because in many cases the worst polluters in Ireland are local authorities."

Pfizer Incorporated has recently moved into 99th position in the Fortune Top 500 Companies in the world and, more significantly, is ranked as the 37th most profitable company. Sales last year approached 4 billion dollars—over a quarter of this country's GNP—and profitability has increased five fold since 1974. In 1983, the best growth year in the company's history, income increased by a staggering 33 percent.

plant presented a well-researched and documented case to the Labour Court. This case was based primarily on company figures on manufacturing costs and sales and confirmed that not only was the company's operation at Ringaskiddy viable, but that it was excessively profitable. This has since been confirmed by publication of the company's Annual Report for that year.

For their part, the company simply claimed that the figures presented by the workers were forgeries, but were not prepared to produce any figures of their own to substantiate this claim. Neither were they prepared to produce evidence to support their claim that "the company has been making substantial financial losses since 1979."

In the event, the Labour Court once again submitted to the inherent threat obliquely contained in the company's submission, that they would have to re-consider their investment in this country if they did not get their way on this issue.

In their findings, the court recommended that the workers accept the company's proposals in their entirety and went on to note the court's concern at the reaction of the workers to the company's proposals for cuts in labour costs. They stated that it was essential that workers co-operate with the introduction of ongoing changes to reduce labour costs to ensure the future of the plant.

Since 1980, operating personnel have been reduced by over 30 percent while, at the same time, output has substantially increased, leading to greater workloads on the operators remaining.

One serious result is the reduction in safety standards within the plant. The Labour Court, when informed of the workers' concern at this situation, refused to consider the matter, claiming that they were not competent to decide on such issues. The Factory Inspectorate are satisfied to allow the company to monitor its own safety precautions and will not send a factory inspector to the plant without first informing the company, so that they will have an opportunity to put every thing in order before the inspector arrives.

a result of a works accident, or from chronic illness resulting from the effects of the environmental pollution within the plant. They have been whole-heartedly supported in this policy by the courts who accept that a worker who cannot attend work on a regular basis because of illness or injury is guilty of having frustrated his or her contract of employment and is therefore entitled to be dismissed.

No doubt the Government's plan to abolish jury trials in workers' compensation cases will make it easier for these companies to dispose of workers who are no longer fit to serve a useful purpose because of the hazardous nature of their employment.

Pfizers, like most trans-national companies, consider themselves above the laws of the host countries in which they operate. For many years they have been embroiled in legal battles and Senate Investigations in the United States. They have been convicted of paying bribes and kickbacks to have their drugs used in Vietnam and have had to repay vast sums to the US Government in compensation.

They were also charged and convicted of fraud of the US Patent Office—to procure a patent on an antibiotic drug. They were blackmailed by the Bristol Myers Company into giving that company a licence to manufacture and distribute the drug Tetracycline, when that company obtained evidence that Pfizers had hired private detectives to tap its own executives' phones and the phones of a competitor—Squibb.

A jury found them guilty of conspiring with others to fix prices on drugs to the detriment of the consumer. With devastating evidence from the Company's own files the prosecutor showed that the drug Tetracycline—which is manufactured at Ringaskiddy—costs \$ 1.52 per 100 capsules to manufacture. The consumer was charged £ 51.00 per hundred capsules, because Pfizers conspired with other companies to monopolise the market. After ten years the legal battles in this case are still continuing.

cancellation of a similar excursion to South America because of the unstable political situation in that area

Among the notable kings of capitalism who are members of the seventeen man Board which was represented on the visit to Cork last month were:

- o Howard C Kauffman, President—Exxon Corporation;
- o John R Opel, Chairman—IBM;
- o Joseph B Flavin, Chairman—Singer Corporation;
- o Walter B Wriston, President—Citicorp;
- o Wm. J Kennedy III, Chairman—North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Co.

At the Ringaskiddy plant preparations for the one-day visit, on August 23 were going on for some months. Over £500,000 has already been spent on a clean-up of the site, with mature lawns, trees and shrubs appearing overnight. Production of pharmaceuticals involving odorous and toxic solvents and chemicals was suspended since mid-July in an attempt to sanitise the plant area. Hoardes of operators, painting contractors were seen climbing over every piece of equipment that couldn't be moved out of the area for the day, cleaning and painting in the hope that it would survive environmental attack until after the visitors had passed through.

Local garage owner Ryan had his forecourt tarmacaded at Pfizer's expense because it was considered to be unsightly for the visitors. CIE were offered £25,000 towards the cost of painting their stations between Limerick Junction and Cork to improve their appearance as the visitors sped through on the Presidential train.

If Pfizers had accepted the recommendations of their own report back in 1977 they could have built the bio-oxidation treatment plant, which was recommended, for the same cost that they were now spending on trying to clean up the mess they had created over the years.



we seem to have bit something solid here"

In this same year, 1983, the workers at Ringaskiddy, in an attempt to forestall further redundancies at the

The company have recently adopted a policy of dismissing workers who are absent on long term illness as

OBITUARY
John Kennedy Waterford SWM expresses sympathy to the family and friends at the death of John Kennedy, shop steward at Waterford Glass, Socialist and fighter.

CLEANING UP O'CONNELL

REVIEW: *Daniel O'Connell: Portrait of a Radical*, ed. Kevin E. Nowlan, Appletree Press.

DANIEL O'Connell was the father of constitutional nationalism. He was born in 1775 into a family of landlords whose estate he was to inherit. As a young man he lived through an age of revolution. In Ireland Wolfe Tone's United Irishmen organised for rebellion in '98. Their inspiration was the French Revolution where the rising capitalist class destroyed the hated rule of the aristocracy and the church.

O'Connell feared the revolutionary wave. After the unsuccessful invasion of the French fleet at Bantry Bay, he rejoiced at the failure because it would have "shook the foundation of all property and destroyed our [legal] profession, root and branch."

LAWYER

Although a lawyer, he defended members of secret peasant societies such as the Whiteboys, he left no doubt where he stood on agrarian outrages. He wrote "I never quitted an assize town at which the Whiteboys were tried without expressing my abhorrence of their crimes."

His political influence in the early 19th century reflected all the weakness of the Irish bourgeoisie. They allowed this landlord to represent them because they dared not break with the gentry and the British garrison. Verbally they opposed British oppression—but they feared the Irish masses more.

RESTRAINTS

O'Connell's main achievement was to divert the national movement onto the road of Catholic Emancipation. This was achieved in 1829 but most legal restraints on Catholics had been removed before the Act was passed. Its effect was to allow rich Catholics to take

a seat in Parliament.

O'Connell won because he held one advantage over the more militant nationalists: he understood the weapon of mass agitation. His movement was an inspiration for the Chartists in Britain. But he did everything to separate the Irish nationalist movement from the militant working class Chartists. Instead he used the power bestowed on him by the mass agitations to cement his alliance with the British Liberal Party—the Whigs.

LIBERAL

As a true liberal, he opposed "the tyranny of trade unionism" and particularly, the closed shop. Workers would only benefit by "tempting capitalists to the country, in order that having cheap labour they might have profits". He opposed the Poor Laws and the outlawing of child labour lest they interfere with "free enterprise". When a famine broke out on his estate, he sent £200 worth of potatoes over from London. But they were not for distribution—they were for sale so that the "free market" was not interfered with.

REPEAL

His last major agitation was the Repeal movement which he only took up after the Whig government was removed from office. In his model repeal law, he reserved special places in an Irish Parliament for resident landlords. But it was during this agitation that his rhetoric was finally blown. He called off the mass rally at Clontarf after the British surrounded it with cannon. The movement never recovered.

Today O'Connell is despised by many. His lack of nationalist militancy is well known. But his class politics are still hidden. Yet the two are connected. O'Connell was first and foremost a defender



of privilege. In a country where capitalism was weak he dared not take the measures necessary to break the chains of British colonialism lest he unleashed a movement of the Irish peasantry.

Daniel O'Connell: Portrait of a Radical is a curiously named book. It is a collection of "studies" of O'Connell's politics by among others, five of the leading Irish history professors. It tells you more about the politics of the pro-

fessors than O'Connell. It is an attempt to rehabilitate O'Connell's reputation by means of lies and excuses. It fits in perfectly with the new revision of Irish history initiated by Conor Cruise O'Brien. The professors are always willing to put themselves at the service of a class that needs to hide the truth of its origins. The myths they create about O'Connell are designed for just that.

KIERAN ALLEN

WHAT ANSWERS TO THE CRISIS?

THE economic crisis, like the bad summer and moving statues, is believed by many to be caused by forces beyond our control and understanding. Two recently published pamphlets set out to try to disprove this view.

The first, "Jobs and Borrowing" written by a group of socialist economists, examines the right wing argument that the present recession is due to government borrowing and expenditure.

With regard to facts and figures, it is a mine of useful information which give the lie to many of the myths that are thrown at us by politicians bosses and the media.

For instance, did you know that pound for pound invested in wages the average productivity of Irish workers is 36% greater than that of German workers? So much for the overpaid, lazy Irish workers!

It's in its solutions to the crisis that the pamphlet falls down. What the writers propose is the building up of a revitalised State Sector. They admit that this would not be socialism but state capitalism. However, they argue that this would lay the basis for the industrialisation of the country.

That this is no solution is shown by the second pamphlet "Why the world economy is in crisis". Capitalism is now an integrated world system. What happens in one country has effects throughout the world. This explains why countries which were for years quite happy to cooperate with South Africa are now putting pressure on the regime to reform the system of Apartheid. There are no longer any national solutions to the economic crisis. The small number of miracle economies such as Hong Kong and Singapore only manage to survive by the massive repression of their working classes—and even these economies are beginning to feel the effects of the recession.

The pamphlet explains in very readable language the marxist theory of the economic crisis; why capital-

ism goes through a cycle of slumps and booms, why the cycle seemed to have been broken in the years after the Second World War, only to re-appear in the late sixties; and finally the solution of the economic crisis—socialism.

As the pamphlet puts it in the last paragraph: "Capital-



Workers hold the key

ism has one last great achievement to its credit—it has created its own gravedigger, the international working class. In Brazil, South Africa and India, as well as in the older industrial economies, East and West, there are large numbers of workers, members of a world working class bigger than ever before, who have repeatedly shown their ability and willingness to fight their exploitation. The problem is to transform the struggle within the system into a struggle to overthrow it and build a socialist society...

"Jobs and Borrowing—Where the Right is wrong"—£2.00 Available from 16 Ormond Rd, Dublin 6.

"Why the World Economy is in Crisis — the Socialist Case" by Pete Green — 80p Available from SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8.

SOCIALIST WORKER BOOKS



BOOKS are weapons. The SWM has now available an extensive list of socialist books at reasonable prices. A full booklet is available from the national address. The top seller is still the double special offer: A copy of Why we need a revolution in Ireland and What we stand for, both giving a readable introduction to SWM politics, costing a mere £1 for the two. Send for the pamphlets and the booklet.

SWM, PO Box 1648, Dublin 8



Soccer business in decline

IN HIS great days, Georgie Best used to have a column in Jimmy Hill's Football Weekly. Apart from telling of his feats, he was always saying, "Footballers are entertainers, and football is an entertainment business." (Definition of business: a profit maximising concern.) Once you understand this and realise that the football bosses are trying to keep down costs and increase income, you can see the football events of recent times is some sort of pattern.

In Bradford a stand burnt down. The ground was not covered by the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975. All third and fourth division clubs were exempted from

these regulations because they haven't the money to pay for the necessary improvements. Hence, 52 people died.

MONEY

In Brussels, Liverpool and Juventus fans were sold tickets into the same part of the grounds, so eager were officials to take their money. The stadium was decrepit and security facilities were few. The inevitable fights followed, and in the rush to escape from them, 42 were killed.

In Luton, Millwall fans rioted and attacked the police and the opposing

supporters. Millwall's fans have always been a rough crowd, coming as they do from a dying dockland area of the east end of London, where poverty and unemployment are endemic. Thatcherism has condemned many more to frustration and despair. Fighting at football matches and in dance-halls has been evidence of this. The riot at Luton was no different.

LEGACY

Like British industry, British football was originally small-scale, unplanned, localised, inward looking, dismissive of the rest of the world and relatively small-

profit-making. British clubs carry this legacy within them; at least one third of the Football League's 92 clubs are technically bankrupt and only survive because of a subsidy from the larger clubs like Liverpool, Manchester Utd., Spurs etc. Put all this with a world-wide capitalist slump, a monetarist government, mass unemployment, the decline of football (like cinema) as a mass entertainment and you get "hooliganism", football riots, tragic deaths. And, on a lighter note—you now have an English team for which even Butch Wilkins can get a game!

—JOHN STITT

DUNNES DRAGS ON

THE 24-hour pickets called by the Dunnes Strike Support Group on Thursday/Fridays have proved highly effective.

Deliveries to the shop have been stopped on those days and the store is virtually empty when the picket is at full strength. This has obviously had a good effect on the morale of the strikers.

These 24-hour pickets will have to spread to other days. But if this is to be done many more workers will have to be involved in the Support Group.

At present, the Group is more representative of the Left than of workers and if it stays like this, it cannot but stagnate and become less effective.

The Socialist Workers Movement has suggested a rank-and-file union conference might well draw workers who will not attend support group meetings but who want to hear the arguments for

supporting the strikers. Once the arguments were put, the basis might exist for building the kind of active support of other trade unionists which the strikers need if they are to win.

However, the chances of such a conference being called by the union—IDATU—are slight given that the union official who had been in charge of the strike, Brendan Archibald, has been taken off it. Not, it seems, because he wasn't doing *enough* to help win the strike but because he was, according to the union executive, doing too much! While evidence for this view will seem to most *Socialist Worker* readers to be severely lacking (witness the fact that the strikers are still out after fourteen months!) IDATU thinks Archibald was getting "too involved" in the strike.

The on-the-spur-of-the-

moment occupation of the store at the end of last month seems to have been the last straw. It was, after all, unofficial and even "illegal". The fact that the store was closed all day Saturday for the first time in the 14 months of the strike, was ignored. The closure of the store and the publicity surrounding the occupation gave a much-needed boost of morale to all the supporters of the strike.

But to the leadership of IDATU this was too much like workers' self-activity and a repeat had to be prevented.

Archibald had to be removed. How Marie Hayde, the Regional Organiser who has taken over responsibility for the strike will deal with it remains to be seen. Those who attended the first Strike Support Group meeting chaired by her are not

optimistic. She seemed antagonistic to those who, for months now, have been trying to organise support for the strikers in workplaces, encouraging blacking of Dunnes and building the pickets.

Much of this activity is, of course, unofficial. Archibald tolerated it because he knew it to be the only way the strike could be won. We can only hope Hayde doesn't let her obvious distrust of left groups and of not-quite-official action get in the way of building the kind of support from other workers which can win the strike.

JOIN THE 24-HOUR PICKET
Thursday 6pm to Friday 6pm
DUNNES STORES,
HENRY STREET.



CORPO CODE CON

EARLY LAST year union officials at Dublin Corporation were shown a management document entitled "Industrial Relations Code of Practice". The document was then discussed between management and the officials and eventually an amended version was produced. This amended version was then presented to the members for ballot.

This document is six pages long with about 50 clauses dealing with pay claims, grievances and discipline. Looking at it, it's hard to believe any union official had a hand in drawing it up—although, given the calibre of some of the union officials "representing" Corpo workers it's not too hard.

The overall effect of the document is to shackle the rank and file workers with a series of endless procedures deliberately designed to discourage us from ever looking for anything.

To take just two examples: Section 1, Procedures for Claims, Clause 1.5 says that "The Corporation shall enter into discussion or make a response to a claim within one month from the date of its receipt". In other words the management would be entitled to ignore any claim completely for four weeks. Pay claims submitted by a well-organised and united workforce would demand and get an immediate response.

A second example: Clause 2.2 Section 2 on Grievance Procedure says that "If an employee feels aggrieved by

some practice or instruction, act or omission which he/she considers to be unfair, he/she may make representation accordingly to his/her supervisor, either directly or through his/her shop steward".

Put simply, this means that a workers cannot actually refuse to carry out an unfair instruction but must refer to others—supervisor or shop steward. The implication is that the worker is incapable of judging whether an instruction is fair or unfair.

But the main point is that every worker knows that point-blank instruction to carry out an unfair instruction is the best and the only effective way to preserve the one person—one job policy which is vital in defending jobs. This

clause, agreed by the union officials would put any worker taking that line in breach of agreement.

All the union officials could say in recommending this document was that we needed "something" like this. At the UCATT meeting official Sam Nolan was told to go back to the drawing board and return with a document which had something in it for the workers.

Another suggestion was that the best procedure was to build unity at shop floor level between all trade and general operatives, not sitting down with the bosses discussing documents.

The document was overwhelmingly rejected at the UCATT meeting, but with very low turn-outs some officials were actually able

to sell the document to their members.

There are 14 unions in all and each one voted separately at different times during 1984. The result of the ballot, which was supposed to be by aggregate, is still not known. But any attempt to implement its procedures, or the procedures in any other document, on the basis of ballots at meetings some of which didn't have a quorum, will have to be met with the strongest possible rank and file opposition.

—CHARLES NOWLAN,
Shop Steward, UCATT,
Sundrive Road Depot, Dublin
Dublin Corporation.

Industrial news

PRINCE O BURREN

THE Prince O'Burren strike is now in its sixth month.

Since there is a court injunction against mass picketing, scabs continue to run the factory.

However the strikers continue to seek solidarity from other workers, organising workplace collections etc.

But they have still not succeeded in blacking deliveries of components to the plant from England. This kind of blacking is necessary to put real pressure on management.

CORK ESB

"DESPICABLE pickets!" was the headline blazoned across the "Cork Examiner" on Saturday August 31. The article beneath urged ESB workers in Cork to ignore the unofficial pickets being placed by ATGWU members in Cork City.

The strike began on August 19 in the Wilton and Albert Road depots when two workers were sacked for refusing to drive vans as this work belonged to members of another union. Workers from other unions have, for the most part, respected the pickets and

there have been power cuts in Cork city and county.

However, some supervisors and engineers scabbed on the striking workers to restore power. The strikers reacted quickly and placed pickets on the homes of the scabs.

As we go to print, they are attempting to spread the strike by picketing out the Marina and Aghada power stations. This action will out the lights in much of the South West of the country, and bring industry there to a halt. If they succeed in doing this, the strike will very quickly be won.

The arguments of the "Cork Examiner" about old people and children suffering because of power cuts are the arguments always used against workers in struggle—like those against ambulance workers in the North.

But the fight of these ESB workers to maintain agreed working conditions, and their action in spreading it, should be an inspiration to other public sector workers whose pay and conditions are under threat.

GALWAY CLEANERS

200 ITGWU members at Galway Regional Hospital are on strike against the use of contract cleaners.

The issue is clear: the use of contractors is an attempt to destroy union wage rates and conditions. The experience of

the UCD cleaners prove that once the contract workers organise, the contract is removed. That is why the Galway workers are correct to strike to keep contractors out.

The picket line at the hospital is being broken. Young Secondary School students are doing cleaning work. Many ITGWU members at the hospital are also passing the picket. There are three sections to the union in the hospital—ambulance, nurses and ancillary workers.

Unfortunately, the union is not campaigning to bring all sections out. They should do so immediately—this does not require an all-out picket.

The strike can be won if workers step up the action. There should be regular strike

meetings, which draw every worker into the running of the strike. What is needed is small work groups for collections, for publicity, for organising demonstrations, etc.

Above all the workers have to take up the argument on the need to close the hospital except for emergency cover. The union official must be told to openly appeal for, and issue leaflets directing other ITGWU members to respect the picket line.

DERRY DRIVERS

GALWAY is not the only part of the country where workers are striking against the privatisation of the health service. Ambulance drivers in most areas of the Six Counties came out at the end of August in support of their fellow workers in Derry.

Drivers from Derry's Altnagelvin Hospital has gone on strike at the start of the month when details of the proposed privatisation were leaked.

The spread of the strike has meant that the Health Boards will not be able to introduce privatisation in some places—playing drivers in one area off against the other.

The ambulance drivers are, off course, receiving the wrath of the media who are going into the highways and byways to find patients whose lives are "endangered" by the strike.

The reports, as always, ignore the fact that patients would suffer far more in the long term if the drivers had not fought back and if private ambulances had been introduced.

RANK + FILE HUH! WELL MY RANK IS UNSELECTED OFFICIAL + THIS IS THE FILE WE HAVE ON YOU!



UCD cleaners fight back

TWENTY three women cleaners have been on strike at University College Dublin for more than a month after being

declared redundant when the college management switched contracts as part of a cost-cutting exercise.

The women are members of No 7 Branch of the ITGWU, having established their right to union recognition only by

means of a strike a few years ago. UCD management has tried to disclaim all responsibility for the dispute and, unfortunately this line was accepted by many UCD workers. But now, as a result of the women's own determination, the possibility of real solidarity is beginning to emerge.



Scabs make a run for it at UCD.

Picketing

The women have been picketing the college from five am each morning in an effort to stop the scabs who have been escorted into the college by a garda escort.

The picket line has been backed up by supporters, including members of the Socialist Workers Movement.

But more support is needed.

In this report EAMONN McCANN and GORETTI HORGAN set out the background to a dispute which raises important questions about the rights of part-time workers and about the role of trade union officialdom in disputes. Pictures by DEREK SFIERS (Report).



Singing in the rain—shop steward Marie Lenihan (left) strikers Jackie Thompson and deputy shop steward Concepta Carroll holding the line outside UCD.

EDUCATION CUTS ROB CLEANING WORKERS

A STRIKE by 23 part-time workers might seem a minor affair at first sight. And that was obviously the initial reaction of the union leadership.

But the issues the strike raises are enormous.

Briefly, the background is that Contract Cleaners Ltd, (CCL) held the contract for cleaning the Arts and Library buildings at UCD for ten years. The women worked five hours a day, five days a week.

Last year, as the cuts in education spending began to bite, UCD management encouraged firms to undercut one another for the contract. CCL held on by bidding as low as possible. The

result was a cut in hours from five to four a day. It meant a loss of wages for the women—plus that they had to do five hours work in four.

This year UCD held another dutch auction. The college management stipulated that the work would have to be done in the early morning and in three hours a day. A bid was made on this basis by Professional Cleaners Limited (PCL) and they won the contract.

The hours were thus under eighteen a week, which meant that the workers would have dropped out of the PRSI system, losing rights to sick pay, holiday pay, maternity benefit,

redundancy money and all employment protection. This is contrary to official ICTU policy contained in the Charter of Women's Rights issued only last month.

Offered

And it was totally unacceptable to the ITGWU women employed by CCL. (Only six of them were offered work by the new company anyway, and it was made clear that no union militat would be among the chosen six.) So all 23 were declared "redundant" and scab

labour was brought in. That's what triggered the week-long sit-in which began on July 31.

It wasn't until the women occupied a room at the college administration building that union group secretary Pat Rabbittie came out to the college to investigate. He then told them that what they were doing was "illegal" and that the union couldn't give them full backing until they stopped it.

And he assured them that if they did stop it, the ITGWU would deliver the goods. "I'll bring this college to a standstill", he declared. But when the women took him at his word it was a different story.

The ITGWU didn't ask for an all-out picket on UCD. Instead, after some confusion, it asked for an all-out on the premises of Contract Cleaners Ltd in South Richmond Street—five miles from the campus. And even that wasn't placed after CCL management, in the course of talks which were mainly about redundancy money, said that they'd regard picketing as a "hostile" act!

Provide

Meanwhile the picket at UCD was being passed by members of all unions, including FWUI members employed by Contract Cleaners Ltd on other college buildings.

Worse, members of the ITGWU itself were cooperating openly with the scabs. Porters and security men were literally opening the doors to them. And when postal workers refused to pass the picket, ITGWU college employees—including one shop steward—drove through the picket line daily to collect the post and bring it in.

It was only when building workers on a new library site heard a canteen address from shop steward Marie Lenihan and voted to come out on a one day solidarity strike that the official union machinery creaked into action.

On September 2, the day of the building workers' solidarity stoppage—a month and a day after the cleaners' strike began—ITGWU officials convened a meeting of UCD shop stewards and rank and file workers. The women and other picketers leafleted the college from five am

COLLECT

THE UCD cleaners are not working for "pin money". They are working to supplement their family income. All but two of them are married. Almost all have children.

They have given a magnificent lead to all Irish workers who are faced with managements determined to make workers pay for the economic crisis of capitalism. They are entitled to all possible support.

They are on picket duty at UCD from five in the morning. It's an early hour and it's not easy to get to, but any worker who can make it should put in an effort to turn up.

Collections are needed to sustain the strike. Money raised at workplaces or elsewhere can be forwarded to Marie Lenihan, shop steward 43, Valeview Drive, Finglas South, Dublin 11.

The issue should be raised in other union branches with the demand that full, official backing be given to the women and that all scabbing and co-operation with the scabs be stopped. Union members who cooperate with the scabs should be chucked out.



The white-haired man is called Monaghan. He is a member of the No 7 Branch of the ITGWU. The bedraggled fellow in the trench coat is Frank McCarthy, manager of the scab outfit Professional Cleaners Ltd. Monaghan is literally holding the door open for the scabs!

DON'T CROSS PICKETS

As Government plans to "privatise" more and more sectors of the public service emerge, it is important that the lessons of this dispute be learned. The inevitable result of privatisation is the relentless driving down of costs—at the expense of the working class. Whether it is the post office, Galway Regional Hospital, RTE or elsewhere, the lesson of UCD is that only strong rank and file organisation will serve to fight back successfully.

More generally, the enormous damage which the "two-tier" picket system has done to workers' capacity to fight and win should be recognised.

A picket is a picket is a picket. We need to get back to the "old fashioned" socialist principle that YOU DON'T CROSS PICKET LINES, full stop. That principle will have to be fought for by socialists as they strive to rebuild rank and file organisation.

Moreover, if union officials were elected directly by the members they represent, and subject to being "unelected" if they lose their members' confidence, and if they were paid the average wage of the workers they represent, then we would get people who would lead from the front instead of standing on the sidelines.

urging support for the meeting. 200 attended and voted to work for a one-day general stoppage on September 16.

It was the fierce determination of the women themselves, coupled with the builders' solidarity, which sparked this action.

It was clear at the meeting that many workers saw the ramifications of the dispute clearly. That if UCD could get away with trampling on one group of workers, all others would be weakened when it came to a fight. It was clear, too, that once a lead was given there was a willingness among at least a minority of UCD workers to come out in support. The pity is that the lead from the union officials was so long in coming.

Seek solidarity

What's needed now is active rank and file involvement in maintaining solidarity action. The stewards who met on September 2 should coordinate the action, stamp out all cooperation with the scabs and hold regular meetings of their sections to stiffen any who are open to intimidation by UCD management.

A victory here could well herald the beginning of a fight back against the cuts and against privatisation. No clearer example could be asked for of what privatisation means.

And in the course of supporting the cleaners, UCD workers could begin to build the type of grass-roots organisation which is going to be needed if the anti-worker policies of UCD management are to be defeated.

THE LAW

ONE lesson which comes out loud and clear from the UCD strike is that the law is not "impartial". When it comes to workers' struggles, the law is firmly on the side of the bosses.

It's four and a half years now since the Stardust fire tragedy. Yet not a penny piece has been paid out in compensation to the victims and their families.

But when UCD management wanted to get the cleaners out of occupation, they were able to get a court hearing immediately at a judge's house on a Bank Holiday Monday! And of course the judge ruled against the women.

The gardai upon their arrival at the picket line made it clear that their role was not to stop anyone being injured by scabs' cars which speed through the gates, but to protect the scabs and ensure that the picket is ineffective.

They explained clearly to the strikers that any picket which blocked the gate and stopped the scabs was illegal. The only legal picket is one which lets the scabs through!